



NEW YORK
WINES



THE NIAGARA ESCARPMENT

A Great big opportunity

When we take a look around, we see Great things. With a capital G...because of our Great Lake right outside our doors. In the Niagara Escarpment, Lake Ontario has the influence you would expect of one of the largest lakes in the world.

Boldly, Confident

The power of Lake Ontario in combination with the slope of the Niagara Escarpment—to moderate temperatures, extend the growing season, and protect against winter damage—is allowing more vinifera grape varieties to pop up on the landscape. And once planted, the soil and climate conditions of our unique terroir squeeze every ounce of flavor from the fruit.



GRAPES: Native, hybrid, and vinifera
SIZE: 58 farms, with 1,067 acres (432 hectares) under vine
AVERAGE GROWING SEASON: ~205 days

The dirt on our region

Our gravelly limestone and clay loam soil is perfectly suited for viticulture. The limestone dates from the Paleozoic Era when our land was under a warm sea abundant with coral and shellfish. This naturally tempers the soil acidity to an ideal level for grapes and great wine.

A warming climate and improved growing techniques are yielding superb results with vinifera. In fact, most of the new plantings have been vinifera and the region is particularly well suited to the production of elegant, age worthy wines made from **Pinot Noir**, **Cabernet Franc**, **Chardonnay**, and **Riesling**.

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

Great things are on the horizon. Winemakers are realizing that the terroir is suited to sought-after vinifera varieties and ice wine. As a result, we're an area that's fast gaining a reputation for high quality.



Growing more **than grapes**

There's a long history of growing grapes and a wide range of fruit in the region. We have the largest acreage of land available in the state that is suitable for vinifera grapes like Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Riesling, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Prime vineyard sites are less expensive than anywhere else in the state. We take pride in our diversity and share a common passion for producing only the highest quality wines. We're definitely a region on the move.

The deep **anti-freeze**

Ontario is the 13th largest lake in the world, but in the land of truly great lakes, it's the smallest. Its tremendous depth—up to 800 feet (244 meters)—and airflow that rises over the Escarpment keep the area frost-free deep into the growing season.

Winter warmth—In the winter, warm air rises off Lake Ontario and is met with cooler air blowing over the top of the Niagara Escarpment. This causes constant air movement as the warm air is forced back down the slopes toward the lake. The result is over 205 frost-free days and little winter vine kill and bud damage.

Lake snows—Between November and February, cold air picks up water vapor as it blows over warm lake waters and deposits heavy snow in Western New York. While the storms can be intense, the accumulated snow actually protects the vines in the coldest parts of the year.

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.

Crossroads—Winegrowing in the region began before the Civil War. It is believed that a winery operated at Lockport, NY, during the 1860s the same place where the Niagara grape (Concord x Cassidy cross) was developed.

Grape boom—Much like the Lake Erie grape belt, the Niagara regions experienced a grape production boom through the 1890s.

Grape bust—The region has seen several market declines. In the early 1900s, the market collapsed from overproduction. New planting flourished in the 1960s before running out of steam from a lack of markets.

Great reversal—In the early 2000s, Niagara's commercial winery businesses resurged. In 2002, the Niagara Wine Trail was established with two members. Today, it has grown to 12.

Cool to the extreme
In addition to dry white and red wines, ours is one of the few regions in the world where true ice wine can be made—and they're known the world over.



We're known for our winters in Western New York, but our summers are things of legend...pleasantly warm and exceptionally sunny. In fact, the region sees more summer sunshine than any metro region in the Northeast. The people of the area love it. The grapes perhaps love it even more. For more about New York wines and our AVAs, visit newyorkwines.org

**Boldly,
NY.**