

"Canada is on the verge of breaking out  
big time on the world wine map."

- Ian D'Agata

Contributing Editor, Decanter  
Wine Columnist, Vinous





## WINES OF CANADA

Canada's wine regions are primarily located between 41° and 50° North, similar to many acclaimed wine regions in the world. Each distinct wine region has its own unique mesoclimate, soil ecology and topography, where vineyards thrive in soils rich in glacial deposits, benefiting from the moderating effects of nearby bodies of water. Canadian winemakers embrace and celebrate this regional diversity, striving to express the best qualities of their appellation in each bottle. Pride of place and attention to detail is evident throughout the country's wineries, showing why Canada's cool climate wines are amongst the best in the world. ■

## ■ O'CANADA

Canada is a New World wine producer, but our grape wine history is centuries old. In fact, the planting of grapevines and winemaking in Canada dates back to the 1600s in Nova Scotia, one of the first areas to cultivate grapes in North America.

Canada's modern wine history is about 40 years old, and although small in scale by world standards, wine is a growing business in Canada with wineries sprouting up wherever soil and climate permit the growing of productive vines. Grape wines are predominantly being produced in four provinces in the primary wine-growing regions of the Niagara Peninsula in Southern Ontario and the Okanagan Valley in Southern British Columbia, along with smaller producing areas found in Québec and Nova Scotia. Canada's wine growing regions are comprised of approximately 30,000 acres (12,140 Hectares) and 671 wineries, with British Columbia and Ontario accounting for 98% of Canada's premium wine production.

While perhaps best known internationally for its icewine, Canada is home to a complete range of premium wines, including red, white and rosé table wines, sparkling wine, dessert and fortified wines. ■



## GROWING DEGREE DAYS

Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia	■ 1,000
Eastern Townships, Québec	■ 1,120
Epernay, France (Champagne)	■ 1,050
Geisenheim, Germany	■ 1,050
Kelowna, British Columbia	■ 1,155
Montérégie, Québec	■ 1,190
Prince Edward County, Ontario	■ 1,250
Beaune, France (Burgundy)	■ 1,315
Napa, California	■ 1,450
Niagara Peninsula, Ontario	■ 1,500
Osoyoos, British Columbia	■ 1,535

## PRECIPITATION

Average annual rainfall varies widely across the country, from a low of 295 mm in Central Okanagan, British Columbia, to 746 mm in Ontario's Niagara Peninsula, to 1,100 mm in Southern Québec and 1,215 mm in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley.

## BEYOND COOL

Canada is categorized as a 'cool climate' region, providing ideal growing conditions where grapes ripen slowly and uniformly, combining a fine balance between natural sugar and acidity levels, resulting in highly aromatic wines with lively, concentrated flavours. Canada's cool nights and hot summer days (where temperatures can often exceed 30°C), allow for the perfect ripening of grapes in its wine growing regions. ▀



## ▀ VQA: TASTE THE PLACE

Viticulture in Canada proudly reflects its origin, resulting in distinct wines that provide a sense of place. Similar to France's AOC and Italy's DOC, the Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) system has been established in the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia to designate Viticultural Areas, regional appellations and sub-appellations, as well as to evaluate eligible wines.

VQA Ontario and the British Columbia Wine Authority are the provincial governments' official regulators, authorized to respectively oversee and enforce Ontario's VQA and British Columbia's BC VQA regulations and standards. Laboratory testing and tasting by an independent expert panel, as well as comprehensive label reviews, ensure precise adherence to rigorous winemaking standards and label integrity. Wines that are approved by the regulating authority must clearly state the appellation of origin on the label, providing consumer assurance of a wine's origin, as well as quality production, varietal content and vintage date. ▀

