

NAPA VALLEY

CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE



napa valley vintners

PRESS KIT



Our Wine

- The Napa Valley name is synonymous with the world's finest wines.
- We balance more than 150 years of tradition with innovation in grape growing and winemaking techniques.
- Our region's combination of diverse soils, ideal climate and varied terrain are perfectly suited to producing a wide variety of consistent, high quality wines.

Our Commitment

- We make wine responsibly, in America's first designated Agricultural Preserve, established in 1968.
- Nearly 90% of Napa County land is under permanent or high levels of protection from development.
- More than one-third of Napa County's vineyard acreage is certified Napa Green Land and 4.5 million cases of wine are produced annually at Napa Green Certified wineries.

Our Valley

- Napa Valley is one of America's most stunningly beautiful regions.
- Collaboration is the hallmark of our mutual success.
- Via Auction Napa Valley, we've given more than \$145 million to ensure the health and wellbeing of the place we call home.

About the Napa Valley Wine Region

Napa Valley is celebrated for consistently producing wines of the highest quality. We are committed to a culture of excellence, providing environmental leadership and caring for our extraordinary valley. Learn more at napavintners.com.

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AUCTION NAPA VALLEY

PREMIERE NAPA VALLEY

WELCOME to this world famous
wine growing region



NAPA VALLEY



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*... and
the wine
is bottled
poetry ...*

Robert Louis Stevenson

OVERVIEW

Napa Valley is a region of incomparable natural beauty and is the quintessential wine country destination. Located just over an hour's drive north of San Francisco, Napa Valley is bounded to the west by the Mayacamas Mountains and to the east by the Vaca Range. The valley stretches 30 miles in a northwesterly direction, starting with the windswept flats and gentle hills of Carneros at the southern end—which is near sea level—and rising quickly above the Valley floor to Mount St. Helena at 4,339 feet (1,323 meters) at the north. Dotted along the main route, Highway 29, are small towns from American Canyon at the southern gateway to Napa, Yountville, Oakville, Rutherford, St Helena and Calistoga in the north at the foot of Mount St. Helena. Napa County has a population of about 140,000 and is the last of the San Francisco Bay Area counties to count agriculture as its top industry.

Although the most renowned wine region in the United States, the Napa Valley appellation is also one of the smallest yet most diverse regions in the world. Only 4% of California's harvest is from the Napa Valley even though 8% of the state's vineyards are found here. This is because the grape clusters are thinned to allow only the very best to come to fruition, resulting in harvesting at less than half the statewide average. Yields of Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley are generally 1.5 to 4 tons per acre.

The Napa Valley appellation, which includes nearly all of Napa County, is just one-sixth the size of Bordeaux, and is planted to approximately 45,000 acres (18,210 hectares) of wine grapes. Only 9% of Napa County is planted to vineyard.

napa valley rocks



Dig into what makes Napa Valley unique in the world through this video series, featuring author and educator Karen MacNeil and more than two dozen vintners and industry experts.

[Click here to access videos](#)

Within the Napa Valley American Viticultural Area or AVA are currently 16 recognized sub- or “nested” AVAs recognized for possessing distinguishable characteristics, including microclimate and terrain, and cultural and historical distinction. The Napa Valley was the first AVA to be recognized in California in 1981.

The majority of Napa Valley’s producers are also small: nearly 80% of the NVV’s 500+ member wineries make less than 10,000 cases of wine a year, and nearly 65% produce less than 5,000 cases annually. And 95% of Napa Valley wineries are family owned.

In spite of its small size, the Napa Valley wine industry has a big impact. It creates 46,000 jobs in Napa County alone with a total annual local economic impact of more than \$13 billion. The Napa Valley wine industry has a \$50 billion annual impact on the US economy which accounts for 27% of the California wine industry’s total economic impact on the U.S. economy.





SOILS

Napa Valley has an amazing assortment of microclimates, soils, weather and topography, which allow a wide array of fine wine grapes to grow extraordinarily well here, from Albariño to Zinfandel. Between 2001 and 2003, the NVV commissioned three major studies to verify that the Napa Valley's unique attributes all work together to nurture the wine grapes. The scientists and geologists who conducted the studies were Jonathan Swin-chatt of EarthVision, Paul W. Skinner, Ph.D. of Terra Spase, and David G. Howell of the USGS.

What we now know is that about 150 million years ago, a series of geologic events caused the shifting, sliding, and lifting of land masses

in the area that we know of today as California. That plastered material onto the edge of North America and formed it into its present, yet ever-changing configuration. This is the process that created the Napa Valley. Over time the mountains eroded and reformed, helping to create California.

Geologists call this the Great Valley Sequence, the remains of which are generally found on the east side of the Napa Valley along the Vaca Range. As volcanoes were forming inland, the surface of the ocean floor was being sheered-off as it met the coastline, literally plastering all sorts of marine sediment on top of the newly forming landmass, extending California westward. Geologists call this the Franciscan Formation, the remains of which are generally found on the west side of present-day Napa Valley.

About 24 million years ago the San Andreas Fault system took shape with tremendous compression forces that created the Coast Range and Mayacamas Mountains. San Pablo Bay - the northern arm of the San Francisco Bay - engulfed the lower valley as far inland as current day Yountville, only to retreat and then engulf the lower valley floor again.

Napa Valley has some of the greatest soil diversity found in any winegrowing region in the world. Soils act as building blocks in determining the quality of premium wine grapes. Napa Valley contains more than 100 soil variations, 33 soil series and half the soil orders found in the world.



