

Liquors – Alcoholic Beverages made by distillation rather than by fermentation

Cognac

- **Cognac** (pronounced /'kɒnjæk/ *KON-yak*), named after the town of Cognac in France, is the most famous variety of brandy (grape based liquor).
- It is generally consumed straight up in a brandy snifter (fig. 1). In fact, this is what a brandy snifter is designed for; it makes you stick your nose right in there and breathe in the strong aroma of a fine cognac while you drink it.
- Cognac is generally expensive and can range anywhere from RM160 to RM1000 and above.
- Cognac's Standard
 - it must be made from **at least 90% Ugni Blanc, Folle Blanche or Colombard** grapes; of these, Ugni Blanc, known locally as Saint-Emilion, is the most widely-used variety today.
 - It must be distilled twice in copper pot stills and aged at least two years in French oak barrels from Limousin or Tronçais. Most cognacs are aged considerably longer than the minimum legal requirement of two years, because cognac matures in the same way as whiskies and wine when aged in a barrel.

Cognac's Grades

- The official quality grades of cognac are, according to the BNIC (Bureau National Interprofessionnel du Cognac):
 - **VS** *Very Special*, or ★★★ (three stars) where the youngest brandy is stored at least two years in cask.
 - **VSOP** *Very Special Old Pale*, where the youngest brandy is stored at least four years in a cask, but the average wood age is much older. Also known as 5 star.
 - **XO** *Extra Old*, where the youngest brandy is stored at least six, but average upwards of 20 years. On April 1, 2016, the minimum storage age of the youngest brandy used in an XO blend will be set to ten years.
- In addition the following can be mentioned:
 - **Napoleon** Although the BNIC states this grade is equal to **XO** in terms of minimum age, it is generally marketed in-between **VSOP** and **XO** in the product range offered by the producers.
 - **Extra** A minimum of 6 years of age, this grade is usually older than a Napoleon or an XO.
 - **Vieux** Is another grade between the official grades of VSOP and XO.
 - **Vieille Réserve** Is, like the Hors d'Âge, a grade beyond XO.
 - **Hors d'âge** The BNIC states that also this grade is equal to **XO**, but in practice the term is used by producers to market a high quality product beyond the official age scale. Hence the name "Hors d'âge" (beyond age).

Example:

- Martell VS, Hennessy VSOP, Martell Extra, Remy Martin XO, Couvoisier Fine Champagne XO

Armagnac: ([aʁma'ɲak])

- A brandy from the Armagnac region in France
- Armagnac tends to have fuller flavour, and is often deeper in colour.

• Compound Brandy – Locally Packed Brandy

- Apollo Brandy
- Old Fort Brandy
- Sahip Brandy



Fig. 1: Brandy Snifter

Whisky

- It is dark liquor made by distilling the fermented mash of **rye, barley, corn, or wheat**.
- The dark colour is the result of aging in barrels.
- The majority vast of whisky is made from US, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and Japan.
- It generally consumes straight up or adding ice (On the rock) or adds plain water into a rock glass. (Fig. 2 & 3)
- Whisky or whisky-like products are produced in most grain-growing areas. They differ in base product, alcoholic content, and quality.
- **Malt** is whisky made entirely from *malted barley* and distilled in an onion-shaped *pot still*.
- **Grain** is whisky made from malted and unmalted barley along with other grains, usually in a continuous "*patent*" or "*Coffey*" still. Until recently it was only used in blends, but there are now some single grain scotches being marketed.
- Malts and grains are combined in various ways
- **Vatted malt** is blended from malt whiskies from different distilleries. If a whisky is labelled "pure malt" or just "malt" it is almost certain to be a vatted whisky. This is also sometimes labelled as "blended malt" whisky.
- **Single malt whisky** is malt whisky *from a single distillery*. However, unless the whisky is described as "single-cask" it will contain whisky from many casks, and different years, so the blender can achieve a taste recognisable as typical of the distillery. In most cases, the name of a single malt will be that of the distillery (*The Glenlivet, Bushmills, Yoichi*), with an age statement and perhaps some indication of some special treatments such as maturation in a port wine cask.
- **Pure pot still whiskey** refers to a whiskey distilled in a pot-still (like single malt) from a mash of mixed malted and unmalted barley. It is exclusive to Ireland.
- **Blended whiskies** are made from a mixture of malt and grain whiskies. A whisky simply described as Scotch Whisky or Irish Whiskey is most likely to be a blend in this sense. A blend is usually from many distilleries so that the blender can produce a flavour consistent with the brand, and the brand name (e.g., *Chivas Regal, Canadian Club*) will usually not therefore contain the name of a distillery. *Jameson Irish Whiskey* is an exception and comes from only one distillery. However, "blend" can (less frequently) have other meanings. A mixture of malts (with no grain) from different distilleries (more usually called a vatted malt) may sometimes be referred to as a "blended malt", and a mixture of grain whiskies with no malts will sometimes carry the designation "blended grain".
- **Cask strength** whiskies are rare and usually only the very best whiskies are bottled in this way. They are usually bottled from the cask undiluted. Rather than diluting, the distiller is inviting the drinker to dilute to the level of potency most palatable (often no dilution is necessary, such is the quality of single cask whiskies). Single cask whiskies are usually bottled by specialist independent bottlers, such as Duncan Taylor, Gordon & MacPhail and Cadenhead amongst others.
- **Whiskies do not mature in the bottle, only in the cask, so the "age" of a whisky is the time between distillation and bottling.** This reflects how much the cask has interacted with the whisky, changing its chemical makeup and taste. Whiskies which have been in bottle for many years may have a rarity value, but are not "older" and will not necessarily be "better" than a more recently made whisky matured in wood for a similar time. Most whiskies are sold at or near an alcoholic strength of 40% abv



