

WSET Systematic Approach to Tasting Spirits®

(Level 2 Award in Spirits)

WSET SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TASTING SPIRITS AND LIQUEURS®

APPEARANCE									
Clarity	clear or hazy/cloudy (faulty?)								
Intensity	water-white – pale – medium – deep – opaque								
Colour	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>white</td> <td>colourless – green – lemon-green – lemon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>golden</td> <td>gold – amber – copper</td> </tr> <tr> <td>brown</td> <td>tawny – mahogany – brown</td> </tr> <tr> <td>coloured</td> <td>pink – red – orange – yellow – green – blue – purple – brown – black (natural/synthetic?)</td> </tr> </table>	white	colourless – green – lemon-green – lemon	golden	gold – amber – copper	brown	tawny – mahogany – brown	coloured	pink – red – orange – yellow – green – blue – purple – brown – black (natural/synthetic?)
white	colourless – green – lemon-green – lemon								
golden	gold – amber – copper								
brown	tawny – mahogany – brown								
coloured	pink – red – orange – yellow – green – blue – purple – brown – black (natural/synthetic?)								
Other observations	e.g. legs, tears, louching								
NOSE									
Condition	clean – faulty (fault: feinty – woody – TCA – stale – other taint)								
Intensity	neutral – light – medium – pronounced								
Maturation	unaged – short ageing – matured								
Aroma characteristics	e.g. fruits, flowers, vegetables, grains, botanicals, herbs, oak, sweetness, other								
PALATE									
Sweetness	dry – off-dry – medium – sweet								
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								
Length	short – medium – long								
Finish	clean and simple – some complexity – very complex								
CONCLUSIONS									
Quality	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding								

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AROMA AND FLAVOUR CHARACTERISTICS (SPIRITS AND LIQUEURS)

FRUITY/FLORAL (ESTERY) – fresh or cooked? natural or synthetic?

Citrus Fruit	orange, tangerine, grapefruit, lemon, lime
Orchard Fruit	apple (green/ripe?) 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



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