

How vegan-friendly is your wine?

Wine is made from grapes so all wines must be vegan-friendly, right? Not necessarily. Winemakers traditionally use animal-sourced by-products to clarify wines in a process called "fining" to remove unwanted elements in the wine which make it appear hazy or cloudy.



These unwanted elements chemically bind with the fining agents to settle at the bottom of the tank or barrel and are then removed to leave a bright, clear wine.

Traditional animal-sourced fining agents include casein (the protein in milk), albumin in egg whites, gelatin from animal bones or cartilage, and isinglass (the collagen protein in fish bladders). However, increasingly winemakers from estates such as Lourensford are using vegan-friendly alternatives.

At Lourensford in Somerset West, Cellarmaster Hannes Nel, along with his winemaking team, prides themselves on creating fresh-from-nature wines that celebrate the purest form of the grape with minimal intervention.

"We use mineral and plant-derived products during the winemaking process," says Nel. "These ingredients such as bentonite, polymust, vegocol, PVPP and activated carbon, are sourced from reputable and accredited manufacturers in the

world, are great alternatives and we are able to achieve a more eco-conscious end result in the bottle without sacrificing any quality or flavour."

"Environmental sustainability is at the core of what we do. It's not difficult to make a vegan-friendly wine, it just comes down to the choice of the fining agent during the winemaking process," concludes Nel.

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