Fig. 2: Classic Rock Glass



Fig. 3: Modern Whisky Glass

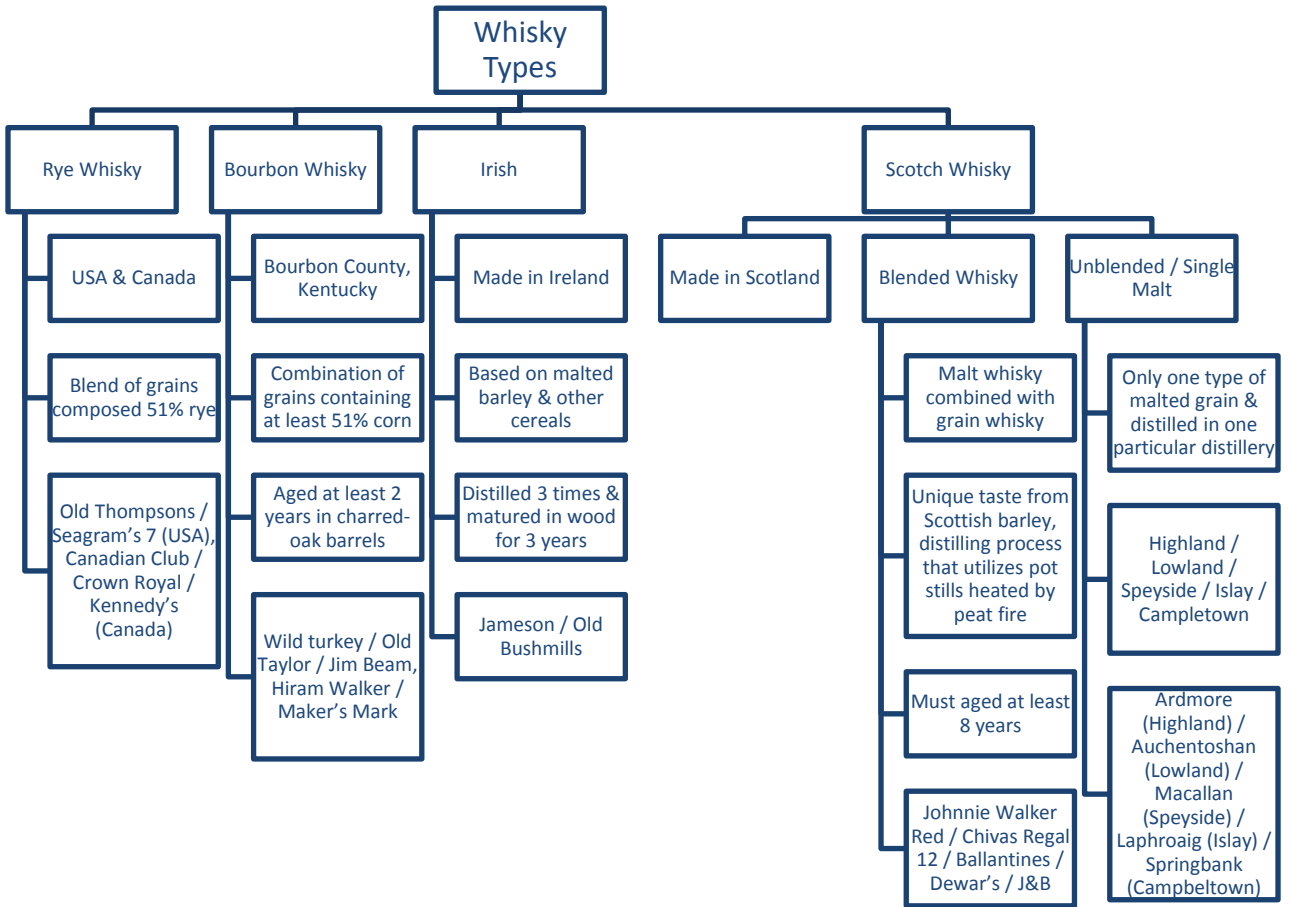


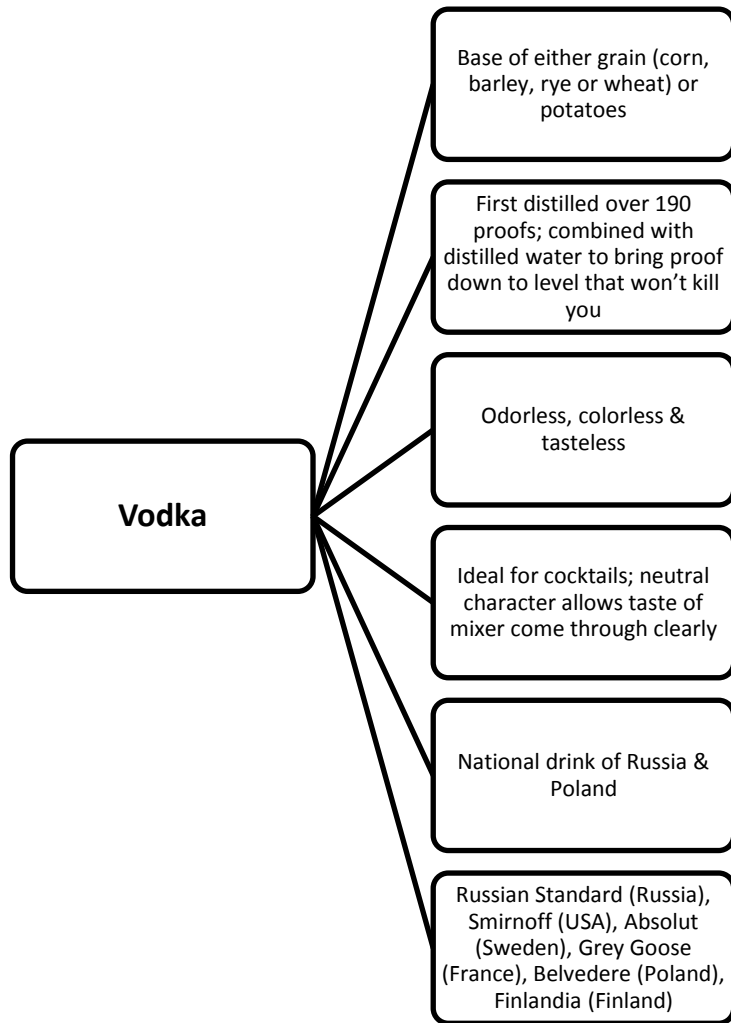
