



History of Wine in California



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California's viticultural history dates back to the 18th century when Spanish missionaries planted the first vineyards with each mission they established, to produce wine for Mass. The wine was used for religious sacraments as well as for daily life.

The California Gold Rush in the mid-19th century brought waves of new settlers to the region, increasing the population and local demand for wine. The newly growing wine industry took hold in Northern California around the valleys of Sonoma and Napa. Chinese immigrants played a prominent role in the developing of the California wine industry during this period, building wineries, planting vineyards, digging the underground cellars and harvesting grapes. But by 1890, most of the Chinese were out of the wine industry.

The late 19th century saw the advent of the phylloxera epidemic, which had already ravaged whole vineyards forcing many smaller operations out of business. Fortunately, the California wine industry was able to quickly rebound by grafting the resistant American rootstock to utilize the opportunity to expand the plantings of new grape varieties.

By the turn of the 20th century nearly 300 grape varieties were being grown in the state, supplying its nearly 800 wineries. Worldwide recognition seemed imminent until January 16, 1919 when the 18th Amendment ushered in the beginning of Prohibition.

Vineyards were ordered to be uprooted and cellars were destroyed. Some vineyards and wineries were able to survive by converting to table grape or grape juice production. A few more were able to stay in operation in order to continue to provide churches sacramental wine, but most went out of business. By the time that Prohibition was repealed in 1933, only 140 wineries were still in operation.

As the quality of California wine improved, the region started to receive more international attention. In 1976 British wine merchant, Steven Spurrier, invited several Californian wineries to participate in a blind tasting event in Paris. In an event known as The Judgment of Paris, California wines shocked the world by sweeping the wine competition in both the red and white wine categories. Throughout the wine world, perspectives about the potential of California wines started to change. The state's wine industry continued to grow as California emerged to become one of the world's premier wine regions.

Up until the late 1980s, the Californian wine industry was dominated by the Bordeaux varietals and Chardonnay. Sales began to drop as wine drinkers grew bored with the familiarity of these wines. Groups of winemakers and a new wine wave of Italian winemakers dubbed "Cal-Ital" reinvigorated the industry with new wine styles made from different varietals like Syrah, Viognier, Sangiovese and Pinot grigio. California now produces wines made in nearly every single known wine style including sparkling, dessert and fortified wines.

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The Grape Vine

Classic Wine Club Selections



Paso Robles

Gaining worldwide attention for its distinctive wines, Paso Robles is emerging as a leader in Californian viticulture. The largest American Viticultural Area (AVA) in San Luis Obispo County, Paso Robles has 18,500 acres under vine. Aside from a small gap near the town of Templeton, the Santa Lucia range shelters the region from the fog that cools southern San Luis Obispo. Wines from the westernmost section in the foothills have the highest profile, yet it is the more fertile eastern half of the region that is responsible for the bulk of production. Vineyards in the western section feature a mixture of both calcareous and siliceous rocky soils and daytime summer temperatures often top 90°F. In the evening, vines are cooled by ocean breezes cascading down the eastern mountain slopes, which maintain the grapes' acidity. Paso Robles wineries typically produce full bodied wines with rich fruit character. These wines often have softer tannins and lower acidity compared to the west, making them more approachable in their youth.

The Martin & Weyrich Winery, originally "Martin Brothers" Winery, was established in 1981, back when the now acclaimed Paso Robles wine country was in its infancy. Over the past 25 years, the winery's history has progressed in tandem with the surrounding wine region. An important part of this history has been the planting of more than 250 acres of premium vineyards in San Luis Obispo County. Since 1981 Martin & Weyrich has planted more than 250 acres in San Luis Obispo County. Currently two of the vineyards are located in the Paso Robles Appellation: The Weyrich Family Ranch, located just a few miles from the winery, and the Martin & Weyrich Estate Vineyard, at the winery. The family also owns the spectacular Jack Ranch Vineyard in Edna Valley, a region renowned for growing some of the best Chardonnay and Pinot Noir California has to offer.

