



vegan wine

F.A.Q.

YOUR GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING WHAT
MAKES A WINE VEGAN-FRIENDLY

Q: What does it mean when a wine is “vegan friendly”?

A: A vegan-friendly wine is made without the use of any animal-based products. During the winemaking process, some wines need to be “fined” to improve clarity or to soften or remove tannins.

Q: What does it mean to “fine” a wine?

A: Juice from crushed grapes contains tiny particulates of grape skins and pulp. Sometimes these particulates can make the wine cloudy. Fining the wine involves removing these particulates. This can happen either through gravity (letting the particulates settle out at the bottom of the tank or barrel over time) or by the use of fining agents to speed the process along. A winemaker may also choose to fine a wine in order to soften or remove tannins (red wines).

Q: What are fining agents?

A: Fining agents typically used include egg whites, casein derived from milk, gelatin and isinglass obtained from the bladders of fish. These are the most common methods used in non-vegan friendly wines.

Q: How are vegan-friendly wines fined?

A: Bentonite, a clay-based mineral, is the most commonly used vegan-friendly fining agent due to its effectiveness in absorbing proteins and some microorganisms. Seaweed, although uncommon is another option for fining vegan-friendly wines.

Q: Do all wines need to be fined?

A: No. Not all wines need to be fined. As a rule of thumb, white wines typically go through a fining process as most consumers don’t prefer to drink cloudy white wine! Red wines, however, are typically aged a little longer so they have more time to let gravity do her “settling” work and may not need to be fined. One reason to use fining agents in red wines would be to help with tannin management so that the wine is not too astringent, for example.

Q: What is the difference between filtering and fining a wine?

A: Filtering takes place after fining but before a wine goes into the bottle. If needed, fining comes first to remove large debris. Then filtering further clarifies the wine by removing any residual particles. It also provides bacterial stabilization. As with fining, red and white wines can be filtered. The process entails gently pumping the wine through filter pads or cartridges to remove yeast and bacteria.

Q: Does a vegan-friendly wine taste any different than a conventional/non-vegan wine?

A: If a wine has been fined using vegan-friendly practices, the taste or quality of the wine is not impacted. Wines that are un-fined and un-filtered may appear more cloudy and contain particulates floating in the bottle.

NOTE: many winemakers make unfiltered and un-fined wines (aka “natural” wines. There is no one-size fits all!

ALL GIRASOLE VINEYARDS WINES ARE VEGAN FRIENDLY!