CLIMATE

Napa Valley is located within the rare dry Mediterranean climate zone, which encompasses just 2% of the earth's surface. The long growing season is marked by warm summer days and cool evenings – ideal for wine grapes to ripen slowly and evenly, with great balance between sugar and acid development. Lack of summer rainfall helps to contribute to consistency of vintages and reduces the risk of vineyard disease.

Most areas of the appellation can dry farm or tightly manage their irrigation practices. Compared to most growing regions in the world, Napa Valley is unique in this regard. When it does rain in the winter, the southern reaches of Napa Valley AVA receive an average of 18 and 23 inches of rain each year. The mountains at the northern end can record nearly 60 inches annually.

During the summer growing season, conditions exist for creating a recurring pattern of marine fog from the Pacific Ocean. As hot air in California's interior valley rises, it creates a vacuum effect which draws in moist, cool air from the Pacific Ocean, forming fog. This pattern repeats most days during the warmer months of the year.

Daytime temperatures can also vary dramatically throughout the AVA during the growing season. The southern part of the valley, particularly the Los Carneros AVA, is closer to San Pablo Bay and is cooled by marine breezes. In summer, there can be as much

as a 10-15°F difference between Carneros and St. Helena, to the north. On many days, due to the cooling effect of the fog, there is a large diurnal (day to night) temperature swing throughout the valley.

Adding to the diversity of Napa Valley is its topography. It changes with its length, from the flat estuaries in the south near San Pablo Bay to flat river valley with some rolling hills leading to nearly 3,000 foot mountains on either side of the valley floor to the valley's sentinel, 4,339-foot Mount St. Helena in the north. There is a strong correlation between topography and climate: slope, aspect and elevation all influence the many growing conditions found throughout the Napa Valley.



VITICULTURE

Napa Valley is known for its innovative, quality-driven wines that stand among the best in the world, and the region's vintners are known leaders in viticultural innovation as well. Perhaps because of the great diversity of soils, unique climate niches and good-natured competition within the vintner community, these variables strongly influence grape growers in the Napa Valley and give them the opportunity to make myriad decisions and refinements to their grape growing practices.

There are many factors to consider when determining the right grape variety and the best practices for the location being planted. Take a wine grape like Cabernet Sauvignon – and grow it in different areas – it will taste a little different depending on where it's from. For a winemaker, blending grapes from different vineyards means being able to make a wine of greater complexity.

Another way to create a unique, distinctive wine is to focus on a single place or single vineyard. Winemakers in Napa Valley have become famous for doing both – creating beautifully blended wines from many sources, and creating distinctive wines from a single grape source: think Martha's Vineyard or To-Kalon.

Napa Valley has become synonymous with Cabernet Sauvignon. The majority of Napa Valley winemakers produce it. Yields of Cabernet Sauvignon from the Napa Valley appellation are generally 1.5 to 4 tons per acre. The

grape accounts for just 12% of California's grape harvest, but in Napa Valley, it's king accounting for 40% of harvest tonnage and nearly 60% of the value of overall wine grape crop.

But, thanks to the many diverse growing conditions, all kinds of grape varieties flourish. Conditions are well-suited for growing not only cooler weather varieties like Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, but also warmer weather varieties such as Cabernet, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc.

A ton of Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon grapes are generally capturing four times the statewide average price for a ton of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. Napa's quality is reflected in its grape prices and its continued demand.

Most winemakers subscribe to the philosophy that quality starts in the vineyard. Napa Valley vineyards are intentionally farmed to produce low yields to allow only the healthiest of grape clusters to mature. Throughout the growing season, the canopy is carefully managed, usually by hand, to ensure optimal sunlight to shade ratio and fruit development. Vineyard workers will tend each vine, on average, more than twenty times during the year—a far different ethic than just a few decades ago when the popular practice was “prune, sucker and pick.”



To continuously improve the quality of the grapes, vintners in Napa Valley have been at the forefront of using technology to improve viticultural practices from planting through harvest and were among the first to use NASA satellite technology during post-phylloxera replanting to map out best vineyard layouts.

Napa Valley vintners and growers also work in close partnership with the Viticulture and Enology Department at nearby UC Davis, one of the most respected wine schools in the world. A 40-acre experimental vineyard and research facility in Napa Valley's Oakville AVA allows students to conduct research. Vintners from all over the world benefit from this research.



CHIEF GRAPE VARIETIES



Though Napa Valley winemakers craft wine from Albariño to Zinfandel, here are the top five varieties in descending order.

Cabernet Sauvignon is the acknowledged “king” of red grapes in Napa Valley. Some Napa Valley Cabernet vines from the 20th century are still producing, but most were replanted in the last 20 years. Cabernet Sauvignon is a complex grape; its character can emerge as black currants, green olives, herbs, bell peppers or combinations of these with mint and leather. These wines age beautifully. When young they are best matched with robust red meat dishes; older Cabernets are superb accompaniments to roasts and steaks, and also complement many cheeses.

Chardonnay is the most widely planted white grape variety in Napa Valley. Chardonnays from Napa Valley have repeatedly impressed the international wine world—think Judgment of Paris. Napa Valley producers make several styles of Chardonnay, ranging from fresh and crisp to rich and complex with layers of flavors. With such a wide range of interpretation, Napa Valley Chardonnays accompany a variety of dishes, from simply prepared seafood to lighter red meats.

