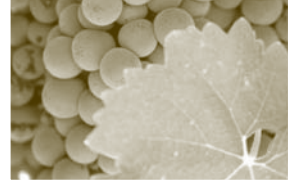


# PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY

## DISTINCT AND DIFFERENT



**distinct. different.**

- Centrally located halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles along California's Central Coast.
- Largest and most diverse wine region in California – distinct soils, many microclimates, unique topography.
- Fastest growing American Viticultural Area (AVA) in California: 26,000 vineyard acres and more than a five-fold increase over the past decade from 35 to over 180 bonded wineries ranging from nationally distributed, mid-size to boutique.
- Greatest diurnal (day to night) temperature swing (typically 40 to 50 degrees during the growing season) of any appellation in California due to cooling marine air of Pacific Ocean.
- One of the longer and most consistent growing seasons for wine grapes in California, giving Paso Robles vines plenty of time to produce fully mature fruit, while overnight cooling keeps the grapes' acid chemistry in balance.
- More calcareous soils than any other California AVA.
- Zinfandel, the heritage wine grape variety.
- Cabernet Sauvignon, the AVA's largest planted wine grape variety with diversity of distinct gold medal winning styles found throughout the region.
- California's "Rhône Zone," an important AVA for premium Syrah, and largest coastal acreage of Syrah, Viognier, and Roussanne in California.
- Known for its proprietary Paso Robles blends – innovative Bordeaux, Rhône and Zinfandel blends.
- An estimated 58 percent of Paso Robles wine grapes are sold to wineries outside the area, making them the secret ingredient in other California wines.



# PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY

## VITICULTURAL OVERVIEW



**distinct. different.**

### NUMBER OF WINERIES

In the last decade, Paso Robles has seen more than a five-fold increase from 35 to over 180 bonded wineries.

About two-thirds of Paso Robles wineries produce less than 5,000 cases. More than 95% of the region's brands are family owned and operated.

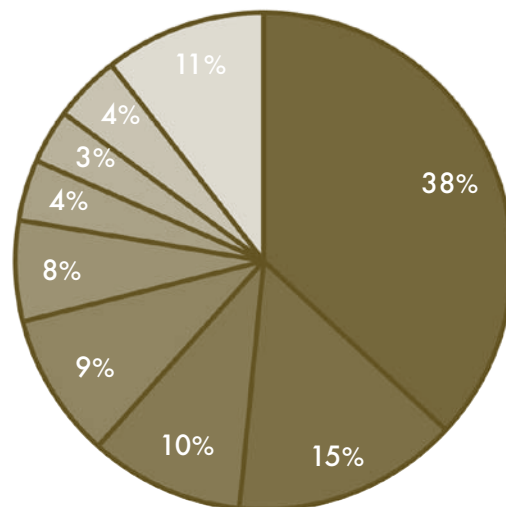
### NUMBER OF GROWERS

In addition to wineries with estate vineyards, there are nearly 120 Paso Robles Wine Country grape growers who sell their fruit to wineries both within and outside the Paso Robles AVA.

### VARIETIES

The most widely planted varieties in the Paso Robles appellation are Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Sauvignon Blanc.

With Italian, Spanish and Rhône varieties on the upswing, more than 40 other varieties with 300 to less than an acre planted in the region include Cabernet Franc, Chenin Blanc, Petit Verdot, Muscat Cannelli, Sangiovese, Pinot Noir, Grenache, Viognier, Malbec, Mourvèdre, Barbera, Tempranillo, Semillon, Pinot Grigio, Roussanne, Nebbiolo, Riesling, Lagrein, Counoise, Marsanne, Refosco, Cinsault, Orange Muscat, Tannat, Carignane, Primitivo, Touriga, Vermentino, Tinto Cão, Pinot Blanc, Souzão, Picpoul Blanc, Albariño and Dolcetto.



