The background of the page is a large, artistic splash of red wine. The splash is centered and extends from the top to the bottom of the page. It features a central vertical stem that tapers towards the bottom, with a large, rounded top. The splash is composed of various shades of red, from deep crimson to light pink, with numerous small droplets and larger splatters scattered throughout. The overall effect is dynamic and celebratory.

Aldiploma Module Six

Other Wine Styles

Sparkling, Sweet and Fortified

In this final module, we'll explore the other wine styles – including sparkling, sweet and fortified wines – the perfect excuse to pop open a bottle of bubbly and celebrate!

Sparkling Wines

Sparkling wines come in a range of different styles, price points and flavours, but essentially there are **TWO** key ways in which sparkling wines are produced.

For both methods, a still base wine is made first where the sugar in grapes is turned into alcohol by the action of yeast.

However, an additional stage then takes place to make the wine sparkling; the wine is fermented **AGAIN**. To do this, more yeast and additional sugar (as the natural grape sugars have now been fermented) are added to the wine to kick-start another fermentation.

This is because a by-product of the fermentation process is carbon dioxide (CO₂). Usually this CO₂ is allowed to escape as it is not wanted in the wine. However, when making sparkling wines it is absolutely critical and instead of allowing it to escape, it is trapped, where it then dissolves into the wine to give it that all important fizz!

But we mentioned there are two key ways to make sparkling wines and the fundamental difference in these two methods is that the second fermentation can be carried out either in a **TANK** or in a **BOTTLE**. This has a big impact on both the flavour and the cost of the wine.



1. Tank Fermentation Method

For this section make sure you pour yourself a flute of the Prosecco Superior DCOG and the Rosé Spumante

The key things when it comes to a tank fermentation in sparkling wines are:

- a) It has very little impact on the flavour of the wine
- b) Large volumes of wine can be made sparkling at once
- c) It is therefore a relatively cheap way of making wine sparkling

Prosecco for example is usually made by the tank method and the grape variety is Glera (although there are a few exceptions).

The best Proseccos are labelled Superiore DCOG and can come from the regions of Conegliano Valdobbiadene (or Con-Val) and Asolo.

How sweet or dry they are can also be found on the label - Brut is the driest, followed by Extra Dry and then Dry.

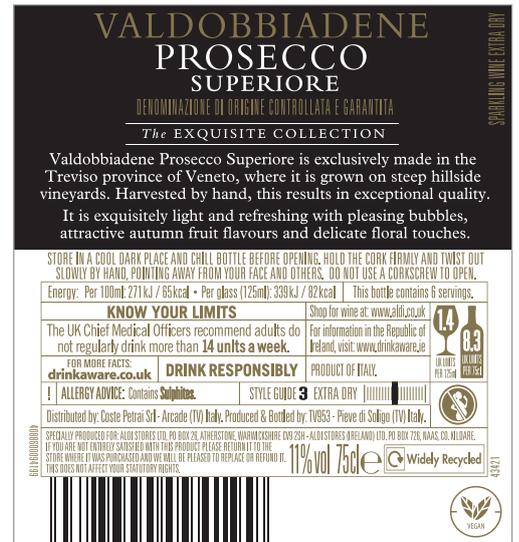
Characteristics Of Fermented Wines

- Bigger bubbles (mousse)
- Slightly lower alcohol
- Fruitier flavours such as pear, apricot and some blossom
- The wines are also slightly less fizzy
- The wines are generally speaking, cheaper than bottle-fermented wines and less complex



Other examples include cheaper German sparkling Sekt, cheaper New World sparkling wines (such as sparkling Moscato) and also Lambrusco.

Tank fermented wines make great apéritif wines and can be enjoyed with a range of nibbles. The sweeter wines are terrific with fruit based puddings.



2. Bottle Fermentation

The most complex, lengthy and expensive way of making sparkling wines is by something called the **Bottle Fermentation** method.

Instead of the still base wine being put in large volumes into a pressurised tank, the still wine is put into the individual bottles that the wine will eventually be bought in.

Sugar and yeast are then added, the bottle is sealed with a cap and the second fermentation takes place inside the bottle.

Eventually the yeast dies once their food source has been consumed (the sugar) but the dead yeast cells are left in contact with the wine – something called yeast autolysis – and it is that, that accounts for the great complexity and flavours of bottle fermented wines.

