ACIDITY AND WINE MAKING — ACIDS ON THE PALETTE

The conversion of grape juice ("must" in wine-making nomenclature) into wine is far more complex a process than the formation of alcohol from carbohydrates which occurs by the action of yeasts in primary fermentation. For example, a second stage referred to as malolactic fermentation is desirable for nearly all red wines and is often sought for white wines. In this fermentation, a bacterium belonging to the *Lactobacillus* genus converts malic acid into lactic acid. Malic acid is perceived as being softer and smoother in the mouth than lactic acid, even though there is very little difference in acidity between these acids. (The pH of wines varies from 2.8 to 3.8).

![Malic acid and Lactic acid structures](image-url)