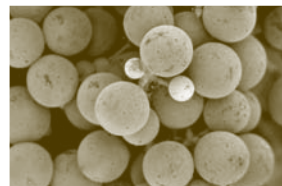
Variety	% Total
Cabernet Sauvignon	38%
Merlot	15%
Syrah	10%
Zinfandel	9%
Chardonnay	8%
Petite Sirah	4%
Sauvignon Blanc	3%
Cabernet Franc	2%
Other Varieties	11%

**Paso Robles AVA Total**      **26,000**



# ECONOMIC IMPACT

## PASO ROBLES AVA & GREATER SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY



Vibrant and growing, the Paso Robles wine industry has a significant impact on the local economy of San Luis Obispo County.

**distinct. different.**

- San Luis Obispo County's wine industry is largely concentrated in North County, which is primarily the Paso Robles AVA and accounts for more than 90 percent of the acreage and 90 percent of the number of wineries in the county, about 82.4 percent of the county's winery revenue and 82.5 percent of county wine production. Fifty-eight percent of Paso Robles grapes are sold out of the county, with more than two thirds of them going into value wines designated for California and Central Coast AVAs.
- Wine, vineyards and related industries, products and services generate \$1.785 billion in economic value in San Luis Obispo County, including employment of more than 8,100 persons, wages of \$241 million and more than \$86 million in state and local taxes. These jobs represent 7.5 percent of county employment, 9.2 percent of private sector employment and a major share of jobs created in the county in recent years.
- The economic impact of wine and wine grapes in the Paso Robles AVA is estimated at \$1.467 billion, employing 7,000 persons with a total payroll of \$182 million.
- Wine grapes, now San Luis Obispo County's highest value crop, represents one third of the county's total agricultural production value. With more than 29,000 acres planted into wine grapes, San Luis Obispo County produced an estimated 148,000 tons of wine grapes with an estimated value of \$151 million in 2006.
- In San Luis Obispo County, wineries are an important tourist draw, attracting over 1.2 million visits by tourists spending locally more than \$113 million and creating more than 1,800 jobs.
- Wineries, vineyards and related industries pay \$10.5 million in property taxes. Wineries and vineyards in San Luis Obispo County have a total assessed value of more than \$1 billion, reflecting the very high capital requirements of this industry.
- In a very conservative estimate, charitable contributions by the industry exceed \$1.1 million, not including many of the individual winery cash and in-kind contributions or many of the events in which wine becomes a vehicle for raising funds for community organizations.

Source:

MKF Research, St. Helena, CA, "Economic Impact of Wine and Winegrapes in the Paso Robles AVA and Greater San Luis Obispo County 2007."



# FULL ECONOMIC IMPACT

## WINEGRAPES & WINE IN THE PASO ROBLES AVA AND GREATER SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

**\$1,785 Billion**

Paso Robles AVA + Greater San Luis Obispo Wine	Economic Impact
Full-time Equivalent Jobs	8,114
Wages Paid	\$241 million
Retail Value of Paso Robles AVA Wine	\$657 million
Retail Value of Greater San Luis Obispo County Wine	\$803 million
Number of Bonded Wineries	217
Wine Produced (9 liter cases)	3.2 million
Winegrape Bearing Acres	29,000
Value of Winegrape Crop	\$151 million
Allied Industry Revenues	\$51 million
Tourism Expenditures	\$113 million
Winery Tourists Visits	1.2 million
Charitable Contributions	\$1.1 million
Taxes Paid (State and Local)	\$86 million



# WHAT WINE EXPERTS ARE SAYING ABOUT PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY



**distinct. different.**

"Best festival. Paso Robles Wine Festival in Paso Robles, Calif. This laid back, down-to-earth California town is the anti-Napa. On the third weekend in May, it holds what's billed as the state's largest outdoor wine-tasting event, where \$55 gets you unlimited samples from more than 100 producers. Book a room ... for this year's fest May 15-17 or head over March 20-22 for the town's equally lauded Zinfandel Festival."