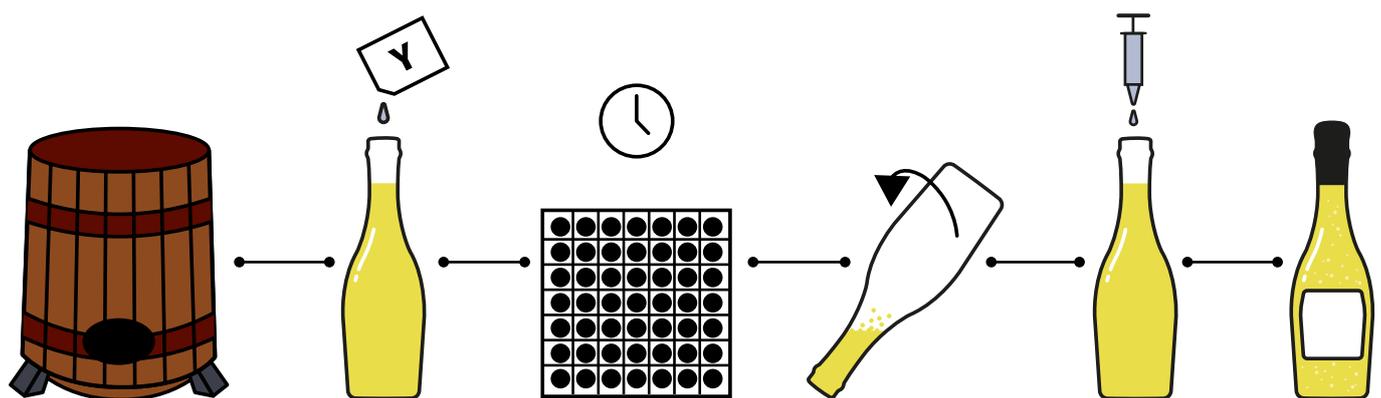
The longer the wine is left with the yeast, or on the lees (as it is technically called), the more the wine picks up wonderful biscuity, nutty and bready notes.

The dead yeast ultimately needs removing from the bottle and to do this there are two methods:

The Traditional Method

- For this method the bottles are slowly tipped over time (either by hand or more usually machine) so that the dead yeast falls to the neck of the bottle.
- Once this has happened, the dead yeast needs removing (this is called disgorging) and so the neck of the bottle is frozen so that when the crown cap is removed, the frozen pellet of yeast comes out with it.
- Following this a small amount of wine (and usually some sugar) is then added to top up the bottle and adjust the final sweetness of the wine (this is called the dosage).

These wines are generally higher in acidity, complexity and fizz than tank method wines.



Cuvée

After wines complete the first fermentation, the winemaker creates a blend or “cuvée” with a selection of base wines.

Tirage

Wines are bottled, blended with a small mixture of yeast and sugar/must to initiate the 2nd fermentation. This mixture is called the Liqueur de Tirage.

Aging

Wines age for a period of time on the lees (dead yeast particles). Aging lasts from 9 months to about 5 years (depending on quality level).

Riddling / Disgorging

Wines age for a period of time on the lees (dead yeast particles). Aging lasts from about 5 years (depending on quality level).

Dosage

Some wine and sugar/must (called residual sugar-RS) is added back to the bottle. This mixture is also called Liqueur d'Expedition.

Brut Nature	0-3 g/L RS
Extra Brut	0-6 g/L RS
Brut	0-12 g/L RS
Extra Dry	12-17 g/L RS
Dry	17-32 g/L RS
Demi Sec	32-50 g/L RS
Doux	50+ g/L RS

A number of sparkling wines are produced using the traditional method process of bottle fermentation and these include Champagne, Cava, Franciacorta, Crémant (which is French for sparkling wines) and Cap Classique wines from South Africa.

Champagne, the most famous of these wines, actually refers to a specific region in France (rather than the grape from which the wine is made from).

Champagne wines can be either vintage or non-vintage:

- Vintage wines have to be made from grapes from a specific year and they have to spend longer 'on the lees' - spending a minimum of 3 years doing so. The flavours of Vintage Champagnes tend to reflect the personality of the year the grapes are harvested
- Non-vintage wines can be made using grapes from several different years harvests and only have to spend 12 months on the lees. The flavours of non-vintage Champagne are therefore the personality of the house or brand (such as Veuve-Monsigny).