Fig. 4: Five main Scotch Region



Fig. 5: Pot Still



Fig. 6: Aging in barrels



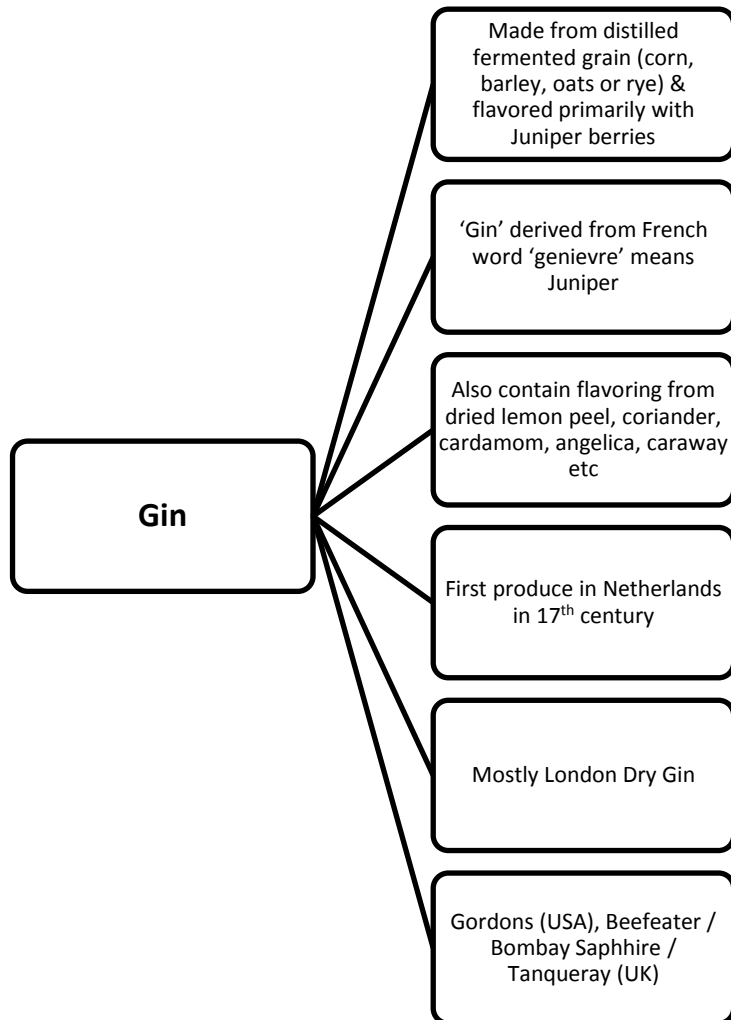
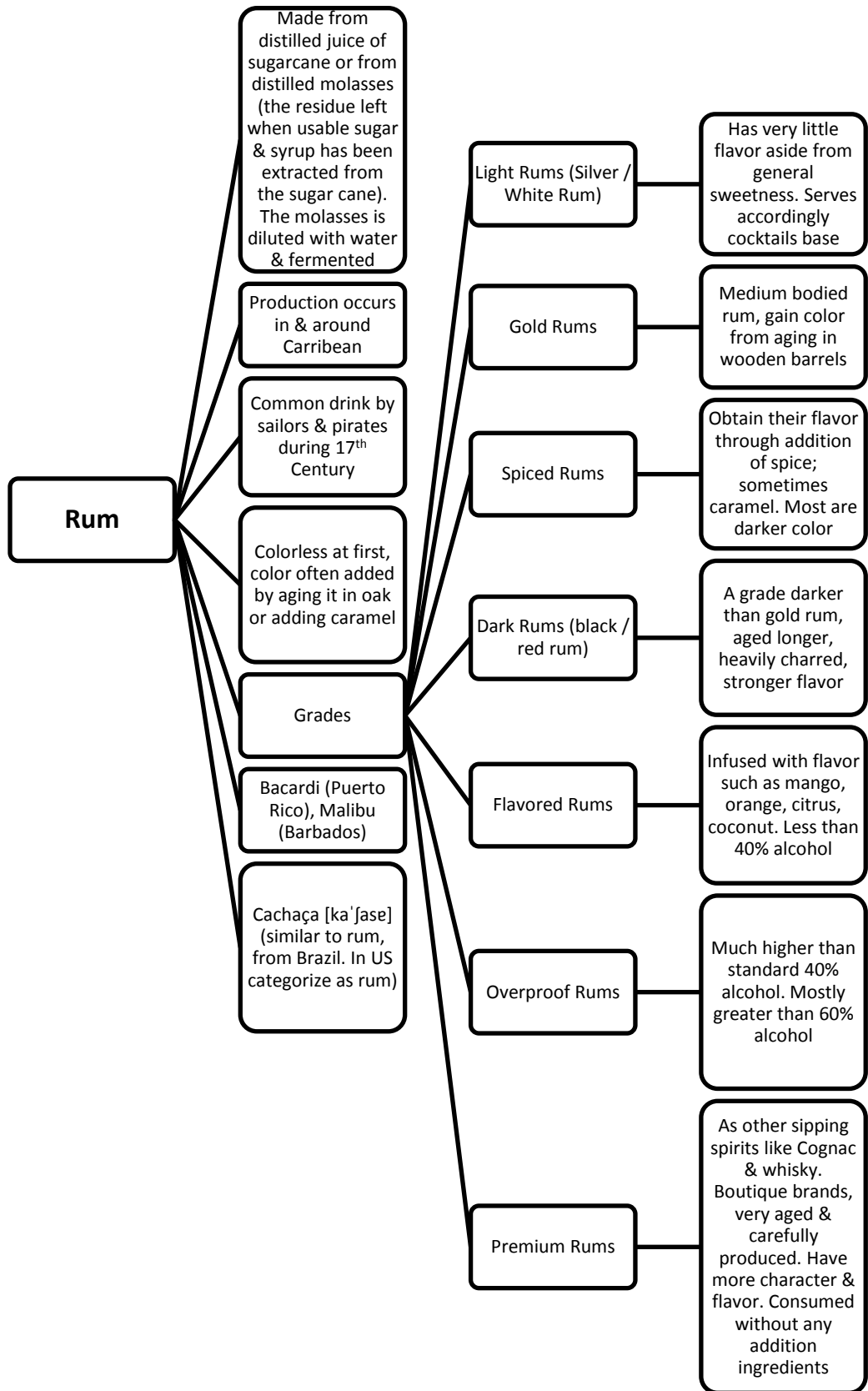