### WHAT'S IN THE BOTTLE?

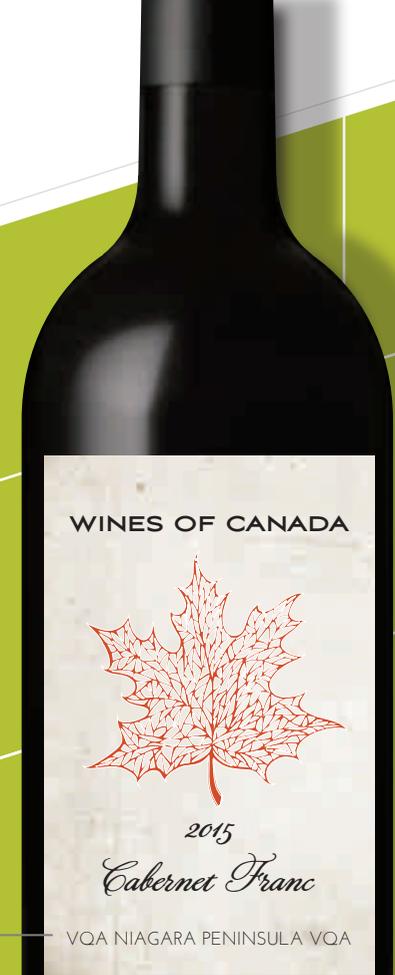
Look for the appellation on the label of approved wines:

Ontario VQA wine labels: "VQA <APPELLATION> VQA"

British Columbia VQA wine label: "BC VQA <APPELLATION>"

VQA NIAGARA PENINSULA VQA

BC VQA OKANAGAN VALLEY



## ■ CANADIAN WINE TOURISM

Wine tourism is a growing and important part of Canada's tourism industry, attracting 3 million annual visitors. Canadian wine regions are considered world-class for their exquisite wines, hospitality and natural beauty, and cater to both national and international visitors. With Canada's award-winning wines, local cuisine and beautiful geographical landscapes, travellers are able to find high quality authentic experiences in all wine regions across the country.

To support the growth of wine tourism across Canada's major wine regions, **Wine411.ca**, a national online winery directory was launched in 2015. Provincial resources also provide excellent trip-planning tools, including the Wines of British Columbia's Trip Planner and Wine Country Ontario's Travel Guide, Map and Mobile App. ■

Explore Canadian Wineries

**WINE411.ca**

## ■ SUSTAINABILITY

The Canadian wine industry is proud of its leadership in sustainable practices, driven to continuously improve the quality of wine growing and winemaking in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. While each winery is unique, all Canadian wineries and vineyards are proud of their environmental practices, from certified biodynamic and organic vineyards, to LEED-certified winery facilities, to habitat protection for threatened species. Additionally, sustainability extends to employees and the greater community, providing safe and fair work environments, and generous support for local charities and causes. ■



## ICEWINE

Canada is renowned for its premium Icewine, where winter's freezing temperatures concentrate the sugar, acid and berry extracts in the grape, resulting in sweet concentrated flavours, and smooth, elegant wines.

Canada is the leading global producer of Icewine, with an average annual production of one million litres produced across the country, primarily from Vidal, Riesling and Cabernet Franc grapes. First commercially produced in 1978 at Hainle Vineyards Estate Winery in British Columbia, it was Ontario's Inniskillin winery that brought international attention to Canada's Icewine, winning the coveted Prix d'honneur at Vinexpo in Bordeaux in 1991. Canadian winemakers continue to excel in producing Icewine with highly concentrated flavours, which have consistently been awarded gold medals from the most prestigious international wine competitions.

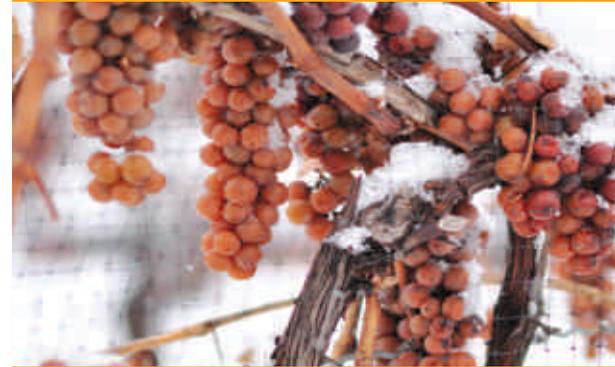


The higher prices commanded by Icewine reflect the precarious nature of its production, as the fruit left on the vine after the normal fall harvest is vulnerable to rot, harsh winds, hail and hungry birds and animals. The yield from Icewine grapes is also much lower than with table wines; a mere 10-15% of an average table wine harvest.

Icewine should be chilled in an ice bucket for 15 minutes or refrigerated for two hours before serving in a white wine glass. It can be sipped and appreciated on its own, as a dessert or with savoury or spicy food. Icewine also makes a great addition to sparkling wine or cocktails. Once opened, re-sealed Icewine will keep in the refrigerator for several weeks. ■

## ICEWINE REGULATIONS

In 2014, a Canadian government standard requiring Icewine to be made exclusively from grapes naturally frozen on the vine was passed into federal law. This standard is consistent with international standards, requiring authentic Icewine grapes be harvested while the air temperature is  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$  or lower with the frozen grapes immediately pressed after picking in a continuous process.



