

## Tequila Chemistry

### That Tequila Smell

These compounds are most responsible for the smell of tequila when you put that shot to your lips:

#### Isovaleraldehyde

Smells like cocoa/chocolate

#### Isoamyl alcohol

Smells like whiskey

#### Vanillin

Smells like ice cream/cake

#### b-Damascenone

Smells like wood/sweet

### Methanol Makes It

Methanol separates the rough stuff from the quality spirits. Too much methanol can be lethal, but distillers say too little can make tequila taste awful. Unfortunately, it's also methanol that makes for wicked hangovers.

### Diamonds in the Shot Glass

If they wanted to, scientists could actually turn tequila into synthetic diamonds. Liquid tequila has just the right ratio of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. All you'd have to do is turn liquid tequila into a gas, and then heat the gas until its molecular structure breaks down into very small diamond crystals!

### Sources:

<http://arxiv.org/abs/0806.1485>

J. Agric. Food Chem. 1996, 44, 557-566,

Characterization of Tequila Flavor by Instrumental  
and Sensory Analysis, Scot M. Benn and Terry L. Peppard