Merlot has long been grown in Napa Valley. Traditionally used as a blending wine, Merlot gained popularity in the early 1980s. Merlot shows lovely cherry-like aromas with hints of sibling Cabernet’s herbaceousness. Because tannins are often softer than those found in Cabernet, it tends to be drinkable at an earlier age. At the same time, Merlot can age, gaining finesse and complexity. Serve Merlot with any dish that calls for hearty red wine or try it with lighter meats such as pork or veal.

Sauvignon Blanc has become increasingly popular as it has a distinctive character, often described as fruity and crisp with very good acidity. These wines can be found in a range of styles — those that are crisp and “grassy” and others that have a ripe pineapple richness augmented by a touch of oak from short barrel aging. Because of its acidity, Sauvignon Blanc is enjoyable with seafood, spicy cuisines or refreshing on a warm summer day.

Pinot Noir has been known as fickle, challenging the winemaker vintage to vintage, but the elusive wine is prized. Pinot Noir is less tannic and has less pigment than Cabernet or Merlot, so the wines are somewhat lighter. They can be very drinkable at two to five years of age and the best will improve for several years after.



The Napa Valley Appellation and its Sub-Appellations



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napavintners.com

The Diversity of the Napa Valley Appellation

The Napa Valley is what is commonly referred to as an appellation. In the United States, the legal term is American Viticultural Area or AVA and Napa Valley was the first in California designated in 1981. The Napa Valley produces just 4% of California's wine grape harvest and is 1/8th the size of Bordeaux. It enjoys a dry Mediterranean climate which encompasses only 2% of the Earth's surface which translates to great consistency vintage-to-vintage.

Within the Napa Valley AVA, regions have been recognized that possess distinct microclimates and terrain, imprinting recognizable characteristics on the grapes grown there. These AVAs are commonly referred to as sub- or nested-appellations. This great diversity within the Napa Valley allows a wide range of fine wine grapes to grow well here, and provides the winemaker a diverse palette to create from. All to bring consumers an incredible selection of consistent high quality wines from the region.

LOS CARNEROS

Climate: Cool, with marine winds from the San Pablo Bay as well as the Petaluma Gap to the west; high temperatures rarely exceed 80° (27°C)

Elevation: Sea level-700 feet (217 m)

Principal varieties: Pinot Noir, Merlot and Chardonnay

COOMBSVILLE

Climate: Temperate climate moderated by near-proximity to the San Pablo Bay and the influences of marine air

Elevation: Most vineyards are in the 100-500 foot (30-150 m) zone, though a small portion tops 1000 feet (300 m)

Principal varieties: Dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon on the hillsides with Merlot, Chardonnay, Syrah and Pinot Noir in the lower, cooler sites

WILD HORSE VALLEY

Climate: A warmer area well to the east, but still moderated by both altitude and prevailing winds coming off Suisun Bay to the southeast

Elevation: 600-1900 feet (186-589 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay

MOUNT VEEDER

Climate: Cool to moderate, with most vineyards above the fog line, meaning warmer nights and cooler days than on the valley floor; typical summer highs are 85° (30°C)

Elevation: 500-2,600 feet (155-806 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel and Chardonnay

OAK KNOLL DISTRICT OF NAPA VALLEY

Climate: Moderate to cool, with marine air and fog often remaining until late morning; afternoon breezes frequently occur, maintaining slightly cooler temperatures than up-valley; summer temperatures may reach 92° (31.5°C) and drop to around 50° (10°C) at night

Elevation: Sea level-800 feet (244 m)

Principal varieties: Merlot, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling

YOUNTVILLE

Climate: Moderate, with cool marine influence and fog contributing to cool summer mornings; the marine breeze keeps afternoons more comfortable than further up-valley; summer peak temperatures may reach 90° (31°C), with night time temperatures dropping into the mid-50s° (13°C)

Elevation: 20-200 feet (6-61 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot

STAGS LEAP DISTRICT

Climate: Moderately warm with afternoon marine winds cooling the warmer air radiating off the bare rocks of Stags Leap and the surrounding hillsides; summer temperatures can reach 100°, but more regularly are in mid-90s° (32-34°C)

Elevation: Sea level-500 feet (155 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sangiovese, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc

ATLAS PEAK

Climate: Cool-mountain influenced with temperatures about 10-15° cooler than the valley floor in summer; above the fog line, there is low day-to-night temperature range, with summer rarely rising above 90° (30°C)

Elevation: 760-2600 feet (232-806 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay

OAKVILLE

Climate: Moderately warm, with temperatures commonly in the mid-90s° (32-34°C) in summer, but affected by night and early morning fog; the east side receives more warm afternoon sun

Elevation: Sea level-500 feet (155 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc

RUTHERFORD

Climate: Moderately warm, still marginally influenced by early morning fog; the western bench area is cooler, with less late afternoon sun, tempered by afternoon marine winds; usual summer peak temperatures are mid-90s° (32-34°C) with a distinct day-to-night temperature fluctuation

Elevation: Sea level-600 feet (186 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Zinfandel

ST. HELENA

Climate: Warm, due to greater protection from western hills, with less fog and wind; the narrowing of the valley floor provides more heat reflection off the hillsides; summer temperatures often peak in the mid-to-high 90s° range (31-35°C)

Elevation: 100-700 feet (31-217 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Zinfandel and Viognier

SPRING MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

Climate: Cool weather prevails, with a lower day-to-night fluctuation in temperatures

