

= Oregon wine =

The state of Oregon in the United States has established an international reputation for its production of wine . Oregon has several different growing regions within the state 's borders that are well @-@ suited to the cultivation of grapes ; additional regions straddle the border between Oregon and the states of Washington and Idaho . Wine making dates back to pioneer times in the 1840s , with commercial production beginning in the 1960s .

American Viticultural Areas entirely within the state include the Willamette Valley , Southern Oregon , Umpqua Valley , and Rogue Valley AVAs . Parts of the Columbia Gorge , Walla Walla Valley , and Snake River Valley AVAs lie within Oregon . Pinot noir and Pinot gris are the top two grapes grown , with over 16 @,@ 000 tons ( 14 @,@ 515 metric tons ) harvested in 2005 . As of 2005 , Oregon wine makers produced over 1 @.@ 5 million cases combined .

With 679 wineries in Oregon , a tourism industry has developed around wine tasting . Much of the tourism focuses on the wineries and tasting rooms in and around the Yamhill Valley southwest of Portland . In 2004 , enotourism contributed an estimated USD \$ 92 million to the state economy , excluding winery and tasting room sales .

= = History = =

Wine has been produced in Oregon since the Oregon Territory was settled in the 1840s ; however , winemaking has only been a significant industry in the state since the 1960s . Grapes were first planted in the Oregon Territory in 1847 . Valley View , the first recorded winery , was established by Peter Britt in the late 1850s in Jacksonville . Throughout the 19th century , there was experimentation with various varieties by immigrants to the state . In 1904 , an Oregon winemaker won a prize at the St. Louis World 's Fair . Wine production stopped in the United States during Prohibition . As in other states , the Oregon wine industry lay dormant for thirty years after Prohibition was repealed .

The Oregon wine industry started to rebuild in the 1960s , when California winemakers opened several vineyards in the state . By 1970 , there were five commercial wineries , with 35 recorded acres ( 14 ha ) .

This included the planting of Pinot noir grapes in the Willamette Valley , a region long thought too cold to be suitable for viticulture . In the 1970s , more out @-@ of @-@ state winemakers migrated to the state and started to organize as an industry . The state 's land use laws had prevented rural hillsides from being turned into housing tracts , preserving a significant amount of land suitable for vineyards . In 1979 , Eyrie Vineyards entered a 1975 Pinot noir in the Wine Olympics ; the wine was rated among the top Pinots in the world , thus gaining the region its first international recognition .

The accolades continued into the 1980s , and the Oregon wine industry continued to add both wineries and vineyards . The state industry continued to market itself , establishing the first of several AVAs ( American Viticulture Areas ) in the state . The state also grew strong ties with the Burgundy region of France , as Oregon 's governor paid an official visit to Burgundy and a leading French winemaking family bought land in Dundee .

In the early 1990s , the wine industry was threatened by a Phylloxera infestation in the state , but winemakers quickly turned to the use of resistant rootstocks to prevent any serious damage . The state legislature enacted several new laws designed to promote winemaking and wine distribution . The state found a newfound focus on " green " winemaking , leading the global wine industry into more environmentally friendly practices . Several new AVAs were established . By 2005 , there were 314 wineries and 519 vineyards in operation in Oregon . By 2009 , the number of wineries in the state has increased to 453 and remains the 3rd largest wine producer in the country

= = Varieties of wine = =

Like other wines produced in the United States , Oregon wines are marketed as varieties . Oregon law requires that wines produced in the state must be identified by the grape variety from which it

was made , and for most varieties it must contain at least 90 % of that variety . The exceptions to the 90 % law are the following varieties : Red and White Bordeaux varieties , Red and White Rhône varieties , Sangiovese , Tempranillo , Zinfandel and Tannat . For these wines , they follow the Federal guidelines of 75 % . Oregon law has long forbidden use of place names , except as appellations of origin . Oregon is most famous for its Pinot noir , which is produced throughout the state . Pinot noirs from the Willamette Valley have received much critical acclaim from wine connoisseurs and critics , and Oregon is regarded as one of the premier Pinot @-@ producing regions in the world .