The majority of Champagne is Brut and this is an indication of how dry the wine is (how much dosage has been added to the wine) and this ranges from Brut Nature (the driest) to Extra Brut, Brut, Extra Dry, Sec, Demi-Sec and Doux.

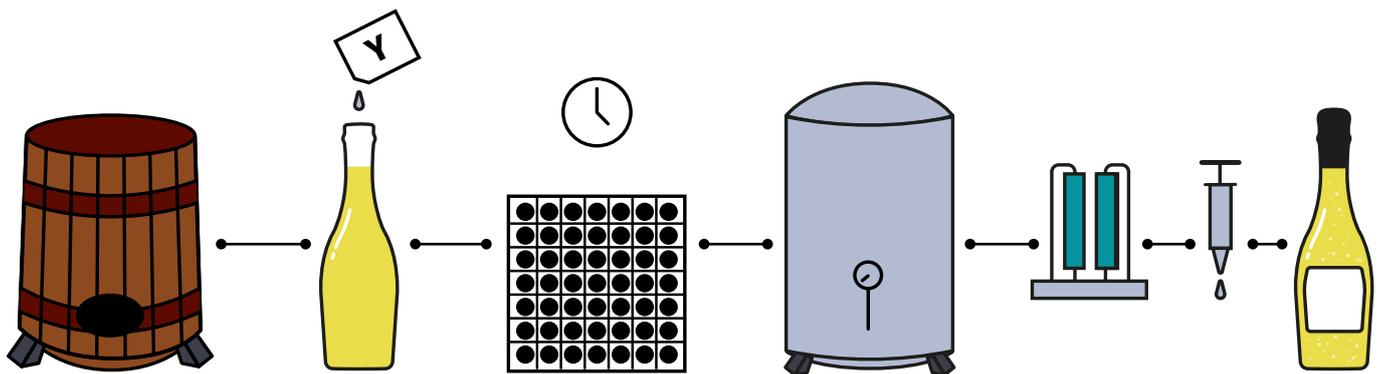
With rosé Champagne, red wine is added to the base still white wine to make it pink and then it is fermented in the same way. The main Champagne grapes are Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Meunier.

The Transfer Method

With the transfer method, the sparkling wines start in much the same way as the traditional method – so second fermentation still takes place in a bottle rather than a tank.

However, when it comes to disgorging the wine, or removing it from the sediment, the contents of the bottles are emptied into a pressurised tank – we call this 'under pressure'.

This is quite a common practice in New World countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the USA. Australia is also famous for producing deeply coloured sparkling Shiraz; a red wine!



Cuvée

After wines complete the first fermentation, the winemaker creates a blend or "cuvée" with a selection of base wines.

Tirage

Wines are bottled, blended with a small mixture of yeast and sugar/must to initiate the 2nd fermentation. This mixture is called the Liqueur de Tirage.

Aging

Wines age for a period of time on the lees (dead yeast particles). Aging lasts from 9 months to about 5 years (depending on quality level).

Tank Transfer & Filtering

Bottles are opened and contents are transferred into high pressure tanks and then wine is clarified by being passed through high pressure filters.

Dosage

Some wine and sugar/must (called residual sugar-RS) is added back to the bottle. This mixture is also called Liqueur d'Expedition.

Brut Nature	0-3 g/L RS
Extra Brut	0-6 g/L RS
Brut	0-12 g/L RS
Extra Dry	12-17 g/L RS
Dry	17-32 g/L RS
Demi Sec	32-50 g/L RS
Doux	50+ g/L RS

The complexity of bottle fermented wines means they can be enjoyed with a range of different foods from sushi, seafood, oysters, dim sum and even cheese. Rosé sparkling wines are also delicious with salmon, tuna and duck.

3. Fortified Wines - Port, Madeira & Sherry

Now we've covered sparkling, let's move on to fortified!

A fortified wine is a wine where spirit has been added to increase the alcoholic strength.

The most popular styles of fortified wines are Port, Madeira and Sherry.

Port

Port is from Portugal and specifically from the Douro region.

It is made up of quite a number of different, local black grape varieties such as Tinta Roriz, Tinta Franca and Touriga Nacional and is highly regarded for its deep colour.

In order to achieve this deep colour, during the first fermentation, colour, flavour and tannin need to be extracted quite quickly.

