



NEW YORK
WINES



LAKE ERIE

Big, and still growing

Grapes are huge here. A huge part of our history. A huge part of our economy. And a huge part of our identity. We have almost 18,000 acres (7,285 hectares) under vine and 338 vineyards in the largest contiguous grape-growing region east of the Rockies.

Boldly, Historic

The first vines went into the ground in 1818, and the first “wine house” followed in 1859. The wine and grape industry continued to grow and thrive over the next 60 years because of ideal glacial soils and the temperate conditions that flow in on the Lake Erie winds.



GRAPES: Concord, with small amounts of labrusca, hybrid, and Vitis vinifera

SIZE: 338 farms, with 17,977 acres (7,275 hectares) under vine

AVERAGE GROWING SEASON: ~200 days

More than a long history

The Lake Erie AVA occupies a long, narrow strip of well-drained, warm soil running 14 miles along the southern shore of Lake Erie. The lake itself moderates the climate, and the Lake Erie Escarpment provides protection. Together, they make the growing season relatively long, with cooler spring and warmer autumn temperatures.

Concord—has a prominent “grapey” aroma, identical to the flavor of Concord grape jelly. **16,166 acres (6,542 hectares)**

Catawba—produces spicy white or pink wines with crisp acidity and a typical V. labrusca “grapey” aroma, which can also be described as the aroma of grape jelly. **322 acres (130 hectares)**

Delaware—unlike other V. labrusca grapes, Delaware does not have a distinctive grape jelly flavor and instead has fruity, spicy aromas. **55 acres (22 hectares)**

Riesling—produces fresh, aromatic, well-aged wines with light to medium-body and racy acidity. **42 acres (17 hectares)**

Wineries in New York State BY AVA



FINGER LAKES / 144

LONG ISLAND / 82

HUDSON RIVER REGION / 59

LAKE ERIE / 20

UPPER HUDSON / 20

THE NIAGARA ESCARPMENT / 8

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY / 7

OUTSIDE AVAs / 131

TOTAL 471

Boldly changing history
The AVA’s first vinifera wine, Chardonnay, was produced by Woodbury Fruit Farm in 1972.

Temperate **and temperance**

In 1920, a new, intolerant wind blew in and Prohibition closed all the established wineries and drove winemaking into many of our grandparents' barns and basements. But grape production for juice and jellies continued to improve and grow. After Prohibition was repealed in 1933 and after World War II ended, wineries began to sprout up again.

Our **big influences**

The two things that influence our winemaking? A huge body of water. And a long and storied history.

Ideal growing conditions—Lake Erie brings a later spring, glorious sunny summers, and a gentle warmer fall that extends the growing season. Early winemakers recognized this, and, as such, we have centuries of experience in growing grapes and crafting a wide variety of wines.

Continuing the tradition—We make the best wines in the world from American native grapes like Concord and Catawba. But we're also growing more diverse. We've rededicated some of our best vineyard sites to growing traditional vinifera grapes, and they too are thriving in the tempering breezes off Lake Erie.

Cool history

You might be tempted to see New York as a young winemaking region. But don't be fooled; the history of wine in the United States runs right through our state.

Putting down roots—In 1818, Baptist Deacon Elijah Fay planted the first vineyard with wild vines in what is now known as the Chautauqua Grape Belt.

The OG—The original vines were replaced with Isabella and Catawba in 1824, and Elijah Fay's son, Joseph, built the first "wine house" in 1859 near Brocton.

Growing intolerance—Plantings of Isabella, Catawba, and Delaware grew, and during the 1870s, wineries prospered. However, at the same time, the temperance movement was growing within Chautauqua County.

Embracing the ice

Even though the lake moderates the coming of winter, cold temperatures are inevitable, making conditions in our region ripe for creating highly sought-after ice wines.

We're simultaneously continuing our history and redefining our future. More and more growers are devoting acreage to vinifera vines, adding varieties like Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc to American Natives like Concord and Catawba. For more about New York wines and our AVAs, visit newyorkwines.org

**Boldly,
NY.**