Fig. 5: Juniper Berries



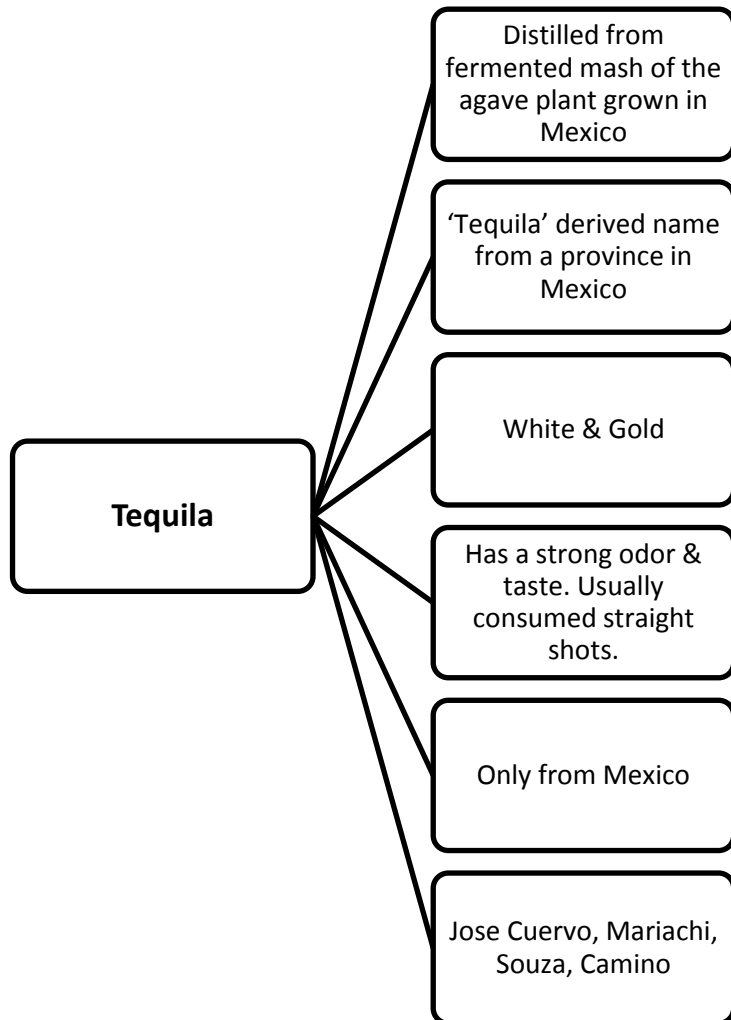
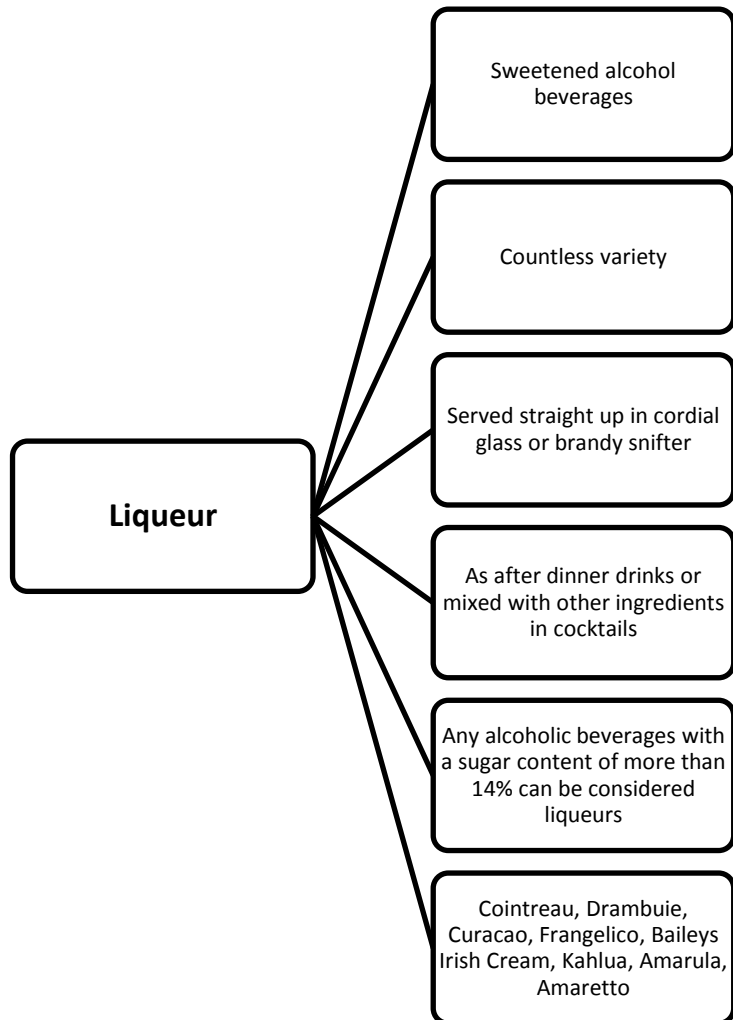
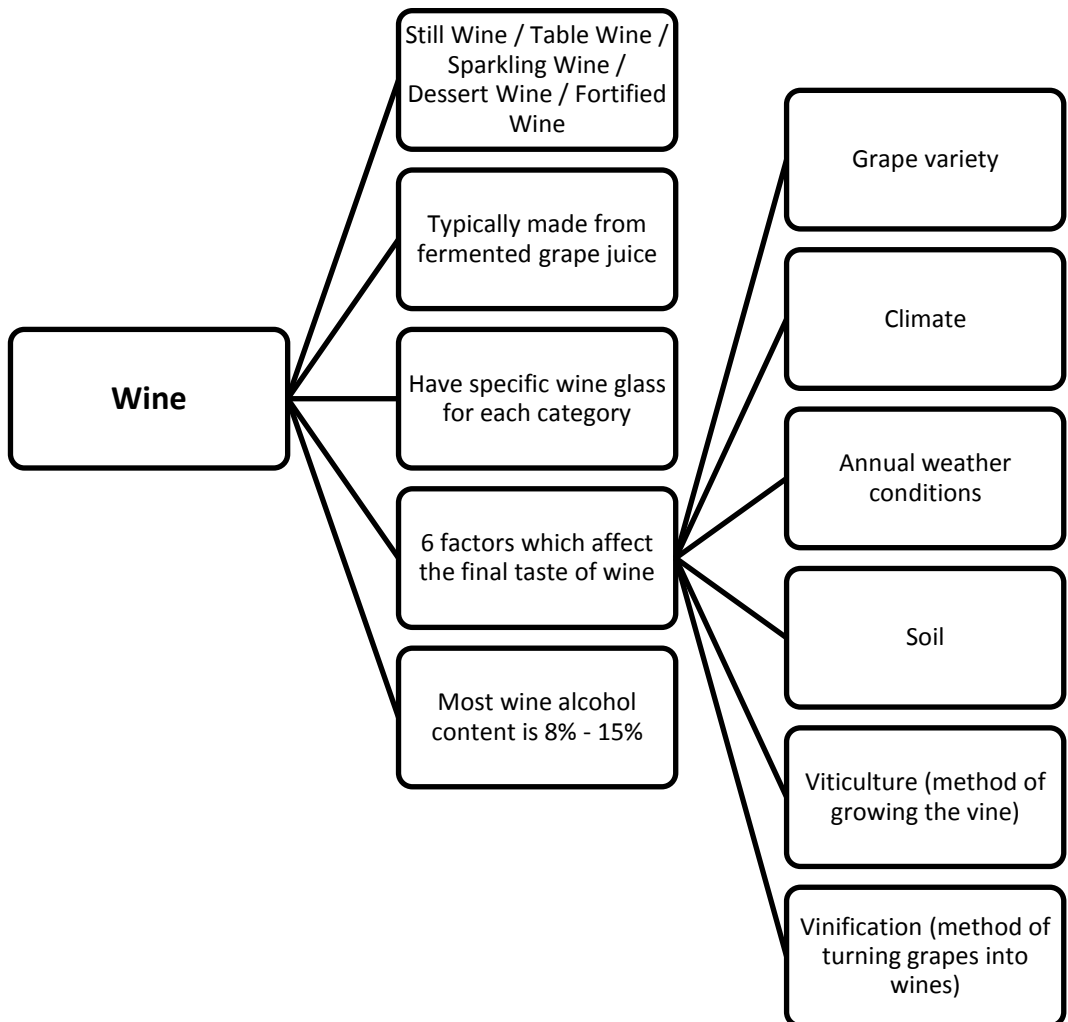


