

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are widely used within the wine industry and are the dictionary of terms used by MW wines Pty Ltd to categorise and specifically describe the condition of bottles of wine. MW wines Pty Ltd uses its best endeavours to describe and notate every defect of each and every bottle to be sold.

### ULLAGE

Ullage is the term used to describe the fill level of wine in a bottle.

#### Standard Bottles:



#### Into Neck (N) – Base Neck BN

If no fill level is mentioned for a bottle, it means that the level is higher than the **Base Neck (BN)**. We do not generally differentiate between levels into the neck since fill level variations occur at the time of bottling and can cause differences. MW wines consider that wine that is clearly **Into Neck (N)** to be of excellent condition regardless of any age. However, in the case of older bottles (20 years plus) that have levels that are at the "base neck" or "into neck" we may mention of the fill level only to emphasise the excellent condition of the bottle.

#### Very Top of Shoulder (VTS)

VTS may indicate a slightly low fill at bottling time and/or a slight reduction through evaporation through the cork and capsule. This is somewhat to be expected for wines above 15 years of age.

#### High Shoulder (HS)

HS is a relatively "normally expected" fill level for wines that are around 20 years of age. A young wine that is 10 years or less is unlikely to exhibit ullage below the Base of Neck if in excellent condition.

#### Mid Shoulder (MS)

MS indicates that evaporation due to easing of the cork and/or inconsistent storage conditions has occurred. However, although this is relatively "to be somewhat expected" for very old wines that are 30 years plus, it is undesirable.

#### Low Shoulder (LS)

LS is a poor fill level for any wine. Unless it is a rare bottle or a collector's item (or a bottle amongst a full case), MW wines is unlikely to offer a bottle of wine with such a low fill level for sale in our auctions.

#### Burgundy Style Bottles:



Burgundy style bottles cannot be measured by neck fill levels because of the slope of the bottle's shoulder. Burgundy style bottle fill levels are measured in centimetres by looking at the space between cork and wine.

### **Below 2cm (-2cm)**

Burgundy bottles with a fill level that is -2cm or less are considered to be of excellent condition regardless of age. The ullage for levels that are -2cm are not generally mentioned, excepting to emphasise the excellent condition of an older bottle of wine.

### **Less than 3cm (-3cm)**

3cm or better is a normal fill for wines around 15 years of age. It is an excellent fill level for wines 25 years plus.

### **Less than 4cm (-4cm)**

4cm is considered a normal fill for wines over 20 years old and excellent for wines over 30 years old. However, it is not a desirable fill for wines 15 years or younger as; discernable evaporation has occurred at a higher rate than anticipated.

### **-5cm (-5cm)**

5cm is common in old wines of 30 years and more however, at this level, oxidation is likely to have occurred and the remaining wine may be tired or even undrinkable.

### **6cm+ (6cm+)**

6cm is a poor fill level for any wine. Unless it is a very rare bottle or a collector's item (or a bottle amongst a full case), MW wines would not likely offer a bottle of wine with such a low fill level for sale in our auctions.

## **LABELS**

The condition of a wine's label is relevant to be taken into consideration in determining the value of a wine to collectors (as opposed to drinkers as you do not drink the label). However, there are a large number of ways in which a label can be damaged that there is not an "accepted" set of descriptions for labels, as there is for ullage. As a result, MW wines makes every effort to describe in detail the conditions of labels by using the definitions below to describe the condition of a label.

### **Cleanskin (CL)**

CL means "Cleanskin" ie that the winery has not labelled the bottle.

### **Scuffed Label (SCL)**

SCL means that movement has affected these labels while in their original bin or case. Bottles, which have moved against barriers in their bins or cases sometimes, have marks/lines or a small bit of paper lifted up or pushed back from its original position. This includes lines of various weights on the labels.

### **Soiled Label (SL)**

SL means that the label has minor discolouring and/or that the label is slightly soiled or scuffed.

### **Soiled or Stained Label (STL)**

STL means that a label has some noticeable stain on the label.