## ■ SPARKLING WINES

While there is a range of production styles, the best known Canadian sparkling wines are made in the Traditional Method, spending one to four years on their lees before disgorging. Méthode Cuve Close (Charmat) is also used by the country's winemakers.

Most sparkling wines are made from the traditional Champagne grape varieties Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, with some Pinot Meunier. Riesling, Gamay Noir and other varieties can also be found in the production of Canadian sparkling wine. Grapes for sparkling wine are most commonly hand-picked, optimizing sugar levels, while enhancing the naturally-occurring high acidity, resulting in a strong aromatic concentration in the wine.

Compared to international styles, BC Sparkling wines generally fall somewhere in between the austere and lees flavoured wines of Champagne and the riper, fruitier Traditional Method sparkling wines of Cava in Spain or those of California or Australia.

Bubbly is rapidly rising to the top as a key strength of Ontario winemaking. A cool climate and limestone-based soils, plus Ontario's proficiency with the Champagne grapes - Chardonnay and Pinot Noir - add up to exactly the right recipe for fine aged sparkling made in the Traditional Method. Those looking for fresh and fruity Charmat method sparkling will find them made with Ontario's high acid aromatic grapes like Riesling and Sauvignon Blanc.

Nova Scotia's sparkling wines are influenced by cool, ever present, ocean breezes and powerful, year-round tidal shifts, resulting in distinctive Traditional Method sparkling wines. Remarkably similar to Champagne, Nova Scotia's climate offers two further growing advantages - naturally low crop levels and an elongated growing season, ensuring sparklings of great distinction and longevity.

*"Canadian sparkling wine was a revelation."*

- Oz Clarke,  
wine writer





BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver

ONTARIO

QUÉBEC

Montreal

Toronto

NOVA SCOTIA

Halifax

■ CANADIAN WINE REGIONS



## ■ BRITISH COLUMBIA

- 48° - 51°N, Acres: 10,260 (4,152 Hectares)
- 260 wineries
- Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah



## ■ ONTARIO

- 41° - 44°N, Acres 17,000 (6,900 Hectares)
- 164 VQA wineries
- Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir, Gamay Noir



## ■ QUÉBEC

- 45° - 47°N, Acres 2,000 (808 Hectares)
- 138 wineries
- Riesling, Chardonnay, Vidal, Seyval, Cabernet Franc, Frontenac, Pinot Noir and Gamay Noir



## ■ NOVA SCOTIA

- 44° - 46°N, Acres 800 (323 Hectares)
- 20 wineries
- Chardonnay, Vidal, L'Acadie Blanc, Pinot Noir, Baco Noir and Marechal Foch

## ■ KEY NUMBERS



## VANCOUVER ISLAND

Acres: 390 / Wineries: 36  
Varieties: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Ortega & Marechal Foch

## GULF ISLANDS

Acres: 95 / Wineries: 13  
Varieties: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Ortega & Marechal Foch

## FRASER VALLEY

Acres: 200 / Wineries: 17  
Varieties: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris & Siegerrebe

## SIMILKAMEEN VALLEY

Acres: 657 / Wineries: 16  
Varieties: Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon/Franc & Chardonnay

## OKANAGAN VALLEY

Acres: 8,619 / Wineries: 165  
Varieties: Merlot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling & Syrah

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Though the first vines were planted in British Columbia by Father Charles Pandosy in 1859, the stage for BC to become a premium winemaking region was set thousands of years earlier when a series of significant geographical events—primarily glacial deposits and erosion—led to the diverse bedrock, landforms and soils that make this wine region so unique.

There are five Viticultural Areas in the province: Vancouver Island, Gulf Islands, Fraser Valley, Similkameen Valley and the Okanagan Valley. Boasting nearly 82% of the total vineyard acreage in the province with 8,619 acres planted, the Okanagan Valley is BC's premier grape growing region. An ever-changing panorama, the Valley stretches over 250 kilometers across numerous sub-regions, each with different soil and climate conditions suited to a growing range of varieties. Cooler climate varieties like Riesling, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir thrive in the North Okanagan, while the South Okanagan provides ideal conditions for ripening Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Syrah/Shiraz. The Okanagan Valley is also home to British Columbia's first sub-appellation, the Golden Mile Bench where 791 acres of vineyards are sited on an alluvial fan that was deposited during the last glacial episode.

