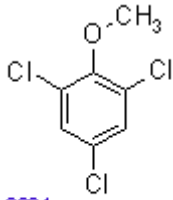


# VINCYCLOPEDIA

---



© 2001  
Andrew L. Waterhouse  
and UCD Students of  
Natural Products of Wine

**TCA** is the common abbreviation for the chemical compound *2,4,6-Trichloroanisole*. A wine infected with TCA is sometimes called "corked" or "corky", so TCA is often referred to as "cork taint", although there are many other possible sources besides corks for its presence in wine. Regardless of the source, it imparts a very unpleasant smell that, depending upon its severity, tends to dominate all other aroma characteristics of any wine it contaminates.

The characteristic smell of TCA can most accurately be described as "moldy" or "musty" or sometimes "medicinal". As with all aromas, individuals vary in their threshold ability to detect the presence and strength of TCA, as well as their tolerance for it; experience can increase sensitivity. The threshold for organoleptic sensitivity is generally considered to be above 5 nanograms per litre. The Australian Wine Research Institute conducted experiments in early 2003, that demonstrated even a low level of TCA contamination, as little as one or two nanograms per litre, suppresses positive fruit aroma character in wine by as much as 50%.

TCA is formed by a reaction between molds and chlorine. Molds may be originally present in raw cork bark or in wood used for barrels or other winery equipment or facilities, or can infect cork or wood in storage.