

Barrel Notes 101

Variables that impact flavor of an oak barrel¹

Age: The more times a barrel is used, the less flavor it adds to its contents. After 3-5 vintages, most barrels become 'Neutral' and no longer impact a wine's flavor profile

Toast: For added flavor profile, barrel makers burn the inside of a barrel over an open flame. While light and medium toasts offer more subtle aromas, Medium Plus and Heavy toasting bring out more robust flavors

Grain: The older the tree, the tighter the grain. The tighter the grain, the more wonderful aromas waiting inside. French oak trees have the widest variety of grains.

Barrel Cooperage (Hyperlinks below)	Notes/fun facts
Francois Freres	Burgundy Barrel-Region of France known for its single varietal wines, primarily chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Cooperage created in 1910 in Saint-Romaine France. Company established under current name in 1942. Fourth generation family owned
Mercurey	Mercurey named for a region of burgundy. Mercurey Cooperage established in 1992 creates two barrels per day. By 2008, production is 60-70 barrels per day
Damy	Founded in 1946, 3 generations of the Damy family, now manufacture 22000 barrels annually. Located in Meursault, in the heart of the Burgundian vineyard.
Nadalie	Cooperage established in France in 1902. Five generations family owned. In 1980 Cooperage opened in Calistoga. This is the first French Cooperage opened in America. Maintains cooperages in Australia, Chile and France. Here is map of the French Forests that provide the Oak for Nadalie's barrels
Vicard	Sixth generation cooperage founded in 1925 in the town of cognac. Current CEO was formerly a professional Rugby player. His predecessor founded a cooperage school in Cognac
Boutes	Nothing on website that highlights history except that it was established in 1880. There are some interesting videos to watch
LeGrand	Unable to locate a website for France. USA Site indicates they are an importer of French barrels and that the company also manufacture barrels in the US from French logs.

Barrel labeling at Darcie Kent: Barrels are stamped on the end in production. The first letter indicates where the barrel is from. The next two numbers indicate the number of barrels produced and the last number is the number barrel of the total produce. For example, M405 means, the barrel is from Mercurey, there were 40 barrels produced and this is the 5th barrel. This is helpful when tasting different barrels and selecting for bottling/blending.

Footnote

1. Attributed to Tibbits, November 2020, Vivino Website