Although the modern winemaking industry is still young by world standards, the growth of the wine industry in British Columbia has been exponential over the past 25 years. In 1990 there were just 17 wineries in British Columbia; today, there are over 260 wineries, welcoming 800,000 winery visitors each year. ■





*"For me, wine is the three P's: the place, the people and the product. British Columbia ticks all three boxes with exuberance, elegance and conviction."*

- Steven Spurrier,  
wine writer



## NIAGARA PENINSULA

Acres: 14,600

Wineries: 93

Varieties: Riesling,  
Chardonnay,  
Cabernet Franc, Pinot Noir  
& Gamay Noir

## LAKE ERIE NORTH SHORE

Acres: 1,100

Wineries: 15

Varieties: Merlot,  
Cabernet Franc  
& Cabernet Sauvignon

## PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

Acres: 800

Wineries: 30

Varieties: Pinot Noir,  
Chardonnay, Pinot Gris  
& Cabernet Franc

## ■ ONTARIO

Neither old world nor new, Ontario's globally acclaimed wines are founded on its unique glacial soils and growing season. Ontario can trace its wine roots back to the early 1800s, where its topography, soil structure and climate were recognized for its potential to become a fine wine zone. Situated between 41° and 44° North, Ontario's wine growing areas benefit from the same latitude as Northern Italy and many other cool climate wine regions of Europe. Wine regions in the province further benefit from proximity to three of the five Great Lakes of North America, which moderate the extremes of the region's continental climate.

There are three Viticultural Areas in the province: Lake Erie North Shore, Niagara Peninsula and Prince Edward County. The Niagara Peninsula has the largest planted area of all viticultural areas in Canada with 14,600 acres, characterized by rich, fertile soils and unique mesoclimates. The Niagara Peninsula has two regional appellations and 10 sub-appellations, established in 2005, offering unique terroir conditions. The Niagara Escarpment is a combination of the smaller appellations of Short Hills Bench, Twenty Mile Bench and Beamsville Bench. Niagara-on-the-Lake is made up of Niagara River, Niagara Lakeshore, Four Mile Creek and St. David's Bench. The remaining three sub-appellations are Creek Shores, Lincoln Lakeshore and Vinemount Ridge. In 2015, the South Islands were identified as the first sub-appellation of Lake Erie North Shore.



Since the 1970s, Ontario has grown steadily in acreage and wineries, earning international accolades for its fine wines. Today, there are 164 VQA wineries, which welcome more than 2 million winery visitors each year. ■



*"Ontario wines are the epitome of cool climate, which puts them right on the cutting edge. I'm anxious to taste the latest, as quality keeps surging, seemingly with every new vintage."*

- Matt Kramer,  
Contributing Editor, Wine  
Spectator Magazine



## QUÉBEC

Acres: 2,000

Wineries: 138

Varieties: Riesling,  
Chardonnay, Vidal,  
Seyval, Cabernet Franc,  
Frontenac, Pinot Noir  
& Gamay Noir

## ■ QUÉBEC

With over 800 hectares of vine, Québec's wine industry is an emerging success story in Canada. Grapes have been cultivated in the province for centuries, but it's only in the past two decades that the wine industry has really taken off. Québec's cool-and at times severe climate-poses a challenge to viticulturalists, but has not prevented the industry from thriving.

The province has five main growing areas: Eastern Townships, Montérégie, Ouest-du-Québec, Est-du-Québec and Centre-du-Québec. Due to the severe winters, Québec grape growers have focused on cold hardy hybrids suitable to the climate, although plantings of vinifera are increasing.

Québec wineries welcome over 200,000 visitors annually, evidence of the strong wine and culinary culture of *la belle province*. ■

## ■ NOVA SCOTIA

Nova Scotia's soil and mesoclimates produce some of the most distinctive premium-quality grapes in the world in this unique maritime growing region. The small cool climate region is making its mark specializing in traditional method sparkling wine and a crisp, aromatic white blend, known as Tidal Bay. The Tidal Bay designation ensures that all wines must be made from specific 100% Nova Scotia grown grape varieties, following a strict set of standards and annually approved by an independent blind tasting panel.