Martin Weyrich Nebbiolo Vecchio Reserve 2000 Paso Robles

Considered by many experts to be the great grape of Northern Italy, Nebbiolo is at its best in rich, strong wines. This Nebbiolo Vecchio is full-bodied and robust, high in tannin and alcohol. The flavors are rich with hints of tar, strawberries, flowers, and truffles. Nebbiolo wines typically age very well and often need as much as 10 years to assume proper character. This grape grows best in Italy but is also cultivated with wonderful results in California. Believed to be the first barrel-aged Nebbiolo in the states, this fantastic Nebbiolo Vecchio is aged in predominantly French oak barrels for more than 18 months and limited to a production of just over 500 cases.

Riverside International Wine Competition - Chairman's Award
Pacific Rim International Wine Competition - Silver
Finger Lakes International Wine Competition - Silver

York Mountain Roussanne 2005 Paso Robles

Originating in the northern Rhone, Roussanne is one of two white grapes allowed in Hermitage, Crozes-Hermitage and St. Joseph. York Mountain's Roussanne is produced from our Weyrich Family Ranch in Paso Robles. The appellation is now considered one of the premier areas in California for Rhone varieties. Barrel fermented cold in French oak barrels and aged 6 months in seasoned French oak.

Only 300 cases produced.

Finger Lakes International Wine Competition - Gold
San Diego Wine Competition - Gold
West Coast Wine Competition - Bronze

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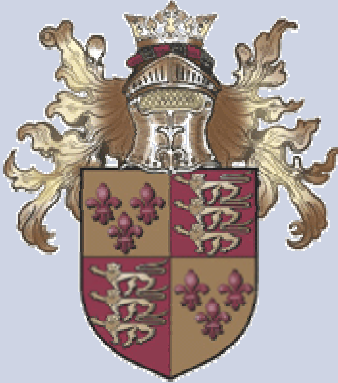


The Grape Vine

Epic Wine Club Selections



York Mountain Winery



At the end of a sun-dappled roadway, nestled among old arching oaks, impressive madrones, and thick Spanish moss of the Coast Range, you'll discover a central coast treasure called York Mountain Winery. In 1882, apple farmer Andrew York discovered his soil and climate were ideal for growing grapes – thus the venerable York Mountain Winery was born. Built of local stone, hand-formed brick fired on the premises, and timber from a Cayucos pier, York Mountain is the area's oldest continuously operating winery.

Though located just seven miles from the Pacific Ocean, it is significantly cooler and wetter than neighboring Paso Robles. Vineyards in the appellation are situated at an average of 1,500 feet and benefit from steep slopes, long sunshine hours, and cool coastal breezes. The climate and soil conditions are so unique that the York Mountain viticulture appellation is one of the smallest recognized in the state of California.

This unique combination of cool climate and low vigor hillside soils create wines that possess a perfumed elegance not found anywhere else on the central coast

2004 Merlot—Napa Valley

This wine has a wonderful texture and body as well as smooth tannins further softened by nearly two years of barrel aging in new French oak. The wine carries dark fruit characters of cassis, black currants, as well as toasted oak. This wine pairs perfectly with hearty dishes like grilled meats and vegetables.

Gold Medal - 2007 Tasters Guild International Wine Competition

Silver Medal - 2007 Finger Lakes International Wine Competition

Silver Medal—2007 Riverside International Wine Competition

Bronze Medal - 2007 West Coast Wine Competition

2004 Pinot Noir—Jack Ranch

This wine is driven with complex fruit flavors such as rich blueberry. Enhanced with wild berry and blueberry aromas and a dark, intense polished tannic structure. A perfect mate to grilled salmon and other light dishes.

Critics Gold Medal- 2007 Critics Challenge International Wine Competition

Silver Medal- 2007 International Eastern Wine Competition

Silver Medal - 2007 West Coast Wine Competition

Silver Medal - 2007 Tasters Guild Intl

Bronze Medal - 2007 Central Coast Wine Competition

Bronze Medal - 2007 Riverside Intl

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