

Natural Wine

The definition of natural wine is often misunderstood by trade and consumers alike. The wine industry often lumps all wines that are Organic, Biodynamic, and “sustainable” under the umbrella of natural wine.

While wines are often thrown into this singular category, there are distinct differences: to be marketed as Organic or Biodynamic requires a specific certification. At Natural Merchants we are Redefining Natural Wine, mandating certification to ensure that we know what’s in every bottle of wine.

In the U.S., all wines labeled and sold as **Made with Organic Grapes** must contain 100% organically grown grapes and can add a minimal amount of sulfites, up to 100ppm. Wines labeled as **Organic** have No Sulfites Added (NSA) and can carry the **USDA organic seal**. Even these wines may contain a very minute amount of sulfites (up to 10ppm) as grapes themselves naturally produce sulfites.

Biodynamic certification is granted by **Demeter** and the requirements for certification are the same the world over. All Biodynamic wines are also organically grown, are produced with minimal intervention and with an eye toward regenerating the soil of the vineyard.

Both Organic and Biodynamic producers must adhere to strict standards that include:

- Grown and produced without most conventional pesticides, synthetic fertilizers and ingredients, genetic engineering, ionizing radiation, or sewage sludge.
- Produced without the use of chemical additives.

Sustainable wines are produced according to criteria set by regional industry associations and are permitted to apply chemicals when needed. There are no consistent standards or certification agencies for sustainable wines.

Defining Natural Wine

No official or legal classification or standard set of operating procedures defines the natural wine category and there are no organizations that can certify that a wine is natural. Because “natural” is an unregulated term, there is no official oversight and no guarantees as to what the wine may contain.

Unofficial definitions of natural wines include the primary practices mandated for Organic and Biodynamic winemakers plus:

- Use of indigenous, wild yeast vs. yeast purchased to instill specific characteristics
- Use of non-chemical additives such as enzymes, acid or tannins to alter the final wine is discouraged.
- Often unfiltered, the wines are often cloudy in appearance.

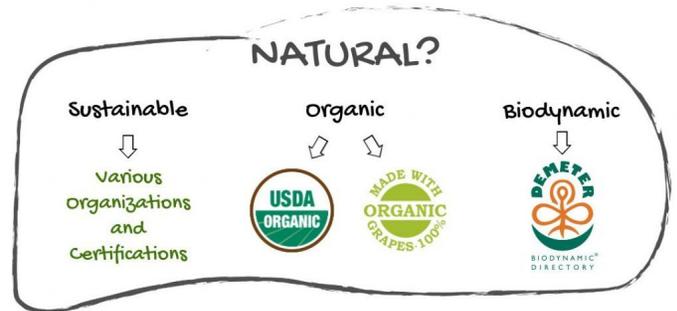
Many of our winemakers utilize wild yeasts, or if added they are organic yeasts sourced from their specific region. While some winery partners produce unfiltered wine (especially red), many of our winery partners choose to filter and fine their wines using natural, vegan materials such as Bentonite clay and pea protein. Other non-chemical additives are kept to a minimum.

Redefining Natural Wines

We believe in the “gold standard” of certification and knowing exactly what’s in your glass. Therefore all of our natural wines are **made with 100% organically grown grapes** and our wineries adhere to the standards set forth by the USDA’s National Organic Program. Some are **Organic with no sulfites added** and display the USDA organic seal; others are **certified Biodynamic by Demeter** and the majority are **Non-GMO Project Verified**.

These forms of responsible wine production are contributing to conservation and a better environment, while offering wines that truly reflect their terroir with distinct taste of place.

Our wines embody the care and respect by each winemaker, and you can feel confident that your purchase is the *most* natural of wines available.



[Video] Redefining Natural Wine

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