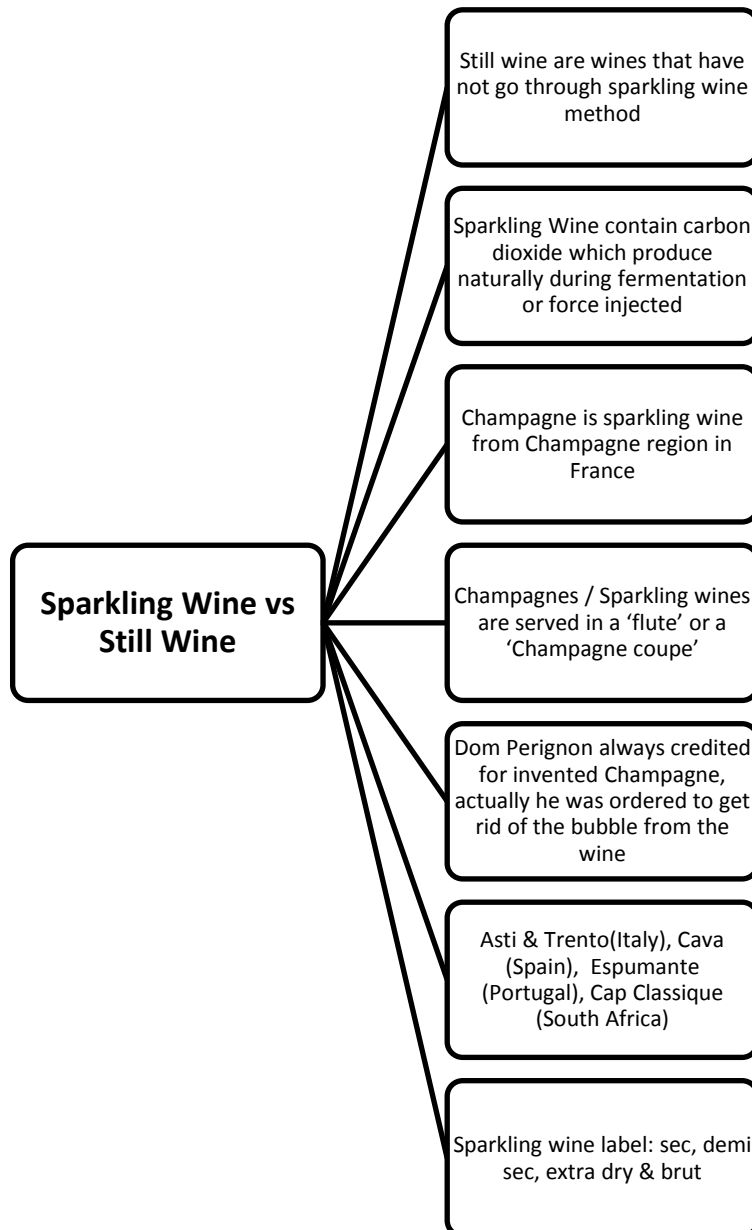
Fig. 7: Shot Glass

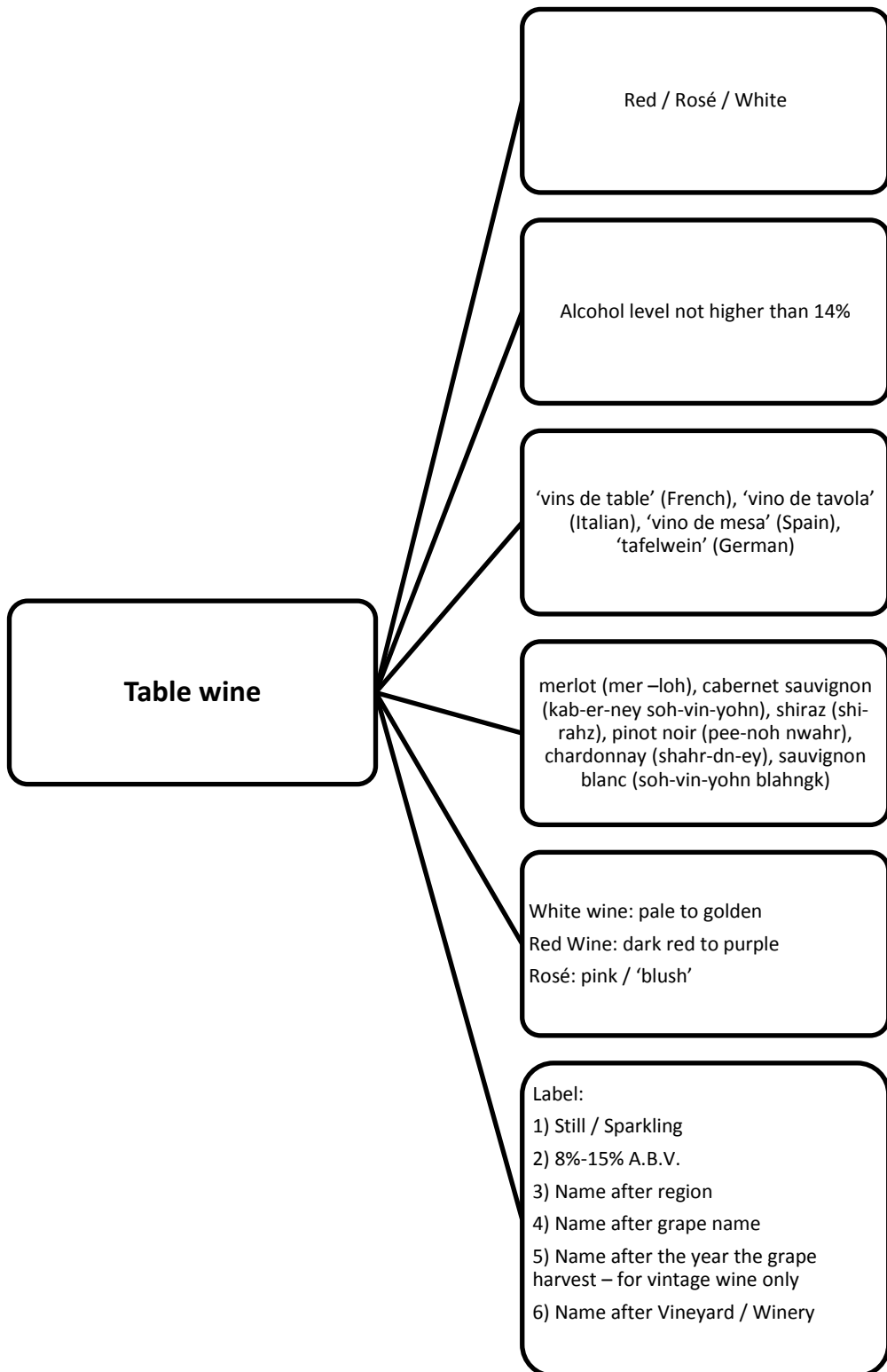


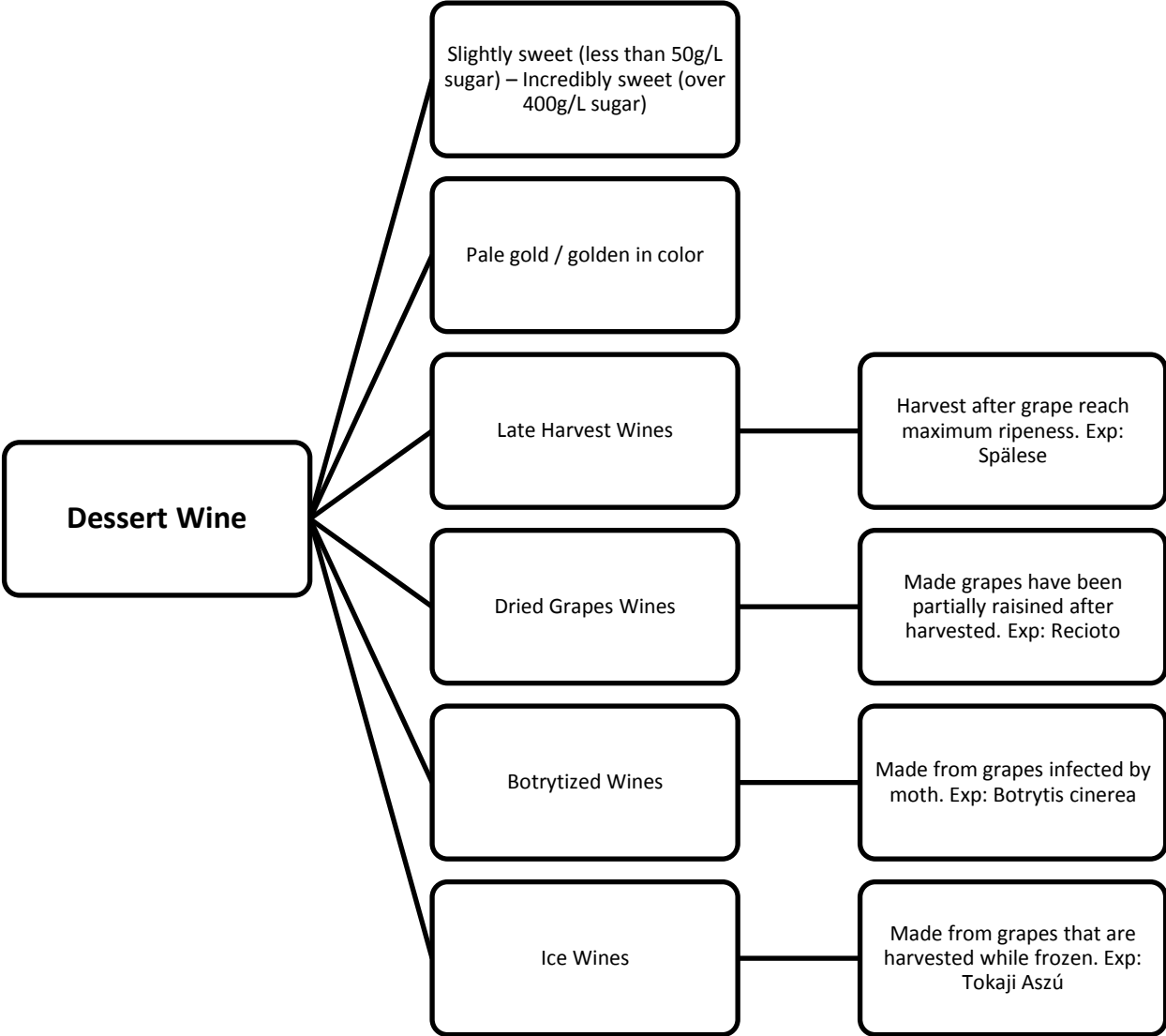