Elevation: 600-2600 feet (186-806 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay and Zinfandel

CHILES VALLEY DISTRICT

Climate: Summer temperatures peak in the mid-80s° (30°C), but due to higher elevation and evening fog, drop to below 50° (10°C)

Elevation: 600-1200 feet (186-372 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc

HOWELL MOUNTAIN

Climate: Slightly warmer and drier overall due to strong afternoon sun influence

Elevation: 600-2600 feet (186-806 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel and Viognier

DIAMOND MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

Climate: Moderately warm temperatures with less fluctuation than the north Napa Valley floor; temperatures in the summer range from 50-90° (10-32°C)

Elevation: 400-2200 feet (130-530 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc

CALISTOGA

Climate: Daytime summer temperatures may peak above 100° (37°C) and fall to low 40s° (7°C) at night, due to cool marine air drawn into the valley from the northwestern hills; cool afternoon and evening breezes continue the process, and on clear nights are assisted by cold air sliding down the mountainsides to the valley floor

Elevation: 300-1200 feet (92-370 m)

Principal varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, Syrah and Petite Sirah



HISTORY

It has taken more than 150 years and a long line of great leaders to make the Napa Valley what it is today. Winemaking history in the Napa Valley began in 1838-39, when George Calvert Yount, founder of the town of Yountville, planted the first commercial vineyards in the valley.

Soon after, in 1849 California's Gold Rush was on and the population exploded on the west coast. In the 1860s and '70s, Europeans like Jacob Schram, Charles Krug and Jacob Beringer arrived in Napa, eager to try their hand at making wine to rival the wines from their homeland. Schram planted Napa County's first hillside vineyard. Most of the wine at that time was shipped in bulk to San Francisco for sales and distribution. Charles Krug is credited with establishing Napa Valley's first commercial winery in 1861.

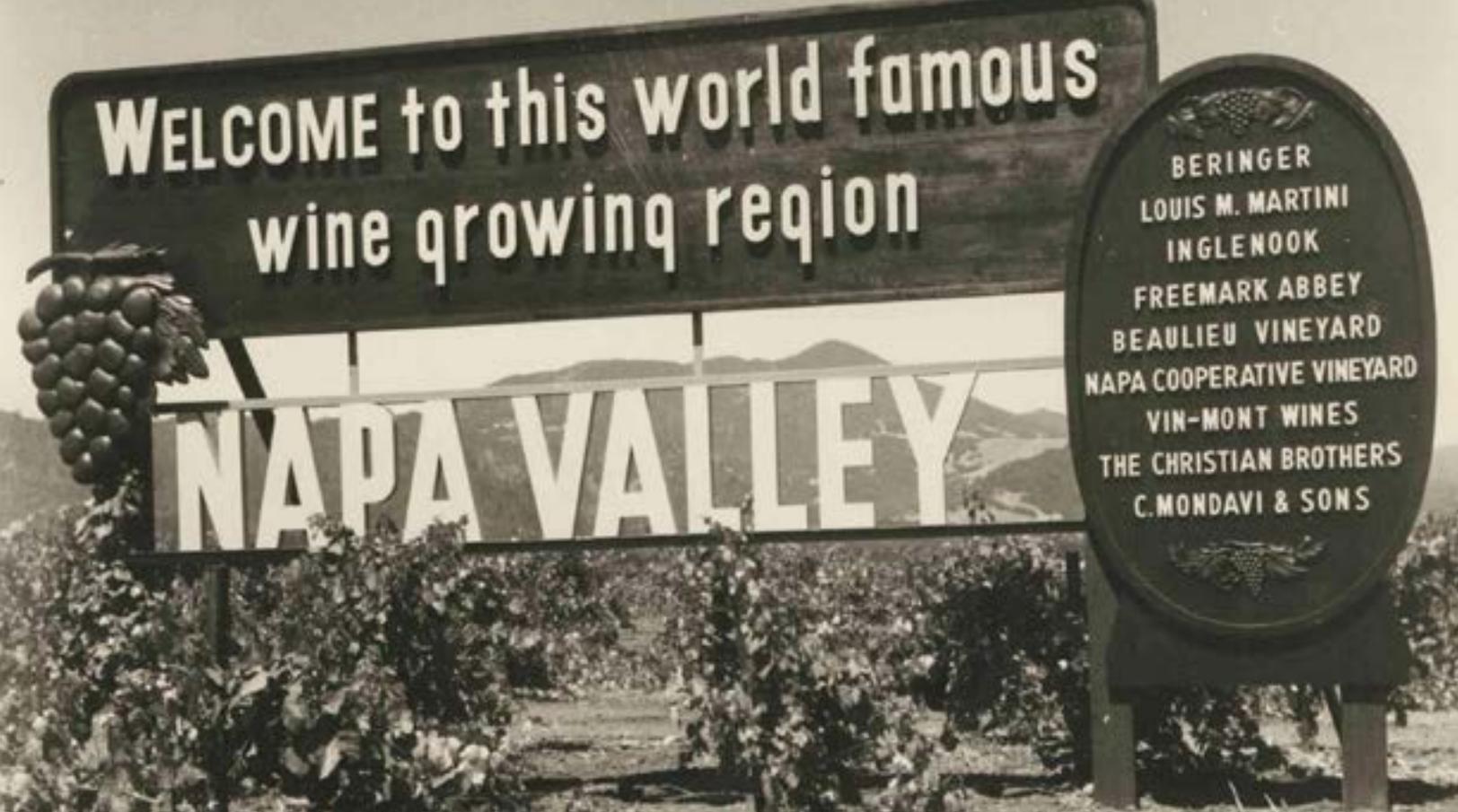
Following the completion of the transcontinental railroad, many Chinese laborers made their way to the Bay Area and continued their hard work on projects like building underground wine caves in the Napa Valley. By some accounts, field laborers of the 1870s and 1880s were primarily Chinese making up as much as 70-80% of the workforce at that time.