**Lori Rackl, "The year's best. 2008 in Review. Some ups and downs during 12 months of globe-trotting," CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, December 31, 2008.**

"There's another California region that has not gotten as much attention as a source of fine zinfandel, but maybe it should. That's Paso Robles. ... A couple of years ago, the wine panel tried to organize a tasting of Paso Robles zinfandels, but we were not able to find enough bottles. This time around we had no trouble assembling a group of 20 bottles. ... I don't recall tasting so many well-balanced zinfandels at one time, which is more the result of careful, conscientious winemaking than it is the character of the region."

**Eric Asimov, "Wines of the Times: Search Party Roams Paso Robles," NEW YORK TIMES, October 15, 2008**

"After an easy 3 1/2 -hour drive from Los Angeles, we explored Paso Robles' markets and hillsides, seeking out local flavors in one of the Golden State's 'last frontier' wine regions. Paso Robles, nestled between the Santa Lucia Mountains and the Cholame Hills, is an ideal place to grow Rhône grapes like Syrah, Mourvèdre, and Grenache. Amy Butler (Winemaker) touted the mineral-rich soil and daily 50-degree temperature swings as exactly what her grapes need to make earthy, smoky wines. Having tasted ... we heartily agreed."

**Daniel Schumacher, "It's the undiscovered wine country," COTTAGE LIVING, October 2008**

"Best known as the home to world-class Rhône varietal wines, this small town along the Central Coast of California feels like Napa Valley 25 years ago. There are standout restaurants, excellent olive oils, award-winning cheeses and, of course, great wineries. This is the next great California food town.

**Andrew Knowlton, "America's Foodiest Small Town," BON APPETIT, October 2008**

"In the last six years, the number of wineries in Paso Robles - halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles - has more than quadrupled, from 50 to more than 200. Edgy Rhône varieties (Syrah and cousins) are coming on strong, and new places to enjoy them - wine bars, restaurants, tasting rooms, and inns - are keeping pace. Put a trip here on your short list."

**"Western Wine Awards 2008. Most Exciting New Wine Region: Paso Robles," SUNSET, September 2008**

"Paso Robles' small-town charm evokes a gentler, quieter California. With more than 170 wineries, however, El Paso de Robles, midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, is also quickly becoming known as the home of the state's fastest-growing wine country, not to mention a mecca for foodies."

**Beth Fhaner, "Travel Day-Tripping: Paso Robles," WESTWAYS, September 2008**

"Paso Robles, America's hottest wine district ... though often overlooked by casual consumers, the region's wines have earned acclaim from critics and filled trophy cases with prestigious awards. If you've never popped the cork on something out of Paso, it won't be long now. This wine-producing region is the third-largest in California, after Napa and Sonoma, and the fastest-growing in the state. ... The region's emergence has prompted some to hail it as the 'next Napa,' which is meant as praise, even if it makes Paso vintners cringe. Every appellation prides itself on its uniqueness. While Napa built its name on burly Cabernets, Paso Robles rests its laurels on Rhône varietals: Grenache, Mourvèdre, and especially Syrah, a versatile grape that flourishes in Paso's alluvial soil."

**Josh Sens, "Que Syrah, Syrah," Outside's GO Magazine, August/September 2008**

"Mention Paso Robles to some people and they only remember the town as that Highway 101 skirts. ... Not any more. In the last few years ... Paso Robles has become a destination for wine lovers. ...The entire Paso Robles area is refreshingly casual. Dogs at tasting rooms are plentiful and there is seldom a fee for tasting even the most coveted wines. Keep in mind that this region has embraced the making of fine wine, and now fine dining and lodging as well, with a serious passion. Yet what makes a visit to this somewhat distant spot such a treat is the fact the locals...seek to improve and to change, but not at the price of their heritage. As a place to spend a weekend, or even longer, it is very hard to improve upon."