Fig. 8: Agave plant to produce tequila

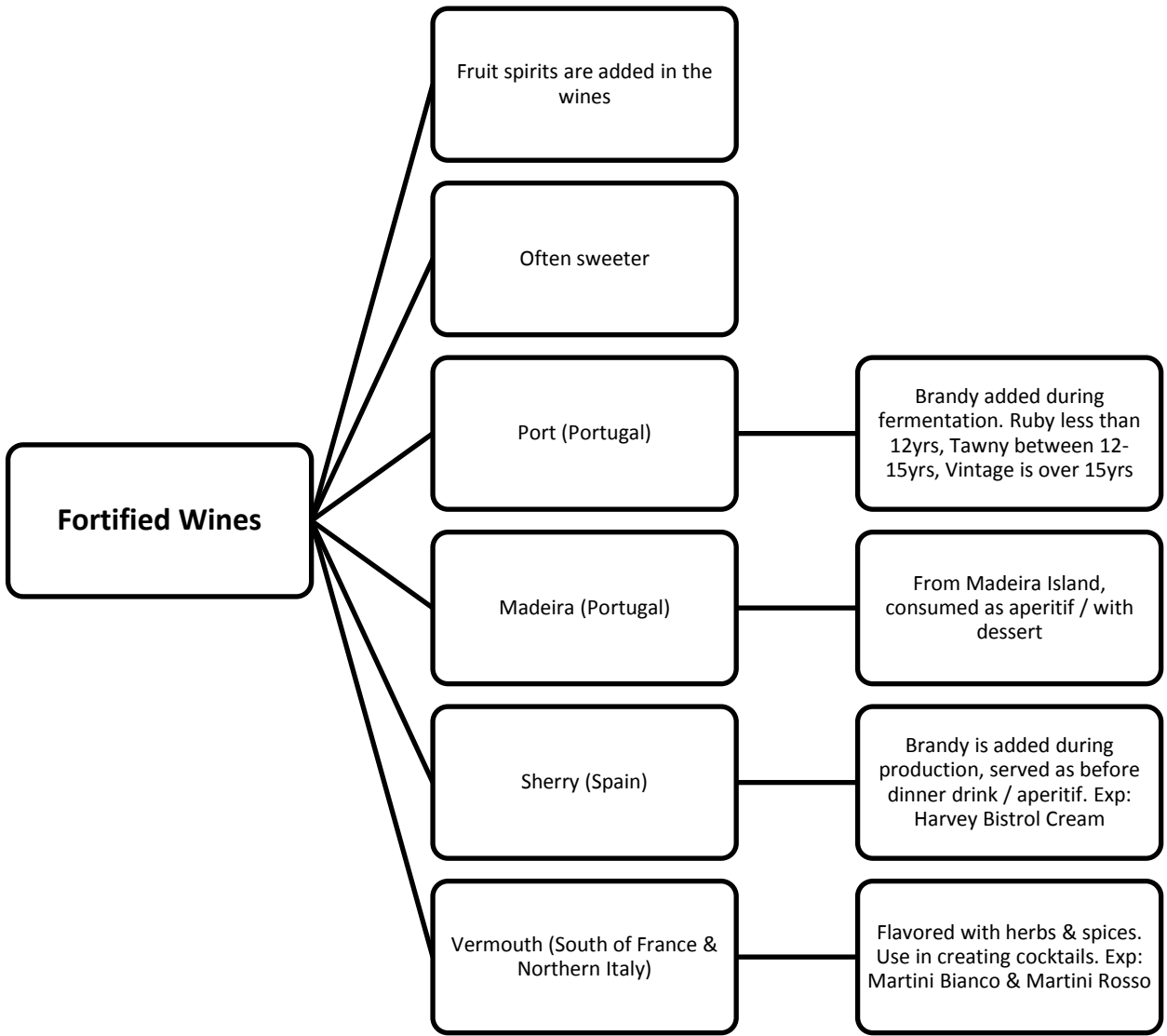












Other Wine Knowledge

Old World Wine: France, Germany, Italy

New World Wine: Australia, Spain, New Zealand, USA, Chile, South Africa, Argentina

