

# The AVAs of Oregon



Oregon has 15 approved winegrowing regions with 734 vineyards including 303 vineyards/wineries, and produces 72 grape varieties. Impressively, almost 57% of the planted acreage is represented by the Pinot Noir grape. Oregon's major white grape is the Pinot Gris, which stands for 13% of the total planted acreage. Together these two grape varieties make up 70% or 9 859 acres (Fig. xxx) of the total 14 100 planted acres in Oregon.

Artisan wines are what Oregon winemak-

ers like to produce. Their stewardship for environmental farming and high-quality wines are surpassed by very few even in Burgundy, France, the home of "Classical" Pinot Noir. However, 10 year old Pinot Noirs from good Willamette Valley wineries will really knock your socks off!

From the landscape soaring above the Columbia River Gorge to the green, rolling hills of the Willamette Valley and the high mountain valleys of Southern Oregon these picturesque, almost Norman

Rockwell-like, settings together with the sublime artisan wines is Oregon in a bottle. If this doesn't whet your appetite then nothing will!

Most Oregon wineries are relatively small with just over 5 000 cases produced annually. So if you want to find these gems, this won't be through your local store; nonetheless, if you take a leisurely drive down one of Oregon's many country roads you'll find these wineries tucked into the foothills as one with the breathtaking land-

scape. Apart from the superior wines and breathtaking views you'll also be able to savor many delicious and wine-friendly dishes offered by a number of very good chef-owned restaurants in the region. For those of you wishing to stay for a couple of days, Oregon is littered with charming inns, bed & breakfasts and boutique hotels where you can rest your liver.

For those of you who can't make a trip into the wine regions of Oregon many of the wineries have an on-line wine club where you can purchase some of their wines.

**S**ustainable agriculture, or in this case sustainable winegrowing, is an environmentally friendly and responsible practice

and increasingly recognized as vital to a terroir-based winegrowing philosophy in Oregon. Wine quality and agricultural sustainability go hand in hand. In 1997 Low Input Viticulture and Enology (L.I.V.E.) was incorporated to promote sustainable, low-impact wine farming in Western Oregon. L.I.V.E. gives vineyards the recognition for their agricultural practices, according to

	Planted Acreage 2005	Crush by Variety 2005	Winery Sales by Case (9 liter cases) 2005
Cabernet Franc	109	190	2 921
Cabernet Sauvignon	504	428	24 277
Chardonnay	842	1 532	136 211
Gewurztraminer	214	245	12 198
Merlot	550	629	43 777
Muller Thurgau	96	319	15 233
Pinot Blanc	190	390	1 757
Pinot Gris	1 885	4 312	267 772
Pinot Noir	7 974	12 075	782 836
Sauvignon Blanc	59	49	3 034
Syrah	402	503	13 457
Tempranillo	108	135	2 422
Viognier	118	147	4 343
White Riesling	524	988	77 902
Zinfandel	64	117	4 841
All others	461	794	134 143
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>14 100</b>	<b>22 853</b>	<b>1 527 124</b> 9 liter cases

**Graph Left:** The total number of planted acres for each of the major varieties, their crush amounts in tons, and number of 12 x750ml bottle-cases produced. The given information originates from the 2005 Oregon Vineyard and Winery Report, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Oregon Field Office.

Rosé, White, Blush, Other Still & Sparkling Wines

the guidelines of The International Organization for Biological Control, based in Geneva, Switzerland. However, in this book we refer to all vineyards with L.I.V.E. and other associated environmental practices as “Sustainable Agriculture.” Some of these ecological practices include:

- 1) the vineyards should minimize their environmental footprint;
- 2) only natural, organic, elemental-spray solutions can be used to combat vine diseases like mildew and botrytis (primarily sulfur);

3) natural and indigenous predatory insects and bacteria are allowed to control noxious pests;

4) compost derived from natural vine cuttings and verma compost are utilized instead of industrial fertilizers to feed soils and young plants;

5) foliar sprays and pulverized plant, and mineral elements are used to help maintain the health of our plants during the dry summer months;

