

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Spirits and Liqueurs®

APPEARANCE

Clarity / brightness	clear – hazy / bright – dull (faulty?)
Intensity	water-white – pale – medium – deep – opaque
Colour	colourless – lemon – gold – amber – mahogany – brown pink – red – orange – yellow – green – blue – purple – brown – black
Other observations	e.g. louching

NOSE

Condition	clean – unclean (faulty?)
Intensity	neutral – light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. fruits, flowers, vegetables, grains, botanicals, herbs, oak, sweetness, other
Maturation	unaged – short aged – matured – very aged

PALATE

Sweetness	dry – off-dry – sweet – luscious
Alcohol	soft – smooth – warming – harsh
Body	light – medium – full
Flavour intensity	neutral – light – medium – pronounced
Flavour characteristics	e.g. fruits, flowers, vegetables, grains, botanicals, herbs, oak, sweetness, other
Finish	<i>length</i> short – medium – long <i>nature</i> simple – some complexity – very complex

CONCLUSIONS

Quality	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding
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WSET Level 2 Spirits-Lexicon:

supporting the WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Spirits and Liqueurs®

AROMA AND FLAVOUR CHARACTERISTICS

FRUITY/FLORAL (ESTERY)

Citrus Fruit	orange, tangerine, grapefruit, lemon, lime
Orchard Fruit	apple, gooseberry, pear, apricot, peach, plum, red cherry, black cherry
Berry/Currant	grape, strawberry, raspberry, redcurrant, blackcurrant, blackberry
Tropical Fruit	banana, kiwi, lychee, mango, melon, passion fruit, pineapple
Dried Fruit	fig, prune, raisin, sultana, citrus peel, fruit cake
Flowers	elderflower, orange blossom, rose, violet, perfume, lavender, lilac, dried flowers

VEGETAL

Cereal	husk, porridge, barley, rye, linseed, malt, flour
Fresh vegetable	agave, bell pepper, mushroom, asparagus
Herbaceous	grass, hay, eucalyptus, blackcurrant leaf, wet leaves, conifer
Botanicals/herbs	juniper, coriander, basil, rosemary, thyme, sage, lemongrass, mint
Kernel	chocolate, coffee, hazelnut, almond, coconut, cashew

OAK/SWEETNESS/SPICE

Oak	toast, coffee, cedar, char, spice, sherry, sawdust
Sweetness	corn, vanilla, butterscotch, menthol, caramel, burnt sugar, toffee, molasses
Spice	anise, fennel, liquorice, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, cardamom, black/white pepper, cumin

OTHER

Peat (phenolic)	peat, medicinal, smoked fish, earthy, smoky, seaweed
Animal	leather, meaty, gravy, yeast extract
Rancio	fruit cake, candied fruits, mushroom, forest floor, polish
Solvent	peardrop, turpentine, paint, varnish
Feinty	wax, leather, biscuits, tobacco, cheese, sweat, plastic
Sulfur	rubber, spent matches, boiled cabbage, drains