**Charles Neave, "Destination: Paso Robles. New energy transforms an old wine region," NAPA VALLEY REGISTER, April 11, 2008.**



"The Central Coast continues to be an enormous work in progress with many new vineyards as well as some emerging superstars. Yet, by and large, it reveals more promising potential than current day sizzle. There is no question that some fabulous terroirs exist in this area from such older, more established regions as Paso Robles and the Santa Ynez Valley. Newer thrilling sites include the Santa Rita Hills and the limestone hillsides west of Highway 101. ... Having intensively tasted and studied these wines for a number of years, it appears to me that while single varietal wines can achieve special heights, the finest offerings tend to be blends, in the case of the Rhône Rangers, blends of Syrah with Grenache, Mourvèdre, and occasionally Petite Sirah. ... While the quality of the whites is still behind the Rhône Ranger reds, the potential for stunning blends of Marsanne, Roussanne, Viognier, and Grenache Blanc is undeniable, as evidenced by the dry whites from Linne Calodo ... and Tablas Creek. ... I suspect our government is going to break up the Central Coast into smaller appellations, which it certainly merits. This will help consumers understand one of the most exciting wine regions in the United States, if not the world."

**Robert M. Parker, Jr., "Recommended New Releases: California's Rhône Rangers (Primarily from the Central Coast)," THE WINE ADVOCATE, June 30, 2008.**

"Reporters are always on the lookout for the next new thing. ... So when I headed last month to Paso Robles - California's fastest-growing wine region - I had my headline already written: 'The New Napa.' ... 'People in Paso can't stand being labeled 'the new Napa' ... These are small-town folks who don't like commercialization or the whole hoity-toity thing. When you walk into the wineries here, nine times out of 10 you're dealing with the people who own them, the people who are coming in from the vineyard and washing their hands before they pour you their wine. That doesn't happen too often in Napa."

**Lori Rackl, "Travel: 'New Napa'? Not," CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, June 18, 2008**

"Two hundred thirty-five miles southeast of Napa and 90 miles north of trendy Santa Ynez Valley (glorified in Sideways) lies one of America's last wine secrets: Paso Robles, California. ... Paso has blossomed into a full-fledged wine region ... Hot days and cold nights give the Zinfandels, Cabernets and Syrahs produced by top wineries ... good acidity and a deep, almost opaque color."

**Claire Martin, "Travel: New Wine Vacations. From India to Patagonia, vintners are breaking ground in some surprising, and adventure-friendly, locales," MEN'S JOURNAL, May 2008.**

"(Paso Robles ) is one of the newest getaway spots on California's map. ... What wine enthusiasts get so excited about is the vast diversity of soil and climate conditions that can be found within the relatively small boundaries of Paso Robles, and also the huge temperature swings that challenge the vines."

**Jolene Thym, "Paso Robles ripe and ready. Wineries turn slumbering cowtown into cool getaway," OAKLAND TRIBUNE, January 9, 2008**

"Vintage 2005 provides the perfect opportunity for exploring the diverse terroir expressions of California's Central Coast ... One of the more intriguing aspects of the Central Coast is the fact that ... there are many instances where multiple producers work with fruit from the same vineyard. Wine lovers can thus actually search for, and identify, individual vineyard expression, as has been the case for generations in many Old World regions."

**Josh Reynolds, "Focus on the Central Coast," STEPHEN TANZER'S INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR, November/December 2007**

"In a decade, Paso Robles has transformed from a well-situated pit stop for motorists plying Highway 101 (with wineries scattered among cow pastures) to the fastest growing wine appellation in California. Is it destined to become the next Napa? Not if locals can help it. ... Paso, at its core, is still dressed-down wine country - without the less palatable notes of attitude and hypercommercialism."

**Andy Isaacson, "The Next Napa?" NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER, November/December 2007**

"Many of the vineyards and wineries of California's Central Coast are still young, but their potential to produce great Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Syrah is enormous. In a decade, the top viticultural areas of Santa Barbara, the Santa Rita Hills, and the limestone hillsides west of Paso Robles will be as well known as the Napa and Sonoma Valleys."

