THE CHALK SEA

IN THE GLASS

FIELD KEY

A visual guide to the aromas, flavours and textures of Champagne.
Use this key at the table, in the cellar or in the vineyard to identify and describe the characteristics you may find in Champagne.

FLORAL

WHITE FLOWERS, BLOSSOM AND BOTANICAL NOTES



- Hawthorn
- Elderflower
- Acacia
- Jasmine
- Orange blossom
- Linden
- White rose
- Violet

FRUITY

FRESH, RIPE AND DRIED FRUITS



- Lemon
- Lime
- Grapefruit
- Green apple
- Pear
- White peach
- Apricot
- Quince
- Red apple
- Mirabelle
- Yellow plum
- Nectarine
- Dried apricot
- Dried fig
- Raisin
- Red berries

VEGETAL

HERBACEOUS, GREEN AND EARTHY NOTES



- Cut grass
- Green apple skin
- Herbs
- Mint
- Tea leaf
- Eucalyptus
- Fennel
- Anise
- Box
- Tomato leaf
- Nettle
- Hay
- Straw
- Woodland
- Undergrowth
- Earth

MINERAL

THE CHALK SEA SIGNATURE



- Chalk
- Flint
- Wet stone
- Limestone
- Oyster shell
- Saline
- Iodine
- Sea air
- Crushed stone
- Graphite
- Gunflint
- Matchstick
- Smoke
- Mineral spice
- Steel
- Talc

BAKERY & AUTOLYTIC

FROM LEES AGEING



- Bread dough
- Brioche
- Croissant
- Biscuit
- Toast
- Pastry
- Almond
- Hazelnut

DAIRY & NUTTY

CREAMY, RICH AND NUTTY NOTES



- Butter
- Cream
- Crème fraîche
- Yogurt
- Almond
- Hazelnut
- Walnut
- Marzipan

SPICE

WARM AND EXOTIC NUANCES



- Vanilla
- Cinnamon
- Clove
- Nutmeg
- Pepper (white/black)
- Ginger
- Liquorice
- Saffron

AGED & COMPLEX

DEVELOPMENT WITH TIME



- Dried fruit
- Fig
- Date
- Prune
- Honey
- Beeswax
- Mushroom
- Truffle
- Tobacco
- Leather
- Hazelnut
- Walnut
- Rancio
- Forest floor
- Game
- Earth

COLOUR

A GUIDE TO HUE AND DEPTH



Yellow-green
This can suggest a mainly Chardonnay wine, a young one, or, very often, both.

Lemon yellow
Most Champagne shares this shade, so the palate offers more clues than the colour alone.

Golden yellow
This can reflect ageing, oak or black grapes; orange highlights suggest that noirs make up the greater share.

Old gold
This suggests considerable age, though it is worth being cautious with that judgement.

Soft pink
A small addition of red wine in a blended rosé can suggest a delicate palate.

Salmon pink
This suggests the rosé has had some time to mature.

Strawberry pink
Maceration leaves skins in contact with the juice, giving the wine a noticeable character.

Raspberry pink
Purple highlights support the suggestion of prolonged Pinot maceration, as you might find in Bouzy or Les Riceys.

TEXTURE & MOUSSE

ON THE PALATE



- Fine mousse
- Persistent bubbles
- Creamy
- Silky
- Lively
- Crisp
- Round
- Mineral
- Structured
- Depth
- Long finish

DOSAGE

SWEETNESS STYLES IN CHAMPAGNE



BRUT NATURE	EXTRA BRUT	BRUT	EXTRA DRY	SEC	DEMI-SEC	DOUX
0 – 3 g/L	0 – 6 g/L	0 – 12 g/L	12 – 17 g/L	17 – 32 g/L	32 – 50 g/L	50+ g/L
Bone dry. Pure expression of terroir.	Very dry. Crisp and mineral.	Dry. The classic style.	Slightly off-dry. Rounder and softer.	Noticeably off-dry. Richer style.	Sweet. Lush and indulgent.	Very sweet. Rare today.

KEY TERMS

COMMON DESCRIPTORS

- Aromatic intensity
- Autolytic character
- Balance
- Complexity
- Dosage
- Finish
- Freshness
- Length
- Mousse
- Ripe
- Tertiary aromas
- Acidity
- Chalky
- Citrus
- Elegance
- Minerality
- Roundness
- Salinity
- Structure
- Tension
- Youthful
- Evolution