

# WINE ENTHUSIAST<sup>®</sup>

## WINE BASICS

### What Does 'Cuvée' Mean in Wine?

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Cuvée is a term that appears on many wine labels but can have multiple meanings. One, commonly used in sparkling wine production, refers to the early stages of extracting juice from grapes.

**"It's our first cut from the press, the best juice,"** says Zak Miller, sparkling winemaker for **Domaine Carneros** in California's Napa Valley.



Domaine Carneros was founded by the family behind Champagne Taittinger, and Miller says its French origin is one of the reasons the company opts for French terminology.

Davies points out that different Champagne houses sometimes refer to their best blends within the larger cuvée designation by even more specific terms, like tete de cuvée, prestige cuvée and grande cuvée.