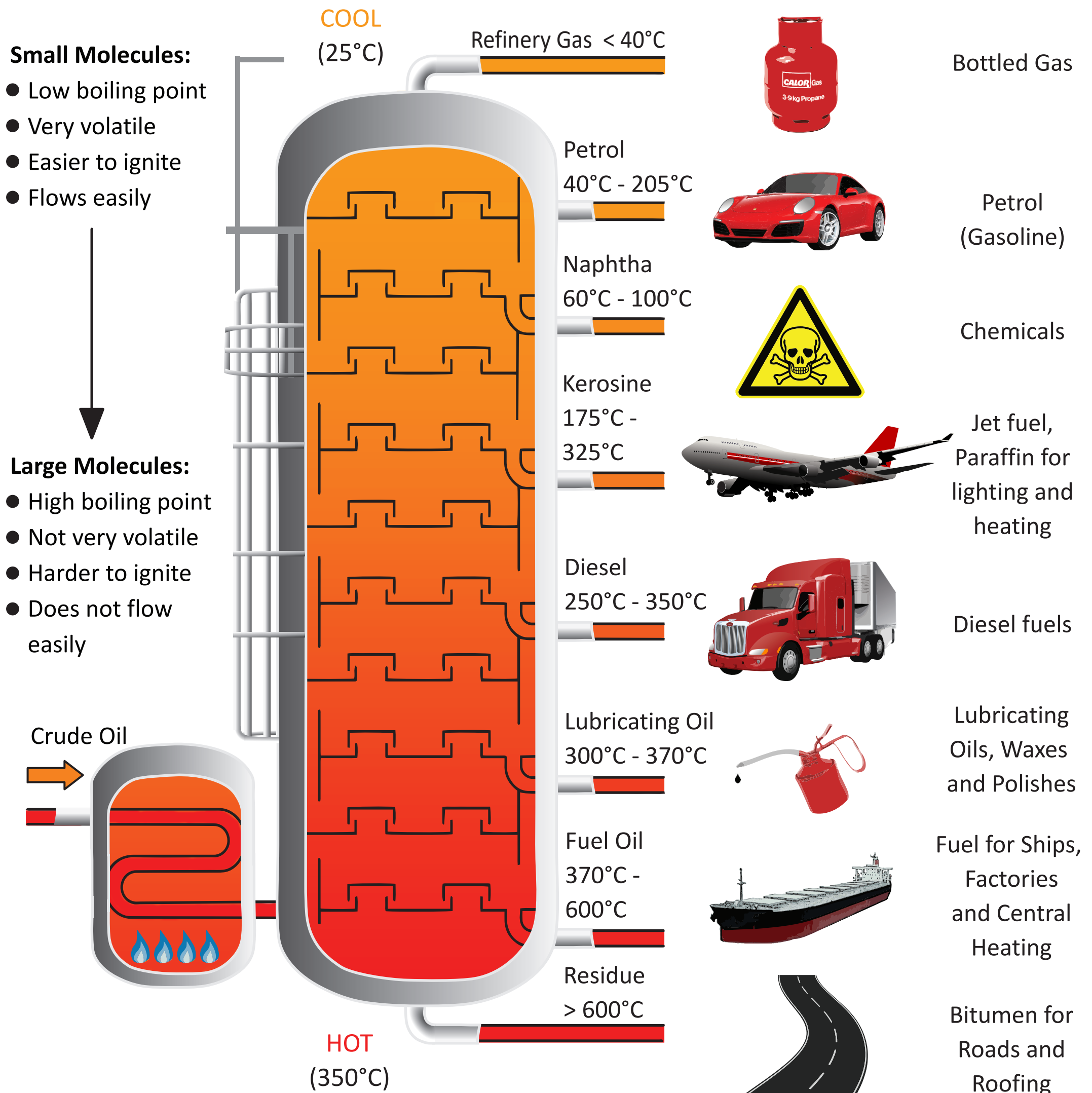


Fractional Distillation of Crude Oil

When crude oil reaches the refinery, it is heated until it evaporates. As the vapour (hydrocarbon gases) condense back into liquids, the column sorts the different fractions from each other and removes them from the sides of the column.

The larger hydrocarbons, with the high boiling points, turn back into liquids at the base of the column and the smaller hydrocarbons stay as gases. They rise up the column and condense at different levels. At the top of the column there are a number of hydrocarbons with low boiling points (between 20°C and 70°C) - these remain as gases.



Fractionating column

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