**Robert M. Parker, Jr., "A Taste of California's Future," BUSINESS WEEK, August 7, 2006**

"The wineries, which range from extremely fancy to winsomely down-home, are the best reason to visit the area, and if you like full, rich wines, you'll be well rewarded. Rhône varietals excel, as does Zinfandel."

**James Rodewald, "Now: Napa Next: Paso Robles," GOURMET, December 2005**



# VINTAGES

## WEATHER AND HARVEST OVERVIEW, 2000-2008



**distinct. different.**

### 2000

2000 was a slightly below average rain season, with the majority of rain coming in December and January. Early springtime weather warmed quickly with average highs near 80 degrees. Bud break was about two weeks earlier than most years, but the month of May cooled significantly, stalling bloom and berry set for a few weeks. Summer daytime temperatures returned to normal while cooler than average summer nights helped maintain good acidity in the grape. In the end, harvest was just about two weeks later than in most years.

### 2001

The 2001 growing season started with a cold winter with less than average rainfall that led to bud break in late March and a late frost that lowered yields. Bloom occurred under warm conditions followed by very warm winds that caused cluster damage in some microclimates. A protracted heat wave in the early summer kept vines under extreme stress, resulting in a smaller crop size. Summer and fall temperatures remained consistently warm, providing an optimal growing season, though yields were down 50 percent below normal for some vineyards.

### 2002

The 2002 growing season began with a warm, dry winter that yielded the lowest rainfall in five years. Bud break occurred in March with naturally reduced bud count in the grapevines. Spring remained dry and cool. June, July and August were the warmest summer months in five years. The combination of low rainfall and a very warm summer resulted in unusually small berries and clusters. Veraison came early, and the months following consisted of moderate temperatures ideal for maturing grapes over a long growing season.

### 2003

The winter months of the 2003 growing season were warm and dry. This mild winter transformed into a warm spring, which brought bud break in March. Normal hot summer temperatures held throughout fruit sizing, veraison and maturation. By harvest in late fall, fruit ripened into a perfect balance of Brix and pH.

### 2004

2004 was looking to be an ideal season with a warm spring and subsequent very early flowering unmarred by frost. A fairly mild summer followed until the end of August and beginning of September, when periods of temperatures in the high 90s caused rapid sugar jumps in the grapes. After September, cooler weather allowed fruit to hang and develop flavor, and the accelerated harvest provided protection against the earliest onset (mid-October) of the rainy season in years. Many varieties reached maturity in mid-August, one of the earliest harvests on record.



## 2005

2005's rainfall ranks as the eighth wettest year since 1869-1870 when official records began to be published in Paso Robles. The cool, wet spring was followed by a sunny and dry but relatively cool early summer, until July, when daytime highs reached 100 degrees and stayed there for a period of two weeks. Harvest began around the beginning of September and ended the first week in November. Although this harvest resulted in the largest crush on record in the state, winemakers were thrilled with the consistent high quality of wine grapes received.

## 2006

Above average winter rains and a cool spring got 2006 vineyards off to a wet and late start. After an unusual heat wave in late July/early August, cooler than normal summer weather (high 80s to low 90s) returned until September when a cooling trend and cloudy skies delayed the last stage of grape maturity by at least 10 days. Mid-September warmed again and the resulting harvest was delayed but unhurried with beautiful weather persisting into November. Winemakers reported a higher than normal crop (perhaps a shade below 2005's levels) with notable elegance, pure flavors, medium body and comparatively lower alcohol levels.

## 2007

The 2007 vintage was dominated by the cold, dry winter that preceded it. Temperatures dropped into single digits in January, which delayed the onset of flowering and reduced the vigor of the vines. Rainfall levels just 40 percent of normal further stressed the vines. The summer was moderate in temperature, producing a long, slow harvest with yields down 15 to 30 percent from 2005 and 2006. The wines were intensely flavored, dark in color, with surprisingly gentle tannins for such a powerful vintage. Winemakers report that the 2007 vintage has the potential to be a classic one for the Paso Robles region.