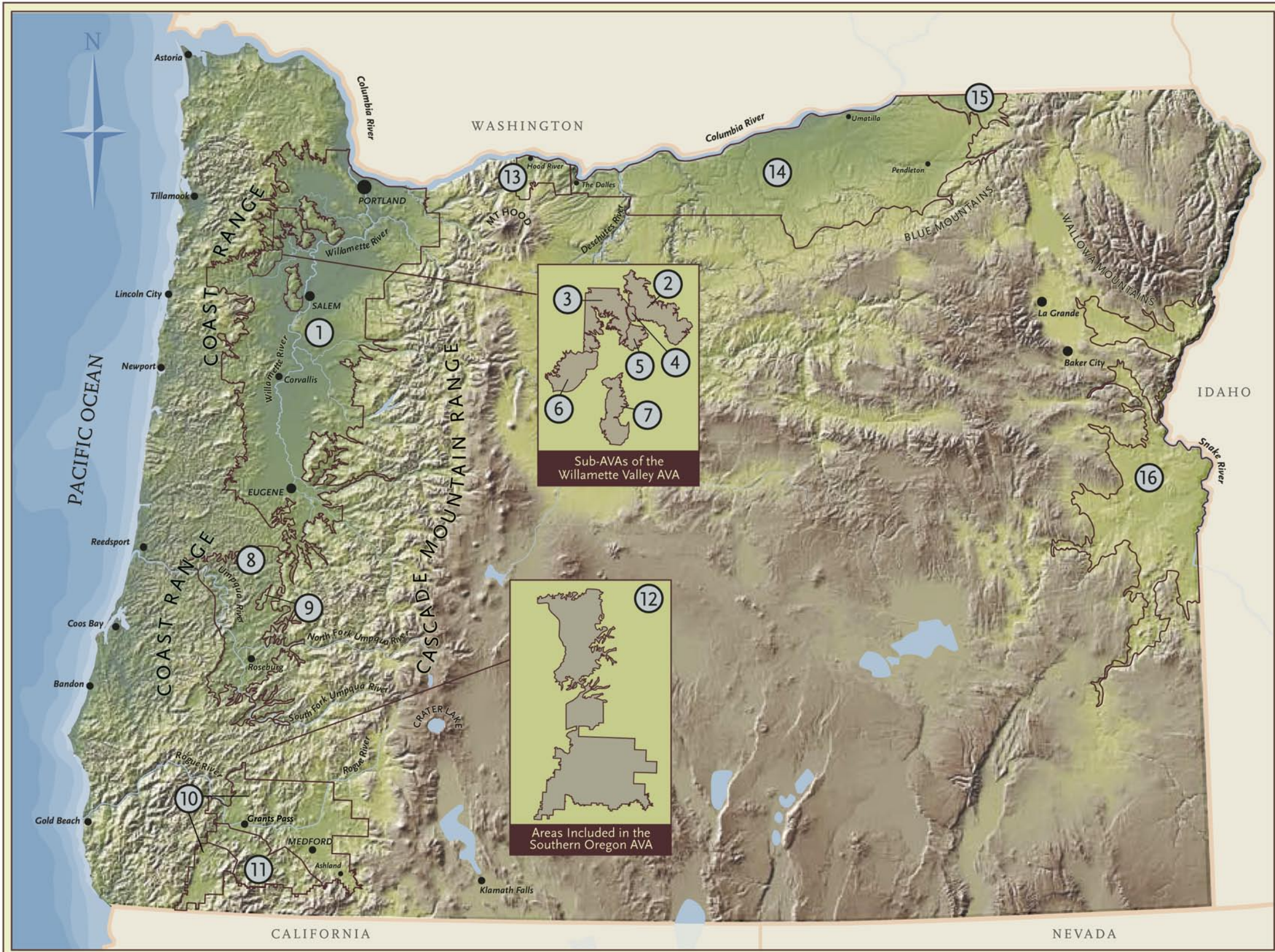
6) biodiversity in the vineyard is practiced by promoting all plant and animal species

naturally indigenous to the vineyard - this diversity is also encouraged by planting wild flowers and varieties of cover crops as well as plant species throughout the property. This creates a balanced ecosystem with naturally occurring insects and fungi that compete biologically with vineyard pests.

There are certainly many other organic, biodynamic and sustainable practices in use but this is not the forum to discuss them.

	Number of Vineyards 2005	Planted Acreage 2005	Production 2005	Wineries 2005
Applegate Valley	33	428	486	12
Columbia River, Walla Walla, and at large	64	997	2458	25
North Willamette Valley	434	9307	15397	199
Rogue Valley	69	1413	2815	16
South Willamette Valley	83	1342	2654	33
Umpqua Valley	51	613	119	18
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>14100</b>	<b>23929</b>	<b>303</b>

**Graph Above:** The graph shows the total number of vineyards, planted acres, production (tons) and wineries in Oregon. The information originates from the 2005 Oregon Vineyard and Winery Report, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Oregon Field Office. **Map Right:** There are 16 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) in Oregon.



# AMERICAN VITICULTURAL AREAS OF OREGON

1	Willamette Valley	5	Dundee Hills	9	Red Hills Douglas County	13	Columbia Gorge
2	Chehalem Mountains	6	McMinnville	10	Rogue Valley	14	Columbia Valley
3	Yamhill-Carlton District	7	Eola-Amity Hills	11	Applegate Valley	15	Walla Walla Valley
4	Ribbon Ridge	8	Umpqua Valley	12	Southern Oregon	16	Snake River Valley

**T**here are 16 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) in Oregon. They are, in accordance with their registration dates:

Columbia Valley - 1984,  
Umpqua Valley - 1984,  
Walla Walla Valley - 1984,  
Willamette Valley - 1984,  
Rogue Valley - 1991,  
Applegate Valley - 2001,  
Columbia Gorge - 2004,  
Dundee Hills - 2004,  
Yamhill-Carlton District - 2004,  
Southern Oregon - 2004,  
McMinnville - 2005,  
Ribbon Ridge - 2005,  
Red Hill Douglas County - 2005,  
Eola-Amity Hills - 2006,  
Chehalem Mountains - 2006,  
Snake River Valley - 2007.

## Willamette Valley

### Willamette Valley

The Willamette Valley was named after the Willamette River which flows through it. 150 miles long and at its widest up to

60 miles wide, it is Oregon's largest AVA. It also represents about 60% of the vineyards and 65% of the wineries in the entire State of Oregon. It extends from the Columbia River in Portland south through Salem and to the Calapooya Mountains near Eugene. The Willamette Valley also includes six sub-appellations:

Chehalem Mountains,  
Dundee Hills,  
Eola-Amity Hills,  
McMinnville,  
Ribbon Ridge, and  
Yamhill-Carlton District.

#### **Stats:**

199 wineries and recently over 10,000 acres of wine grapes.

#### **Wine History:**

The first pioneers responsible for Willamette Valley's modern winemaking culture began in 1965 when three UC Davis graduates (David Lett, Charles Coury, and Dick Erath) left California for Oregon. They believed that Oregon was an ideal place to grow cool-climate varieties, though many experts at that time believed the contrary;

**Picture Right:** Typical winter with low lying clouds in the Willamette Valley.



