## Acid, acidity

The tart (or in excess, sour) quality that wine's natural acidity imparts and that gives the wine a sense of body and structure. Required for proper balance; too much or too little constitutes a flaw.

## Almond

A light bitter, nutlike quality sometimes noted in Italian white wines.

## Anise

Faint licorice, a pleasant element in some Spanish reds; may indicate, however, that the wine has been artificially acidified, a practice that may improve short-term enjoyment but tends to make wines that cellar poorly.

## Attack

A technical term for the first impression the wine makes as it reaches your palate, distinguished (in time sequence) from "middle" or "mid-palate" and "finish" or "aftertaste."

## Bouquet, bottle bouquet

As a technical term, the smells that develop with age in the wine bottle, as opposed to "aroma," the smells associated with the fruit. I have little use for distinctions this narrow and try to avoid using them in my wine notes.

## Earthy

Generic term for a range of aromas and flavors associated with organic qualities like "barnyard," "forest floor," "merde" and "tree bark." May be associated with brettanomyces (see above) but can also result from oak aging or the nature of specific grapes. Mourvedre, for instance, imparts a characteristic earthy aroma. Again, not necessarily a fault, but "earthy" wines tend to be controversial, and a little bit is usually enough.