



California's North Coast Wine Region

The North Coast region is a wine and food lover's paradise - a tranquil scene of picturesque landscapes with rolling hills, sprawling vineyards and enchanting towns. The region is known for its distinctive vineyards and wineries, where visitors may enjoy an afternoon of wine tasting, stroll through local art galleries, or take in the redwood forests or explore the rugged Pacific Coastline. Cozy bed and breakfasts and tranquil spas and gourmet restaurants dot the region making it the perfect weekend get-away. The premium wines made from the world-class winegrapes grown here are enjoyed across the country and around the globe. Here, wine and locally-grown foods are ways of life!

Regional Description: A Wine Mecca

The North Coast grape growing region is comprised of the counties north of San Francisco including Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Sonoma and Solano, and is also home to more than 40 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs). The region – which consists of coastal mountain ranges, rolling hills, deep valleys and vast plains – produces some of the best winegrapes in the country. The North Coast forms a slightly crooked rectangle approximately 100 miles long and more than 50 miles wide from the Pacific Coast Ranges in the northwest to the Blue Ridge Mountain Range in the east to the San Pablo Bay in the South, encompassing more than three million acres of land.

History: A Vintage History

The North Coast region has been a wine-making Mecca since the mid 19th century. Agoston Harazthy, a Hungarian soldier, considered the founder of the California wine industry, promoted vine planting over much of Northern California, during the 1850s and 60s. He was an advocate of hillside planting and fostered the idea of non-irrigated vineyards. The wine industry here had a slow revival after Prohibition. It fully recovered during the nationwide wine boom of the 1960s, thanks to a few families who bet that the area's winegrapes would flourish to produce fine wine. A number of wineries emerged, and range from large corporations to small boutiques to cult classics. Today the region features approximately 800 wineries, nearly half of the total wineries in California.

Climate: Perfectly Mild

The North Coast climate is diverse and ideal for grape growing. Influenced by the cool coastal air and fog from the Pacific Ocean, the region enjoys a temperate climate with a long growing season of sunny, warm days followed by cool evenings. The mild warm weather and seasonal rain encourages vine growth, while the hot, sunny summers help to develop the fruit.

Geography: Composition Breeds

The soil and topography of the North Coast is as varied as the winegrapes grown in the region. The coastal ridges and interior valleys are composed predominately of sedimentary rocks and deposits of sand and clay, which produces wines that are less overtly fruity with more refined tannins and

focused intensity. Porous, well-drained soils with low water-holding capacity found in this region generally yield ripe tannic wines. Additionally, the flavor of wines produced from grapes grown at higher elevations with rockier soils tends to be more concentrated.

Varietals: The Best of the Best

Almost every variety of winegrape can be found somewhere in this sprawling region –that’s the surprise and the adventure of discovering California wine. The ecological conditions here favor production of premium grapes. The region is known for its full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon, rich Merlot, crisp Chardonnay, spicy Zinfandel and smooth Pinot Noir. Other regional favorites include Cabernet Franc, Syrah/Shiraz, Petite Sirah, Viognier, Sauvignon Blanc – and Sparkling Wine!

American Viticultural Areas

American Viticultural Areas, or AVAs, are delimited grape growing areas distinguishable by geographic climatic and historic features – which are sometimes noted on the bottles of California wine. AVA boundaries have been delineated in a petition filed and accepted by the U.S. Government. Following is a list of the AVAs in the North Coast:

Lake County

Benmore Valley
Clear Lake
Guenoc Valley
High Valley
North Coast
Red Hills Lake County

Napa Valley
North Coast
Oak Knoll district of Napa Valley
Oakville
Rutherford
Saint Helena
Spring Mountain District
Stags Leap District
Wild Horse Valley
Yountville

Marin County

North Coast

Mendocino County

Anderson Valley
Cole Ranch
Covelo
Dos Rios
McDowell Valley
Mendocino
Mendocino Ridge
North Coast
Potter Valley
Redwood Valley
Yorkville Highlands

Solano County

North Coast
Solano County Green Valley
Suisun Valley
Wild Horse Valley

Sonoma County

Alexander Valley
Bennett Valley
Chalk Hill
Dry Creek Valley
Knights Valley
North Coast
Northern Sonoma
Rockpile
Russian River Valley
Sonoma Coast
Sonoma County Green Valley
Sonoma Mountain
Sonoma Valley

Napa County

Atlas Peak
Chiles Valley
Diamond Mountain
Howell Mountain
Los Carneros
Mount Veeder

Humboldt County

Willow Creek

Explore the North Coast

Follow the links below to explore the North Coast:

Alexander Valley Winegrowers	www.alexandervalley.org
Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association	www.avwines.com
Carneros Wine Alliance	www.carneros.com
Humboldt County	www.redwoods.info
Lake County	www.lakecounty.com
Lake County Winegrape Commission	www.lakecountywinegrape.org
Marin County	www.visitmarin.com
Mendocino County	www.gomendo.com
Mendocino Winegrowers Commission	www.mendowine.com
Mount Veeder Appellation Council	www.mountveederwines.com
Napa Valley Grape Growers Association	www.napagrowers.org
Napa Valley Vintners Association	www.napavintners.com
Napa Valley	www.napavalley.org
Oakville Winegrowers	www.oakvillewinegrowers.org
Russian River Valley Winegrowers	www.rrvw.org
Russian River Wine Road	www.wineroad.com
Rutherford Dust Society	www.rutherforddust.org
Silverado Trail Wineries Association	www.silveradotrail.com
Sonoma	www.sonoma.com
Sonoma County Vintners	www.sonomawine.com
Sonoma County Winegrape Commission	www.sonomawinegrape.org
Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Alliance	www.sonomavalleywine.com
Stag's Leap District Winegrowers Association	www.stagsleapdistrict.com
Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association	www.svgga.com
Winegrowers of Dry Creek Valley	www.wdcv.com