By 1889, Napa had more than 140 wineries, including Schramsberg, Beringer and Inglenook. Though never a large volume producer - that description was more apt for other agricultural areas of California, like Los Angeles, Almaden (now Silicon Valley) and Livermore. But, Napa was booming.

In the late 1890s phylloxera, tiny sap-sucking insects which feed on the roots of grapevines and eventually kill them, hit and nearly decimated all of Napa's vineyards. Vineyard acreage in Napa Valley declined from 15,807 in 1888 to just 2,000 acres by 1900. Times were tough in the U.S. with a deep recession, followed by World War. Then an even greater threat to the wine industry arrived in 1920 with the enactment of Prohibition, which lasted for 13 years. Following this social experiment came the Great Depression, another World War that found most of Napa's grapevines and wineries largely abandoned or planted over to plums or walnuts. The Napa Valley wine industry was in shambles.

Despite the setbacks, a few vintners persevered. Credit for the post-World War II rebirth of the Napa Valley wine industry goes to a handful of bold and visionary vintners, including Georges de Latour, of Beaulieu Vineyard, who in 1938 recruited André Tchelistcheff, research enologist from France's Pasteur Institute.

In 1939, John Daniel Jr., inherited Inglenook, the Gustave Niebaum estate, and ran the winery for 25 years. Like Beaulieu and Inglenook, a number of pre-Prohibition wineries came back to life between the late 1930s and the mid 1960s, but new winery growth was limited to just a handful, like the establishment of Stony Hill Vineyard, Louis M. Martini Winery and Heitz Wine Cellars.



In 1966 Robert Mondavi founded his iconic winery on Highway 29 with the goal of producing wines that would rival the finest wines of Europe. Mr. Mondavi's renowned marketing strategies brought worldwide recognition to Napa Valley and its wines. He believed in wine hospitality and graciously welcomed visitors to the winery's public tasting room. His vision helped propel Napa Valley's position in the world of wine and was a major factor in Napa Valley's 20th-century Renaissance.

Another important part of Napa Valley's history is its Hispanic heritage. In 1942, facing a labor shortage brought on by World War II, the U.S. and Mexico together created the "Bracero" program bringing guest laborers from south of the border to work in American agriculture. Many of these laborers landed in the California and Napa Valley wine industries and, over time, become incredibly skilled in techniques related to premium grape growing. Some went on to own their own vineyard management companies, while others have become Napa Valley vintners in

their own right, moving from the vineyard to winemaking and winery ownership.

While the vintners of Napa Valley believed themselves in the quality of their appellation, and in the early 1970s Napa Valley's reputation was growing, it was a pivotal endorsement from another part of the world that helped put Napa Valley on the map. The 1976 Judgment of Paris wine tasting, chronicled recently in the movie "Bottle Shock," set the wine world on its ear: few could have imagined that California wines would win such a competition. Yet Napa Valley wines rated best in each category. The hard work of the vintners was starting to pay off.

ABOUT THE NAPA VALLEY VINTNERS

Many vintner leaders, like Louis Martini, John Daniel Jr. and Robert Mondavi of his family's Charles Krug Winery knew there were challenges ahead for their fledgling wine industry, not the least being the ongoing threat of natural disasters and growing regulation. They formed the Napa Valley Vintners trade association in October 1944, with just seven founding members, and the idea that they were stronger together than individually. It was a novel idea and decades ahead of the industry's Renaissance.

Nearly seven decades after being formed, and more than 500 wineries strong, the Napa Valley Vintners still works to promote and protect - as well as enhance - the Napa Valley as the premier winegrowing region. NVV members are deeply committed to conservation and sustainable farming, and to supporting the local community through charitable work. The Napa Valley wine industry thrives on a strong culture of collaboration and pride in its agricultural heritage, community and appellation.



EARLY MEMBERS OF THE NAPA VALLEY VINTNERS: Left to Right: Charles Forni (Napa Valley Cooperative Winery), Robert Mondavi (C. Mondavi & Sons), Brother Timothy (Mont La Salle), Al Huntsinger (Napa Valley Cooperative Winery), Mike Ahern (Freemark Abbey), Charles Beringer, Fred Abruzzini (Beringer Brothers), Louis M. Martini, John Daniel Jr. (Ingelnook Vineyard Co.) and Martin Stelling Jr. (Sunny St. Helena).

AG LAND PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

While it may appear to the casual observer that Napa County is bursting with grape vines, the truth is that only nine percent of Napa County is planted in vineyards and less than three percent remains suitable for grape planting, according to the findings of the Napa County Watershed Task Force. Napa County encompasses more than 500,000 acres in total and approximately 45,000 acres are planted to vineyard.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, local landowners realized that the encroaching urban growth to the south all but guaranteed that their land values were about to increase exponentially. Left unchecked much of the valley could have become paved-over, covered in tract-homes and strip-malls similar to Santa Clara Valley, once a thriving agricultural area.