The fermentation is then stopped by adding spirit to it which kills the yeasts.

This results in a wine that is sweet (because the yeasts were killed before transforming all the sugar to alcohol) and high in alcohol from the addition of the spirit.

There are a number of different styles of Port and they tend to either be bottle or cask aged:

- Bottle aged Ports are those that are intended to age for a long time in bottle, such as Vintage Port, and these need decanting as they have a sediment
- Cask aged Ports (such as Tawny Port) are aged for a long time in barrels and this changes the colour of the wine (from purple to tawny) and makes the flavours more subtle
- Better value Ports include Ruby and Reserve Ruby Port which are bottled ready to drink
- Late Bottle Vintage port or LBV come from a specific year or vintage and is also ready to drink on release
- White port (made from white grapes) and pink Port are also becoming increasingly popular

Port is typically enjoyed with cheese, especially hard cheddars and blue cheese such as Stilton, as the sweetness of the Port is such a great match with the sour notes of the blue veins in the cheese.



Madeira

Madeira is an island that belongs to Portugal and is well-known for its fortified wines.

The wines are famous for having high acidity and an ability to last for an extremely long time.

The wines tend to either be blended (so different types of grapes are used) or made from single varieties of grapes.

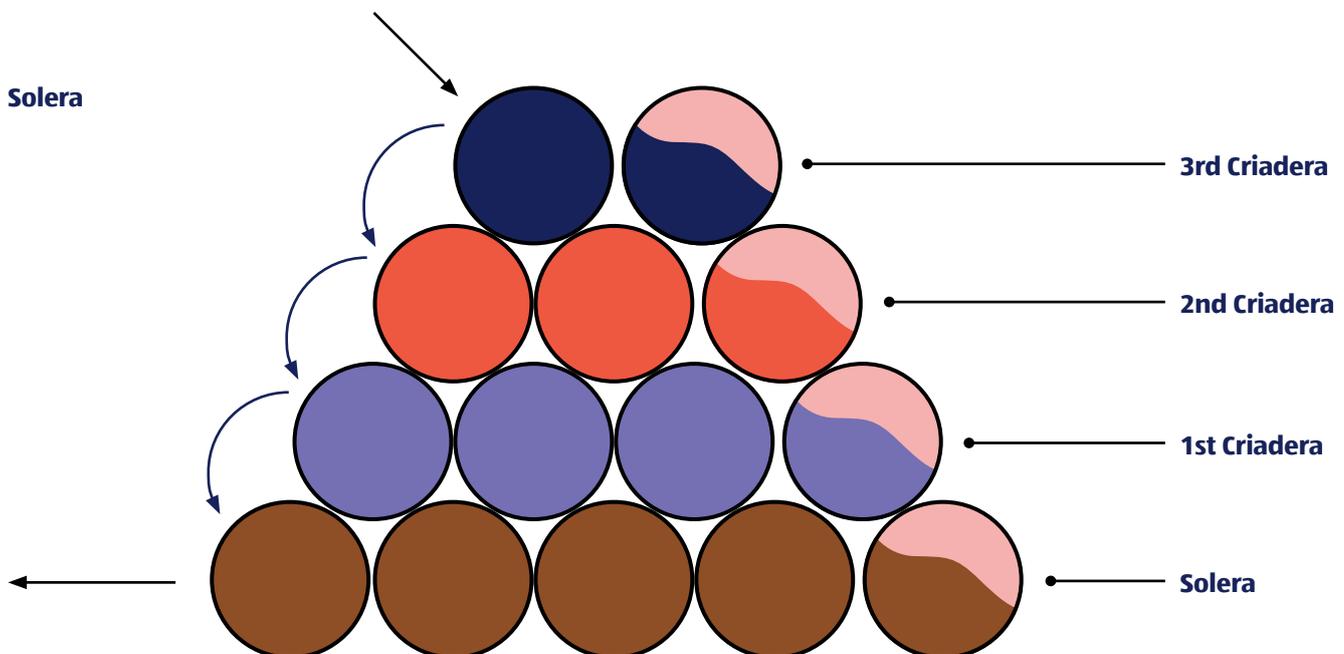
Madeira is incredibly versatile with food due to the range of styles and sugar levels. The sweeter styles are spectacular with puddings whereas the drier wines make great accompaniments to fish.