Must: grape juice before fermentation

Fermentation: Is the conversion of sugar to alcohol through action of yeast

Tannin: tannin is derived from grape skins, pips & stalks, also from oak casks.

Sweetness: Dry, medium, sweet

Light Bodied: refreshing, Easy to drink

Medium Bodied: Richer, grape varieties / oak

Full Bodied: Powerful & concentrated, ripe grapes / oak

Oak: Buttery, Vanilla, Spice

Tannin: Grape skin, gum drying, red wine

Acidity: Refreshing, mouth watering

Type of Grape + Type of Barrel = Aroma of wines

Climate: Cold, mainly white, high in acidity, a refreshing flavor

Climate: Hot, mainly red, high in alcohol, rich in flavor

Black Grapes Varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Shiraz, Grenache

White Grapes Varieties: Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Semillon

Vintage Wine: Year of harvest printed on the wine label

Non-Vintage Wine: No printing of vintage year on the label

Rhine: German famous wine

Chianti: Italy famous wine

Zinfandel, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot: California (USA) famous wine

Bordeaux, Burgundy, Loire, Rhone: France famous wine region

Pinot Noir: New Zealand famous wine

Shiraz: Australia famous wine



Fig. 10: red wine glass



Fig. 11: white wine glass

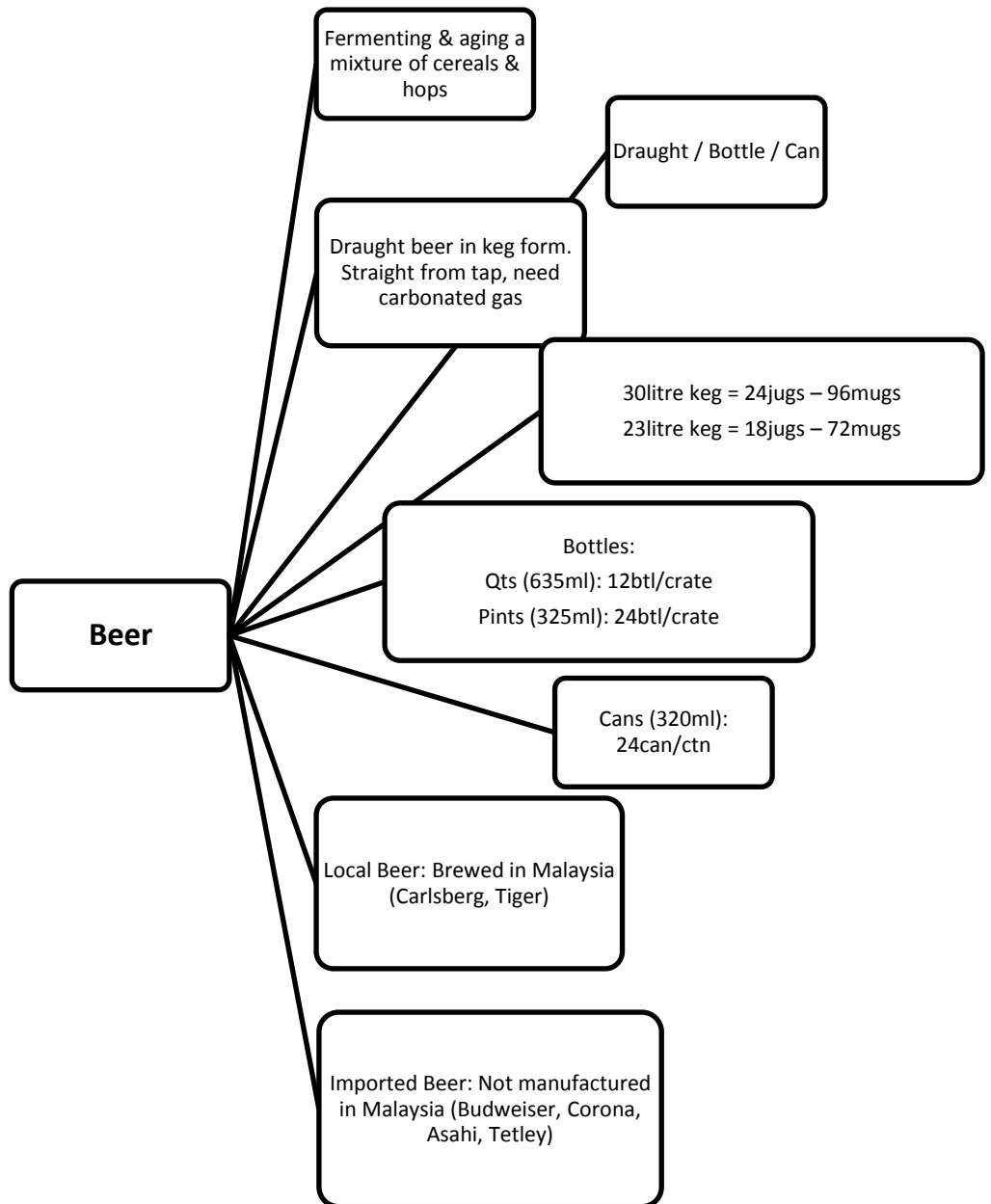


Fig. 9: Hops use as a flavoring & stability agent in beer