### **Torn Label (TL)**

TL means a label with a noticeable tear on the label. In some cases the entire label is on the bottle but with a tear. Whilst in some cases the tear refers to parts of the label missing entirely. MW wines uses best endeavours to always note a label in the description

### **Writing on Label (WL)**

WL is used to describe a label that has something written on it which was not originally placed there by the producer Usually someone's name or a date.

### **Mouldy Label (ML)**

ML describes wines that have been stored in humid conditions over a long period of time.

## **CAPSULES**

There are many different types of capsules used by winemakers to both dress bottles and protect corks from dehydrating and causing shrinkage of the wines. The focus of our definitions is based on capsules/seals. MW wines make every effort to describe in detail any defects of seals by using the definitions below to describe the condition of the capsule/seal.

### **Missing Capsule (MC)**

MC is used to describe that the capsule is entirely missing. Removing capsules is common thing for wine drinkers or restaurateurs to do so that they wish to inspect the corks and drink any bottles where the cork is failing. Often wax is put over the end of the bottle in an attempt to further protect the cork. Whilst not desirable, these are acceptable attributes for bottles that are purchased to be drunk (as opposed to as an investment).

### **Slightly Damaged Capsule (SDC)**

SDC is used to describe minor damage on the capsule such as scuffs, dents and nicks.

### **Damaged Capsule (DC)**

DC is used to describe significant damage to the capsule. This includes notable split or broken capsule.

## **CORKS AND OLDER WINES**

Cork is a natural product and will degrade over time. Corks that are 15 years plus will begin to lose their elasticity. It has been known that fill levels can fluctuate between the time the wine is first inspected for sale and the time of closing. Very old corks have been known to fail in the process of shipping. As a result, MW wines will guarantee that the conditions of wines are as described up to the point it is shipped. MW wines will not be responsible for changes in condition, which occur during shipment.

### **Slightly Raised Corks (SRC)**

SRC is used to describe a bottle, which displays some indication that the cork has raised slightly. This description is used when the cork is pushing on the capsule – but that there is no damage (as yet) to the capsule.

### **Raised Corks (RC)**

RC is used to describe a bottle, which displays clear evidence that the cork is definitely raised. The capsule will be damaged in some way as a result.

### **Slightly Leaky Cork (SLC)**

SLC is used to describe a bottle, where there are some minor signs of some leakage.

### **Leaky Cork (LC)**

LC is used to describe a bottle, where there are obvious signs of some leakage. MW wines will use best endeavours to detect and describe bottles with any obvious leakage. MW wines will not knowingly offer for sale any bottle if the leakage is bad (coupled with unacceptable ullage level).

## **PROVENANCE AND STORAGE CONDITIONS**

Provenance of a wine is an overview of the history of the bottle and the conditions in which it was stored. This information is critical, particularly for older wines that might be more fragile. MW wines uses our best endeavours at all times to determine the provenance of each wine, which is entered into our auctions. Wherever possible, we describe the provenance for a lot and the conditions in which the wine was stored if it is an older bottle. The following describes the terms you will find in the descriptions of wines in our catalogues.

### **Professional Storage Facilities (PSF)**

PSF describes a wine that has been cellared in a commercial temperature controlled environment. Professional Storage Facilities are generally lockers, which are in a temperature controlled building, and which can be rented by wine collectors. Wine storage facilities have become popular over the past decade providing access to humidity-controlled environs designed to keep wines (more specifically corks) in the best conditions possible.

**Underground Cellar (UC)**

UC are always preferable to above ground (uncontrolled) residential storage, which have no means of controlling temperature. Underground storage is at least a cooler environment, less susceptible to damaging light, and generally very still.

**Controlled Cellar (CC)**

CC means a cellar, which is temperature and humidity controlled and do not rely solely on the influence of the naturally surrounding environment alone. They are the most ideal storage facilities for premium wines.

**Direct from Winery (DW)**

DW means that when a winery consigns wines for auction this is the description given to the wine's provenance. Nearly all wineries have temperature-controlled facilities in which they store their wine. Wines direct from wineries are almost always in the best condition because they are rarely moved and have not changed hands.

**Signed by Winemaker (SW)**

SW means that the bottle (usually the label) is signed by the winemaker.