



WINE GLOSSARY FOR SIPPING, SWIRLING AND SLEUTHING



Whether you're a seasoned sommelier or just here to swirl, sip, and sleuth, this handy glossary will guide you through both the fine art of wine tasting and the finer art of mystery-solving flair. Here, you'll find all the wine lingo you need to sound like a pro and a few extra terms to spice up your over-the-top detective work. Throw in some dramatic pauses, raise your glass with a knowing look, and get ready to uncork the mystery!

Wine Words 101: Unlocking the Language of the Vine:

AROMATIC – Refers to wines with strong, pleasant smells (common in whites like Riesling or Gewürztraminer).

BALANCE – How well the wine's elements (acid, tannins, sweetness, alcohol) are in harmony.

BIG – A wine with powerful flavors and a heavy feel in the mouth.

BODY – The weight or fullness of the wine in your mouth; described as light, medium, or full.

BOUQUET – The complex aromas that develop in a wine as it ages.

BUTTERY – A creamy, smooth texture or flavor, often found in Chardonnays.

CHEWY – A wine with dense, rich tannins that give it a thick, almost tactile texture.

CRISP – A wine with refreshing acidity, giving it a clean, fresh taste.

COMPLEX – A wine that has many different flavors and aromas, evolving as you taste it.

DRY – A wine with little to no residual sugar, meaning it's not sweet.

EARTHY – A wine with aromas or flavors reminiscent of soil, mushrooms, or forest floor.

FINISH – The aftertaste of wine, or how long the flavor lingers after swallowing.

FLORAL – Aromas of flowers, often found in white wines or lighter reds.

FRUIT-FORWARD – A wine where the dominant flavors are ripe, fresh fruits.

HERBACEOUS – A wine with flavors or aromas reminiscent of herbs, grass, or green leaves.

JAMMY – Describes wines with rich, ripe, sweet fruit flavors, often found in Zinfandels.

LEGS – The streaks that form on the inside of a glass after swirling, related to the alcohol content.

LIGHT-BODIED – A wine that feels delicate and thin in the mouth, usually with lower alcohol content.

LIVELY – A wine with high acidity or effervescence that feels bright and energetic.

LONG FINISH – A wine whose flavor lingers on the palate for a long time after swallowing.

NOSE – The overall smell or aroma of the wine.

NUTTY – A subtle aroma or flavor of nuts, often found in older wines or wines aged in oak.

OAKY – A wine with flavors or aromas derived from oak barrels, such as vanilla, toast, or smoke.

OPULENT – A rich, luxurious wine with lots of flavor and body.

PEPPERY – A spicy note often found in red wines like Syrah or Zinfandel.

RICH – A wine that feels full and heavy with deep flavors.

ROUND – A wine with a smooth, soft mouthfeel and no harsh edges.

SILKY – A wine with a smooth, elegant texture that feels soft in the mouth.

SPICY – A wine with flavors reminiscent of spices like pepper, cinnamon, or cloves.

STRUCTURED – A wine with well-defined tannins and acidity, giving it good body and balance.





TOASTY – A wine with flavors of toast, caramel, or smoke, typically from oak aging.

VELVETY – A wine that is smooth and soft, with a lush texture.



SIP, SWIRL, AND SUSPECT: MASTERING THE ART OF DRAMATIC WINE GESTURES

Be Overly Enthusiastic About Every Sip – But with a Sinister Twist

- Swirl your glass dramatically, take a loud sniff, then lean in close to another guest and whisper, “This wine... it’s almost to die for... wouldn’t you agree?”
- After sipping, pause dramatically and say, “If only the victim had lived to taste this...” Add a mischievous smirk to keep the tension high.

Use Wine Jargon Excessively – With Dark Undertones

- Mix in ominous hints while you flex your wine vocabulary. “I’m getting a robust bouquet, with a murderously sharp finish.”
- Or, “These tannins are gripping me like the cold hand of death—but in a good way!” Keep the wine chat lively, but always hint that something darker is afoot.