In 2005 , the top five varieties produced in Oregon were :

Pinot noir 7 @, @ 974 acres ( 3 @, @ 227 ha ) , 12 @, @ 086 short tons ( 10 @, @ 964 t )

Pinot gris 1 @, @ 184 acres ( 479 ha ) , 4 @, @ 317 short tons ( 3 @, @ 916 t )

Chardonnay 842 acres ( 341 ha ) , 1 @, @ 568 short tons ( 1 @, @ 422 t )

Merlot 550 acres ( 220 ha ) , 675 short tons ( 612 t )

Riesling 524 acres ( 212 ha ) , 1 @, @ 000 short tons ( 907 t )

Other varieties with significant production in Oregon include Cabernet Sauvignon , Gewürztraminer , Müller @-@ Thurgau , Pinot blanc , Sauvignon blanc , Sémillon , and Syrah . V. vinifera based wines produced in smaller quantities include Arneis , Baco noir , Cabernet franc , Chenin blanc , Dolcetto , Gamay noir , Grenache , Marechal Foch , Malbec , Muscat , Nebbiolo , Petite Syrah , Sangiovese , Tempranillo , Viognier , and Zinfandel . The state also produces sparkling wine , late harvest wine , ice wine , and dessert wine .

= = Facts and figures = =

As of the 2005 wine growing season , the state of Oregon has 303 bonded wineries , 384 wine brands , and 734 vineyards growing Vitis vinifera , composing a total of 14 @, @ 100 acres ( 57 km<sup>2</sup> ) of which 11 @, @ 800 acres ( 48 km<sup>2</sup> ) were harvested in 2005 . Out of all US wine growing regions , Oregon ranked third in number of wineries and fourth in production . Nearly 1 @. @ 6 million cases of Oregon wine were sold in 2005 . The retail value of these cases was \$ 184 @. @ 7 million , a 24 % increase over the previous vintage .

The industry has had a significant economic impact on the state . The industry contributed a total of US \$ 1 @. @ 4 billion to the Oregon economy . Of that figure , over US \$ 800 million is directly provided by wineries and vineyards via sales , wages , and spending . It is estimated that the industry contributed 8 @, @ 479 wine @-@ related jobs and US \$ 203 million in wages . Exports to other states in 2004 were US \$ 64 @. @ 1 million .

Oregon produces wine on a much smaller scale than the California wine industry . Oregon 's leading producer , King Estate , ships only 175 @, @ 000 cases per year and most produce under 35 @, @ 000 cases . The state features many small wineries that produce less than 5 @, @ 000 cases per year . In contrast , E & J Gallo Winery , the United States ' largest winery , produced 65 million cases of wine in 2002 . The majority of wineries in the state operate their own vineyards , although some purchase grapes on the market . Oregon contains a significant number of independent vineyards .

The Oregon wine industry focuses on the higher @-@ priced segments of the wine market . Oregon growers receive a higher average return per ton and a higher average revenue per case than do growers in other wine @-@ producing regions in the United States . Despite producing a much smaller volume of wine , Oregon winery revenues per capita are comparable to those of New York and Washington .

= = Major wine @-@ producing regions = =

There are , loosely speaking , three main wine producing regions with a major presence in the state of Oregon , as defined by non @-@ overlapping American Viticultural Areas . Two of them ? the Willamette Valley AVA and the Southern Oregon AVA ? are wholly contained within Oregon ; a third , the Columbia Gorge AVA straddles the Columbia River and includes territory in both Oregon and

Washington ; however , this AVA is considered to be an Oregon AVA . Portions of the Walla Walla Valley AVA , an area primarily in Washington ( along with the Columbia Valley AVA , which contains it ) , descend into Oregon in the Milton @-@ Freewater area . The Southern Oregon AVA was recently created as the union of two Southern Oregon winegrowing regions long considered distinct , the Rogue Valley and the Umpqua Valley . Several other smaller AVAs are found within some of these larger regions . The Snake River Valley AVA , which straddles Oregon 's border with Idaho along the Snake River , is the first AVA to include a part of Eastern Oregon .

= = = Willamette Valley = = =

The Willamette Valley AVA is the wine growing region that encompasses the Willamette Valley . It stretches from the Columbia River in the north to just south of Eugene in the south , where the Willamette Valley ends ; and from the Oregon Coast Range in the West to the Cascade Mountains in the East . At 5 @,@ 200 square miles ( 13 @,@ 500 km<sup>2</sup> ) , it is the largest AVA in the state , and contains most of the state 's wineries ; approximately 200 as of 2006 .

The climate of Willamette Valley is mild year @-@ round , with cool , wet winters and warm , dry summers ; extreme temperatures are uncommon . Most rainfall occurs outside the growing season and the valley gets relatively little snow . Not all parts of the Valley are suitable for viticulture , and most wineries and vineyards are found west of the Willamette River , with the largest concentration in Yamhill County .