The province has six main growing areas: Avon River Valley, Malagash Peninsula, LaHave River Valley, Bear River Valley and the Annapolis Valley. The latter is the largest region and includes the Gaspereau Valley, a small offshoot at the eastern end of the Annapolis Valley set between two parallel mountain ranges along the shore of the Bay of Fundy.

The Canadian Maritimes are famous for their generous hospitality and Nova Scotia's wineries are shining examples of this, proudly welcoming over 100,000 visitors annually. ■

## NOVA SCOTIA

Acres: 800

Wineries: 20

Varieties: Chardonnay, Vidal,  
L'Acadie Blanc, Pinot Noir,  
Baco Noir & Marechal Foch



*"The wine industry in Québec is exploding!"*

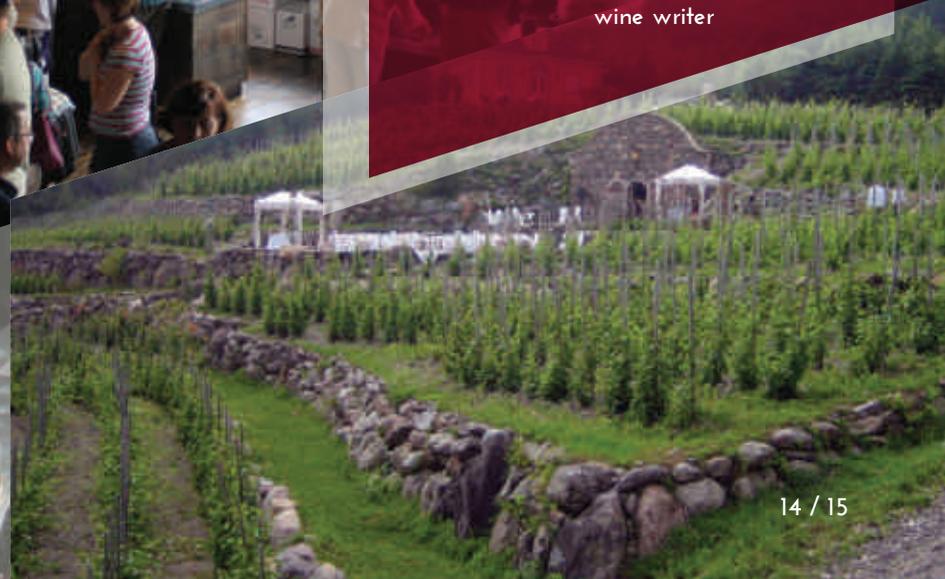
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- Jessica Harnois,  
Sommelière and President  
of Vins au Féminin

*"We are embarking  
on the Golden Age of  
Nova Scotia wine."*

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- Tony Aspler,  
wine writer



## LEARN MORE

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

The British Columbia Wine Institute (BCWI) represents all wineries in British Columbia. It actively promotes the Wines of British Columbia nationally and internationally, giving guests the chance to discover their world class wines and beautiful wine regions year-round for a one-of-a-kind winery experience.

[winebc.com](http://winebc.com)  
[winebc.org](http://winebc.org)



### ONTARIO

The Wine Marketing Association of Ontario (WMAO) is dedicated to promoting and marketing the VQA Wines of Ontario and Ontario's wine-growing regions—from the wines and wineries themselves, to the complete experience of each destination: local cuisine, year-round activities and warm hospitality.

[winecountryontario.ca](http://winecountryontario.ca)



Wine  
Country  
Ontario™

### QUÉBEC

Vignerons indépendants du Québec (VIQ) was formed in 2006 by a group of winegrowers and winemakers to bring together the producers of the regions of Québec and promote the sharing of expertise.

[viquebec.com](http://viquebec.com)



### NOVA SCOTIA

The Winery Association of Nova Scotia (WANS) was formed in 2002 and works to build awareness of Nova Scotia Wine Country, expanding markets and serving as a voice for local industry.

[winesofnovascotia.ca](http://winesofnovascotia.ca)





Funding for this project has been provided by the Canadian Vintners Association (CVA), along with Agriculture and Agri-food Canada's AgriMarketing program through Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial initiative.

CVA is the national association of the Canadian wine industry representing grape-based wineries across Canada responsible for more than 90% of annual wine production. CVA is responsible for the trademark protection of Wines of Canada, Vintners Quality Assurance (VQA) and Icewine. Learn more at [www.canadianvintners.com](http://www.canadianvintners.com)





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