Sherry

Before fortification, like most sparkling wines, Sherry starts as a dry white wine and in the case of Sherry, is made from the Palomino grape.

After the fermentation, the wine is fortified and then it is transferred to oak casks to go through a lengthy ageing process called the solera system. Essentially this is a complex system, where small amounts of younger wines stored in an upper tier of casks are gradually blended with the more mature wine in the casks below.

Solera



This results in different styles of Sherry.

The lightest styles of Sherry are **Fino** and **Manzanilla**.

During ageing in the solera system a layer of yeast develops on top of these wines (this is called flor) and protects them from the air. This yeast affects the taste of the wine – in a similar way to Champagne.

Fino and Manzanilla make great aperitifs when served chilled. They are pale, dry and fresh with an Alcohol by volume (ABV) of around 15.5% and notes of nuts, marmite and a tangy citrus quality.

The next style of Sherry is **Amontillado** and this is still dry but a bit richer and nuttier with limited yeast influence which is killed off with additional spirit so that the wines can oxidise.

Richer still are **Oloroso** Sherries which are fortified to around 18% and are dry, rich, nutty and complex from extended oxidation.

The final type of Sherry are the richly sweet Sherries called **PX**, made from the Pedro Ximénez grape and they are wonderful poured over ice cream as they are rich and syrupy with dried fruit characters.

Sweet Wines

Sweet wines tend to be enjoyed with pudding, cheese and over the festive season, especially Christmas!

They include such names such as **Ice Wine**, **Muscat**, **Sauternes** and **Tokaji** but each is made in a different country, from different grapes and in a different way.

- **Ice wine**

These come from Canada, Germany and Austria and from very cold climates. It is so cold that the berries freeze on the vine which serves to concentrate the sugars

- **Liqueur Muscats**

Some sweet wines are both fortified and sweet, such as Liqueur Muscats from Australia and Vins Doux Naturels from France e.g. Muscat de Beaumes de Venise. Here, the fermentation, like Port is arrested or stopped through the addition of a spirit

- **Sauternes**

This is a region in Bordeaux, France and the sweet wines are made from a blend of Sémillon, Sauvignon Blanc and Muscadelle, usually with subtle oak influence. The sweetness is obtained by something called noble rot (or botrytis cinerea) which is when, through specific climatic conditions, a desired rot occurs on the vine and concentrates the sugars by dehydrating the grapes so that they pretty much resemble a sultana or raisin. Noble rot also occurs in the great sweet wines of the Loire, Alsace, Australia, Austria and Germany

- **Tokaji Aszú**

From Hungary, these wines are rich and sweet with notes of honey, marmalade and apricot. Their sweetness is reflected in the puttonyos level which ranges from 3 to 6. The grapes (mainly Furmint and Hárslevelű), like Sauternes, are affected by noble rot and they are picked and then made into a paste before being mixed with must or wine and aged in oak

‘New Wave’ or ‘Trendy’ Wines

There are a number of relatively new styles of wine on the shelf at the moment that are quite trendy, but what are they!?

- **Orange wines**

These are white wines that have either had a longer period of ageing on the skins or been fermented with them, so that they are a deeper colour and with greater structure and bite than conventional white wines

- **Organic and Biodynamic wines**

Organic wines are those that don't use synthetic herbicides, pesticides or weed killers. Biodynamic wines take organic wines a step further and take into account the Cosmos and the phases of the moon to dictate their vineyard and winemaking activities. They understandably see the soil as a living thing and try to promote soil health and life. Homeopathic treatments are also used

- **Natural wines**

These are wines made with minimum amounts of intervention. They have to be organic or biodynamic and use very low or no levels of sulphur. They are usually unfined and unfiltered

- **Vegan wines**

To make a wine clean and bright with no sediment they are often fined and those fining agents may contain animal by-products such as gelatine, eggs and isinglass. Vegan wines use fining agents that don't contain animal by-products, such as bentonite (a clay) or are unfined

- **Low or no added sulphur wines**

Sulphur or sulphur dioxide is an important preservative used in winemaking. Some people however may have an intolerance to it (though there is more sulphur in a bag of apricots and even various sweets) and so wines are increasingly made with lower levels of, or no added sulphur. Sulphur is a natural by-product of wine production though and so is pretty much present in all wines to tiny degrees