The region is best known for its Pinot noir , and also produces large amounts of Pinot gris , Riesling , and Chardonnay . The region also produces Cabernet Sauvignon , Gewürztraminer , Müller @-@ Thurgau , Sémillon , and Zinfandel grapes , but in far smaller quantities .

The region is divided into six subordinate AVAs : Chehalem Mountains AVA , Dundee Hills AVA , Eola @-@ Amity Hills AVA , McMinnville AVA , Ribbon Ridge AVA , and the Yamhill @-@ Carlton District AVA . In addition , many wine connoisseurs further divide the Willamette Valley into northern and southern regions approximately at the latitude of Salem .

= = = Southern Oregon = = =

The Southern Oregon AVA is an AVA formed as the union of two existing AVAs ? the Rogue Valley AVA and the Umpqua Valley AVA . ( A small strip of connecting territory is included in the Southern Oregon AVA to make it a contiguous region ; however , this strip passes through mountainous regions not suitable for vineyards . ) This AVA was established in 2004 to allow the two principal regions in Southern Oregon to jointly market themselves . As the Rogue Valley and Umpqua Valley regions produce different grapes and different varieties , they are examined separately .

= = = = Umpqua Valley AVA = = = =

The Umpqua Valley AVA contains the drainage basin of the Umpqua River , excluding mountainous regions . The Umpqua Valley has a warmer climate than the Willamette Valley , but is cooler than the Rogue Valley to the south . It is the oldest post @-@ prohibition wine region in Oregon . Grapes grown here include Tempranillo , Baco noir , Pinot noir , Pinot gris , Cabernet Sauvignon , Chardonnay , and Riesling , Grüner Veltliner , and a host of lesser known Vitis vinifera . The region includes two sub @-@ AVAs , the Red Hill Douglas County , Oregon AVA , a single vineyard AVA , as well as the Elkton , Oregon AVA , which was established in early 2013 .

= = = = Rogue Valley AVA = = = =

The Rogue Valley AVA includes the drainage basin of the Rogue River and several tributaries , including the Illinois River , the Applegate River , and Bear Creek . Most wineries in the region are found along one of these three tributaries , rather than along the Rogue River itself . The region is 70 miles ( 110 km ) wide by 60 miles ( 100 km ) long ( although much of the land within the AVA is

not suitable for grape cultivation ) ; there are currently 32 wineries with only 1 @, @ 100 acres ( 4 km<sup>2</sup> ) planted . The three valleys differ greatly in terroir , with the easternmost Bear Creek valley being warmest and driest , and the westernmost Illinois River valley being coolest and wettest . Each river valley has a unique climate and grows different varieties of grapes . Overall , however , this region is the warmest and driest of Oregon 's wine @-@ growing regions . The region has one sub @-@ AVA , the Applegate Valley AVA .

= = = Columbia Gorge = = =

The Columbia Gorge AVA is found in the Columbia Gorge . This region straddles the Columbia River , and thus lies in both Oregon and Washington ; it is made up of Hood River and Wasco counties in Oregon , and Skamania and Klickitat counties in Washington . The region lies to the east of the summits of nearby Mount Hood and Mount Adams , situated in their rain shadows ; thus , the region is significantly drier than the Willamette Valley . It also exhibits significant differences in elevation due to gorge geography , and strong winds common in the area also play a factor in the region 's climate . This allows a wide variety of grapes to be grown in the Columbia Gorge . The region has nearly 40 vineyards , growing a wide variety of grapes , including Syrah , Pinot noir , Chardonnay , Gewürztraminer , Zinfandel , Cabernet Sauvignon , Pinot gris , Riesling , and Sangiovese .

= = = Walla Walla Valley = = =

Portions of northeastern Oregon ( in the vicinity of Milton @-@ Freewater ) are part of the Walla Walla Valley AVA , which was established in 1984 . This appellation , which is part of the Columbia Valley AVA , lies primarily within Washington state . This region has nearly 100 wineries and 1 @, @ 200 acres ( 5 km<sup>2</sup> ) planted . Wines grown in the valley include Syrah , Merlot , and Cabernet Sauvignon , as well as Sangiovese and a few exotic varietals including Cunoise , Carmenère , Mourvèdre , Cabernet Franc , Nebbiolo and Barbera .

A new AVA , The Rocks District of Milton ? Freewater , was established in 2015 .