In 1968, Napa Valley vintners and others in the community had the forethought to preserve open space and prevent future over-development by enacting the nation's first Agriculture Preserve. This land-zoning ordinance established agriculture and open space as the best use for the land in the fertile valley and foothill areas of Napa County. Initially the ordinance protected 23,000 acres of agricultural land stretching from Napa in the south to Calistoga. Today, more than 32,000 acres are contained within the Napa Valley Agricultural Preserve. Additionally, the urban footprint of all the county's communities was defined more than 40 years ago which has safeguarded the region from sprawl.

Napa County, which encompasses the Napa Valley American Viticultural Region, is the last of the nine Bay Area counties to count agriculture as its top industry. What was once viewed as a risky proposition to land value by placing land in an ag preserve, Napa Valley today is proud to have the most sought after grapes for fine wine production in the U.S. valued at nearly a half billion dollars annually. The economic impact of Napa Valley's wine is \$50 billion annually. Though just 4% of California's wine grape harvest, it has a mighty 27% share of the California wine industry's economic impact on the U.S. economy.

Local vintners are well into a second-generation effort to preserve the valley. Working with the Land Trust of Napa County, vintners are joining other property owners in placing their land into Conservation Easements. These easements dictate how designated parcels will be used in perpetuity—without a sunset date.

Presently, nearly more than 55,000 acres of Napa County land is forever guaranteed to remain used as open space and agricultural land through the Conservation Easement program. Those who place their land in these easements are making a financial sacrifice of future property sales. Additionally, another 18,500 acres of prime land are protected under the Williamson Act, a program that provides incentives to keep land in agriculture production and open space.



Vintners have played a big role in the history of Napa Valley's preservation and will continue to play a vital role in ensuring that the pastoral beauty and intact natural environment of today still exists for future generations.



INDUSTRY ADVOCACY

Protecting the Napa Valley Since 1944, the NVV has worked to protect the Napa Valley as the premier winegrowing region and that work is even more keenly focused as the renown of Napa's wines has taken center stage in the globalized wine industry.

Protecting the Integrity of Napa Valley's Agriculture With the strictest land use laws and policies in place it would seem like the pressures on land use would be well-addressed at this point, but challenges continue to arise. For example, the association has been involved in recent efforts by Napa County and other interested parties to oppose the threat of Indian casino gaming. The NVV is committed to maintaining the integrity of the Napa Valley Agricultural Preserve, a core value and unique attribute of the Napa Valley community.

Addressing the concerns of Climate Change In 2006, many in Napa Valley awoke on Memorial Day weekend to read in *USA Today* that Napa was on the verge complete devastation due to global warming—which was news to the growers and vintners here. To get a comprehensive view of the current state of affairs the NVV created a vintner task force which engaged a team of the world's leading climate scientists to conduct Napa-specific research. The report, "Climate and Phenology in Napa Valley: A Compilation and Analysis of Historical Data" details the results of this research.

Protecting the Napa Name Imagine a bottle of wine that by its brand name on the label leads you to believe that the grapes grown to produce this wine came from the incomparable Napa Valley, when they really came from bulk wine producers in less desirable areas. You thought you could trust the label, but without a tough in-

dustry watchdog to protect truth in wine labeling, consumers in the U.S. and around the world would be misled by brands misusing Napa. The NVV's efforts on this front include petitioning the European Commission (EC) to become the first non-European wine region to obtain Geographic Indication (GI) status in the European Union in 2007, and in 2012, after following a similar path with the government of the People's Republic of China, Napa Valley was recognized with GI status in that country, the first region in the world outside of China to be so recognized. The NVV has obtained similar status in several other countries and regularly monitors trademark applications worldwide to ensure the integrity of the Napa Valley name.

Napa Labeling Laws Lead the Industry In 1981, Napa Valley was the first recognized American Viticultural Area or AVA in California. Today there are 16 sub- or nested-AVAs within the Napa Valley AVA. Back in 1989, vintners in Napa Valley seeking to maintain and expand upon what was then the growing perception of the region for quality-driven wine, asked the state legislature to enact the Napa Conjunctive Labeling Law. This requires that on a label where any wholly contained sub-AVA is listed on the label as place of origin, Napa Valley must also appear in close proximity to the sub region. More than 20 years later other wine regions are only just starting to enact similar legislation. Between 2001 and 2006, the NVV fought all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court to have another state law it sponsored upheld: the Napa Name Law, which protects truth in labeling for California consumers.

For more information about the association's advocacy efforts, contact Rex Stults, government relations director for the NVV.

NAPA GREEN LAND

Napa Leading the Industry in Sustainable Farming

Long before green and sustainable became buzzwords, vintners and grape growers realized Napa Valley's future as a premier wine region lay in their hands.

Seeing other rural parts of the Bay Area swallowed up by cities and suburbs, community and industry leaders fought—and succeeded—to protect Napa Valley's agricultural heritage by having it declared the first Agricultural Preserve in the U.S. in 1968.

With the Ag Preserve as a foundation, community and industry leaders voted to enact further restrictions to prevent development in ag lands and open space, and meanwhile preserved tens of thousands of acres with permanent conservation easements.