React Dramatically to Flavor Notes – With a Dash of Suspicion

- Take a sip and suddenly freeze, as if something terrible just dawned on you. “Wait... is that a hint of arsenic? Or is it just the spice?”
- Then, throw a suspicious glance toward someone, “You wouldn’t know anything about that, would you?” Linger on the tension before shaking it off and smiling. “Just a bit of fun, of course.”

Turn Every Conversation into a Wine Debate – With Accusations Hidden Beneath

- Use wine as a way to interrogate others playfully. “Ah, you prefer this Merlot? Strange... I thought you were more of a Cabernet type. You weren’t with the victim during the Cabernet course, were you?”
- Let the debate escalate, but always weave in subtle questions that make everyone wonder if you suspect them.

Make Grand, Over-the-Top Toasts – With an Eerie Edge

- Every toast becomes an opportunity for suspicion. Raise your glass high and declare, “To the truth—may it be as full-bodied as this wine... and as inescapable as the evidence.”
- Or, look around the room and say, “To our delightful evening, where the only thing dead should be the grapes... I hope.” Smile, but hold eye contact a little too long with one guest for added tension.





PHRASES TO SIP AND SLEUTH BY



THIS WINE IS FIRE! – Praising an exceptional wine.

I'M GETTING SOME MAD LEGS ON THIS ONE. – Referring to the streaks of wine on the glass, often tied to alcohol content.

TOTALLY CRUSHABLE! – Describing a wine that's super easy to drink.

I'M VIBING WITH THESE TANNINS. – Liking the astringent texture or structure of the wine.

THIS ONE'S GOT A NICE GRIP. – Talking about a wine with strong, noticeable tannins.

WHAT A JUICY POUR! – Referring to a wine with intense, ripe fruit flavors.

IT'S GOT THAT OAK BOMB FLAVOR. – A wine with pronounced oak characteristics, like vanilla or toast.

I'M LOVING THE NOSE ON THIS. – Enjoying the aroma of the wine.

THIS IS NEXT LEVEL. – A wine that's really impressive or a cut above the rest.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TERROIR, BRO. – Explaining how the geography and climate influence the wine's flavor.

I'M PICKING UP SOME SERIOUS FUNK. – Referring to earthy, unusual flavors (often from natural wines).

I'M GETTING THOSE JAMMY VIBES. – Describing a wine with rich, sweet fruit flavors.

THAT'S SOME SMOOTH JUICE. – A wine that's particularly silky or easy to drink.

THIS BOTTLE'S LIT. – Exclaiming that a particular wine is excellent.

THIS ONE'S REALLY GOT SOME LEGS. – Talking about a high-alcohol wine with good body.

I COULD SIP THIS ALL DAY. – Expressing a strong liking for a wine's drinkability.

IT'S GOT A NICE POP! – A sparkling wine with great bubbles and energy.

IT'S A LITTLE TIGHT RIGHT NOW. – A wine that hasn't fully opened up, likely too young.

THIS FINISH IS KILLER. – Commenting on the lingering taste after swallowing the wine.

I'M GETTING MAD ACIDITY ON THIS. – Referring to the fresh, zippy quality of the wine.

THIS ONE'S GOT SOME SERIOUS BACKBONE. – A wine with a lot of structure and strong tannins or acidity.

IT'S SUPER APPROACHABLE. – A wine that's easy to enjoy, even for beginners.

I'M FEELING THESE EARTHY NOTES. – Picking up on flavors like soil, mushrooms, or leaves.

THIS IS TOTALLY VELVETY. – A wine with a smooth, soft mouthfeel.

IT'S HITTING ALL THE RIGHT NOTES. – The wine's flavor and aroma are well-balanced.

THAT'S SOME BIG JUICE! – Referring to a bold, powerful wine with intense flavors.

THIS ONE'S STILL GOT ROOM TO BREATHE. – A wine that could use more aeration to open up fully.

I'M PICKING UP SOME SERIOUS FRUIT-FORWARD ACTION. – A wine where the dominant flavors are of fresh fruit.

I'M HERE FOR THE JAMMY VIBES. – Enjoying a wine that's rich in ripe, sweet fruit flavors.

I COULD SWIM IN THIS GLASS. – Really enjoying the wine.