= = = Snake River Valley = = =

A new viticultural area along the Snake River was established on April 9 , 2007 . Principally located in Idaho , the area also encompasses two large counties in Eastern Oregon , Baker County and Malheur County . The region 's climate is unique among AVAs in Oregon ; the average temperature is relatively cool and rainfall is low , creating a shorter growing season . Current production is led by hardy grapes such as Riesling , Gewürztraminer , and Chardonnay . The climate also lends itself extremely well to the production of ice wine . However , the AVA is quite large and warmer microclimates within the area can also support different types of grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot .

= = = Yamhill County = = =

= = Enotourism = =

With the continuing improvement in the region 's winemaking reputation , enotourism in Oregon has become a significant industry in its own right . On @-@ site sales are becoming an increasingly important part of the business of Oregon winemaking , and other businesses that cater to wine tourists , such as lodging , fine restaurants , art gallerys , have been appearing in places like Dundee , many of which have long been rural farming communities . Wine festivals and tastings are commonplace . It is estimated that enotourism contributed USD \$ 92 million to the state economy in 2004 , excluding sales at wineries and tasting rooms . There are approximately 1 @. @ 48 million

visits to Oregon wineries each year , 49 % by Oregonians and 51 % from out of state visitors . Major events drawing significant numbers of tourists to wine country include the International Pinot Noir Celebration and the Oregon Pinot Camp .

Facilities for wine tourists in Oregon are considered underdeveloped compared to wine regions in California , especially premium growing regions like the Napa Valley AVA . Only 5 % of overnight leisure trips in the state involve visits to wineries , a much smaller figure than comparable Californian growing regions , which range from 10 % to 25 % . Oregon lacks many accommodations found in wine growing regions in other states such as luxury hotels , resorts , and other attractions suitable for well @-@ heeled tourists . As of August 2006 , a resort hotel is being planned in Dundee , which would be located near notable wineries such as Domaine Drouhin Oregon . A local developer and businessman has proposed construction of a 50 @-@ room hotel , spa and restaurant in the Dundee Hills region , but has met with opposition from many notable vintners , including David Lett , who fear that such a development would dramatically alter the landscape of the region . Concern has also been raised by vintners that the proposed site is on prime growing land that should be used for wine production rather than a resort hotel .

The increase in winery @-@ related tourism , as well as the presence of a casino in the Willamette Valley , has greatly impacted the region 's transportation infrastructure . Oregon Route 99W , the highway running through the heart of Willamette Valley wine country ( and which is the main street in towns such as Newberg and Dundee ) , is plagued with frequent traffic jams . Plans to construct a freeway bypass around Newberg and Dundee ( avoiding the prime growing areas in the hills ) are in motion , but are highly controversial . Currently , construction of the highway project is unfunded , and the Oregon Department of Transportation has proposed making the new bypass a toll road , highly unusual for Oregon . Tolls have also been proposed on the existing route of OR 99W , in addition to the new bypass . This proposal has proven to be highly controversial , with many local residents opposing the plan , primarily due to potential negative effects on businesses located on 99W and a general aversion to tolling existing roads .

= = Recognition = =

= = = Recognition for quality = = =

Oregon wines have won several major awards , and / or been praised by notable wine critics . In 1904 , Forest Grove winemaker Ernest Reuter won a silver medal at the St. Louis World 's Fair . In 1979 , Eyrie Vineyards ' 1975 South Block Pinot noir placed in the top 10 of Burgundy @-@ style wines at the Gault @-@ Millau French Wine Olympiades , and was rated the top Pinot noir . In a rematch , however , the Eyrie finished second to a French wine . Two gold medals in the International Wine Competition in London in 1982 . A Yamhill Valley Vineyards 1983 Pinot noir was the first place preference at the 1985 Oregon Pinot noir / French Burgundy Challenge at the International Wine Center in New York City .

= = = Other recognition = = =

In 2006 , seven Oregon wines made Wine Spectator 's annual Top 100 Wines list . Producers on the list included : Shea , Argyle , Archery Summit , Lemelson , Ken Wright , Elk Cove , and Benton Lane .

Oregon wines have continued to appear on Wine Spectator 's annual Top 100 Wines list . For example , the 2009 list included the King Estate 2008 Signature Pinot gris and the 1999 Argyle Extended Tirage . The 2011 list had 2009 Pinot noirs from Sineann and Rex Hill wineries .

= = Notable wineries and vineyards = =

This is a list of notable operating and defunct wineries and vineyards in the state of Oregon in the

United States , including those in the Southern Oregon AVA and Willamette Valley AVA . Included are wineries and vineyards owned or operated by larger wineries not based in Oregon .