The Napa Valley Winery Definition Ordinance

As the wine industry grew in the county, in 1990 came the creation of the most rigorous regulations in the world for vineyard farming and winery operations, including the groundbreaking Winery Definition Ordinance (WDO). The WDO maintains that wineries in county-governed land have winemaking as their sole purpose for being constructed in the ag preserve. Additional business uses at wineries including operating hotels, restaurants, spas and over-developed retail or catering operations were deemed not only in competition with the various communities' main street businesses, but these non-winemaking endeavors were inconsistent with the ag preserve.

Controversial at the time and even today, the WDO in conjunction with the local Hillside Farming Ordinance, Stream Setback Ordinance and others puts Napa Valley at the top of its class in best practices in land use and protection for agriculture.

Going Beyond in Excellence

Taking environmental leadership to an even higher level, in the early 2000s, vintners worked with industry partners, environmental groups, and government agencies—local, state and federal—to create the extraordinary Napa Green Certified Land program.

Largely based on Fish Friendly Farming, Napa Green Land looks to ensure the health of the vast Napa River Watershed with site-specific farm plans unique to each land owner's property. Management of not only vineyard land, but the property's roads, riparian stream environments, wildlife access and native, non-farmed lands is all encompassing in the enrollment plan. The plan, for example, will look to drastically reduce or eliminate chemicals and herbicides and employ cover crops for soil stabilization and surface-level water management.

After the criteria is established for correcting or enhancing any deficiencies, the land owner along with the certifying third-party agent creates a work plan with timelines for corrective action that leads to the land being certified for five years.

As a sign of the program's success, there is now more land certified or enrolled in Napa Green than all land planted to vineyards in Napa County—more than 61,000 acres. More than one-third of all vineyard land is certified Napa Green.

A complete list of NVV members certified in Napa Green Land can be found on the website [NapaGreen.org](https://www.napagreen.org)

[Click to view the video](#)



NAPA GREEN WINERY

Greening of the Winemaking Process

As a complement to Napa Green Certified Land, in 2008 the NVV developed a companion program for Napa Valley's winery production facilities. Napa Green Certified Winery further leverages Napa Green and the strong track record built with the widely-embraced environmental program; continuing the sustainable practices from the vineyard and land through the winemaking process in the wineries.

Napa Green Certified Winery is an independent third-party certification program to encourage and assist Napa Valley vintners to implement beneficial and verifiable environmental practices through preserving and enhancing the environment of the Napa Valley; demonstrating a commitment to our community; and providing leadership for the wine industry.

Napa Green Certified Winery is a Napa-specific set of sustainable and green business practices developed for wineries. The NVV is working closely with our partners at the Napa County Department of Environmental Management and the Green Business Program as third party certifiers. Certified wineries demonstrate a commitment to conserving water and energy, reducing waste and preventing pollution. The efforts of Napa Green Certified Winery are aimed at reducing or eliminating the carbon footprint of wine production facilities as part of the broader view of excellent business. Certification goes beyond compliance, meeting or exceeding environmental regulations related to winery

operations, and helps wineries become more sustainable through economically viable, environmentally sensitive and socially equitable practices.

Participation in the program has many benefits that help meet these environmental, economic and social equity goals of sustainability. For example, certification can offer wineries the regulatory assurance they need so the focus is on continuous improvement and can assist with navigating new laws related to climate protection and emission reductions. Many wineries also realize economic benefits through implementation of green business practices and when the bottom line improves, they can direct more resources to innovation and sustainability.

Participation in the program also provides a solid platform for educating distributors, retailers and consumers about sustainability. Through efforts like Napa Green Certified Winery, Napa Valley wineries are taking action to protect the environmental quality of the region and are committed to the continued stewardship of our natural resources.

A complete list of NVV members certified in Napa Green Winery can be found on the website www.NapaGreen.org

In 2015, the NVV announced its commitment to the Napa Green program establishing a goal that by 2020 all eligible members will be in either the Napa Green Certified Land or Winery program.

Yvon Chouinard

Yvon Chouinard, 70, is a world-class mountain climber, passionate surfer and committed environmentalist. He is also the founder of the \$275 million outdoor clothing and equipment company Patagonia. Since its inception in 1965 as Chouinard Equipment, Patagonia has championed the environmental movement and spurred other businesses to support environmental causes. In recent years, the company pioneered the production of fleece fiber from recycled soda bottles, and has set the goal that everything it makes will be recyclable by 2020. One of Chouinard's personal passions is wine, and his tastes have evolved over the years, along with his business philosophy. Now he's lending his support to a new effort by the Napa Valley Vintners aimed at greening the wine industry. Chouinard was interviewed by freelance writer Lynn Alley.



Wine Spectator: How did you first become interested in wine?

Yvon Chouinard: I was about 16 years old and living in Burbank, Calif. We were dirt poor, and there was an old Italian woman named Mamma Brusso who had a small vineyard in the Valley and who made her own wine. We'd take that gallon jug of wine, crawl under the fence at the local drive-in movie, sit in the grass and drink it.

WS: And how has your taste in wine evolved?

YC: My assistant now, Mike Dunne, was manager of a wine store, and he really knows his wine. We've been discovering wines together and slowly educating our palates. I travel a lot and so I've been getting exposed to lots of different wines—and now I know what I like and don't like. I try to eat locally, but I drink globally.

WS: And what do you like?

YC: What I really like is that funky, earthy flavor that you get from some Pinots and Burgundies. A lot of the great Bordeaux have that. But I've been able to find it in some \$30 to \$40 Spanish and Rhône wines. I love the Italian whites like Verdicchio and Vermentino, and I hate big, fat California whites. But the best Chardonnay I ever had was a Ridge Monte Bello. A friend brought 40 bottles on horseback into the Wind River Range in Wyoming. One of the

best reds I ever had was the Ridge Monte Bello Cabernet '86.

WS: You spoke at the Napa Valley Vintners' unveiling of their Green Winery program. What did you think of the program?

YC: I was blown away by what they're doing. They've realized that the federal and state governments aren't going to do anything, and that local governments and grassroots movements and businesses are where the changes are going to come from. They want to change the whole valley, starting with wineries, then moving to retail stores and restaurants. I've been at this for 30 years and this is the best, most well-thought-out program I've ever seen.

WS: What do you see as the motivation for businesses to jump on the environmental bandwagon?

YC: It's like David Brower [executive director of the Sierra Club] says: "There is no business to be done on a dead planet."

Coming In *Wine Spectator*

COVER STORY: Exploring Chardonnay around the world

TASTING REPORTS: Chile; New Zealand

FEATURE: Dining out in San Francisco

AUCTION NAPA VALLEY

Auction Napa Valley, the Napa Valley Vintners' annual community fundraiser, is the country's first and most celebrated charity wine auction. The event, held the first weekend of each June, attracts wine lovers from across the U.S. and around the globe—not only for its fine wines, but for the food prepared by culinary superstars, the event's spectacular setting and the hospitality of the hundreds of vintners who host this event—and donate the one-of-a-kind auction lots offered over the course of the weekend.

Founded in 1981 under the vision of Robert and Margrit Mondavi to raise funds for local hospitals, Auction Napa Valley has grown into a four-day-long celebration of Napa Valley's finest, and has given more than \$145 million to community health and children's education nonprofits.

Schedule of Events:

Thursday:

The event's festivities kick off on Thursday evening with a perennial favorite of Auction guests: the Vintner Welcome Parties. Guests choose from dozens private dinner parties, which afford them an insider's peek into vintners' homes and wineries.

Friday:

The Napa Valley Barrel Auction attracts nearly 2,000 attendees. Festivities include a walk-around marketplace featuring hundreds of Napa Valley wines and dozens of dishes from local chefs, but the highlight is the Barrel Auction: more than 100 vintners pulling wine

samples directly from the barrel for guests to taste and bid on. Each winery offers ten cases, sold to the top ten bidders, who can look forward to a future delivery of that wine from the winery's cellar directly to theirs.

Friday evening features another round of Vintner Hosted Dinners—this evening's events are smaller and more intimate, and are another opportunity for bidders to enjoy great food, library-selection wines and a memorable evening as the special guest of a Napa Valley vintner.

Saturday:

Saturday is the highlight of the weekend: the Live Auction Celebration, held every year since its inception at Meadowood Napa Valley. Eight hundred bidders, vintners, chefs and media gather on the lawn for the live—and lively--auction of 40-plus over-the-top offerings of Napa Valley wine collections and one-of-a-kind experiences. The day's festivities also include lunch and dinner prepared by acclaimed chefs, and an after-party and dancing under the stars.

Sunday:

The Auction Farewell brings vintners and bidders together one last time to enjoy a little more wine, food and camaraderie before Auction Napa Valley draws a close...until next June.

Visit [AuctionNapaValley.org](https://www.auctionnapavalley.org) to browse ticket offering and additional details.



PREMIERE NAPA VALLEY

Premiere Napa Valley—the must-attend trade event of the year! Each February hundreds of top wine trade gather in Napa Valley for tastings, social gatherings and networking events as Napa Valley vintners roll out the red carpet to greet their best customers at the main event—a grand tasting and futures auction held at The Culinary Institute of America at Greystone. The funds raised support the association’s work to promote, protect and enhance the Napa Valley appellation.

Wine sellers will be able to capture one-of-a-kind wines to offer in their shops and on

their wine lists to their most discerning customers. The professional networking peer to peer and amongst the vintners is often likened to a homecoming for Napa Valley’s finest ambassadors—and the mood is festive and not to be missed.

Complement the tasting with professional development seminars, a unique Vintage Perspective Tasting and countless intimate at-winery open houses and educational tastings and you’ve got all the right ingredients for a fantastic time in the Napa Valley, just for members of the wine trade.



WINES FROM THE PREMIERE NAPA VALLEY COLLECTION



Premiere Napa Valley A wine portfolio of the world's rarest wines... Produced in California's renowned Napa Valley, Premiere Napa Valley is one of the rarest wine brands in the world. Since 1997 the region's top winemakers have offered ultra-boutique wines to the trade, crafted in as few as 60 and never more than 240 bottles, as individual bottlings for the brand known as Premiere Napa Valley.

These wines, created each only once, by 225 different wineries are offered as futures at auction only to the wine trade—individual restaurateurs and wine retailers—so they have the most unique, and some of the very best wines made from America's leading appellation. Think of Premiere Napa Valley as a brand consisting of 225 "single vineyard," small case production offerings. Each wine from each producer is one-of-a-kind, and will not be found in the market except by the wine seller who secures the unique wine via an annual trade auction held each winter in Napa Valley. Though reminiscent of how Hospice de Beaune wines are produced, the process is uniquely American. The winemakers take a gloves-off approach, often using varieties they may not bottle as a stand-alone, or perhaps a noted white-wine-only house producing a red wine. These wines are innovative and showcase the region's sense of exploration in fine winemaking.

To learn more or find a retailer visit PremiereNapaWines.com

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