## 2008

2008 was a challenging vintage for most of California, with a very cold April resulting in widespread frost damage, wind during flowering causing uneven fruit set, a heat spike in August, and an unusual freeze in early October. Gorgeous weather in late October saved the vintage for many producers. Results will vary depending on varieties planted, with Bordeaux varieties particularly affected by shatter and very low yields, and early-ripening varieties impacted by the August heat spike. Overall yields were below the low levels of 2007 (as much as 50 percent less than normal), but the wines, particularly later-ripening varieties, proving to be generous in flavor and beautifully balanced.



# PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY

## GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW



**distinct. different.**

Paso Robles Wine Country is centrally located between San Francisco and Los Angeles along California's Central Coast. As California's fastest growing wine region and largest geographic appellation, the territory encompasses more than 26,000 vineyard acres and more than 180 wineries. With a greater day-to-night temperature swing than any other appellation in California, distinct microclimates, diverse soils and a long growing season, Paso Robles is a unique wine region blessed with optimal growing conditions for producing premium and ultra premium wines. More than 40 wine grape varieties are grown in Paso Robles, ranging from Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, to Syrah, Viognier and Roussanne, to Zinfandel, the area's heritage wine varietal.

### LOCATION

Paso Robles Wine Country is situated along U.S. Highway 101 in the center of California's Central Coast, halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles.



### PASO ROBLES VITICULTURAL AREA

Established in 1983, and expanded in 1997 then again in 2009, the Paso Robles American Viticultural Area (AVA) is a large, diverse appellation located within northern San Luis Obispo County, comprised of a number of distinctive grape growing regions generally characterized by rolling hills east of the Salinas River and steeper hillsides, cut by small canyons, west of the Salinas River.

The Paso Robles AVA's western boundary is just six miles from the Pacific Ocean. The appellation lies on the inland side of the Santa Lucia coastal mountains in San Luis Obispo County, and roughly forms a rectangle 35 miles from east to west, and 25 miles from north to south. It extends from the Monterey County border to the north, to the Cuesta Grade below Santa Margarita to the south, and from the Santa Lucia Mountains to the west, to the Cholame Hills to the east.

The appellation comprises 614,000 acres of which more than 26,000 acres are in wine grape vines. It is the fastest growing and largest by far of three AVAs in San Luis Obispo County, and the main reason that the county ranks behind only Napa, Sonoma and Monterey counties in planted acreage among the state's coastal growing areas.

### TOPOGRAPHY

The Paso Robles AVA is a land of diversity and contrast that encompasses river bottoms to rolling hills and flat lands to mountains. The major geographical features of the area are the Santa Lucia Range, the Salinas River Valley and the Templeton Gap.



## SOILS

California's Central Coast is geologically different from other California wine growing regions. Unlike others with deep, rich fertile valley soils, over 45 soil series are found in the Paso Robles AVA. These are primarily bedrock derived soils from weathered granite, older marine sedimentary rocks, volcanic rocks and younger marine sedimentary rocks of the Miocene age Monterey Formation featuring calcareous shales, sandstone or mudstone. Soil diversity is the norm and a vineyard block may commonly contain several different soil types.

What is really unique about Paso Robles AVA soils is the predominance of desirable calcareous soils found throughout the region and the high soil pH values of 7.4 to 8.6 that are not typical of California's other viticultural areas. Due to geologic uplift, calcareous shale is plentiful in Paso Robles' west-side hills, where dense clay-based soils combine with relatively plentiful rainfall to make it possible for some vines to be dry-farmed without supplemental irrigation. More granular forms of broken down calcareous shale is found on the eastern hills and valley of the AVA. On both sides of the Salinas River, gently rolling hills are covered with sandy, loamy soils. In the watershed areas, particularly the Estrella River plain, loam and clay are overlain with sand.

## CLIMATE

The proximity of the Pacific Ocean, orientation of numerous canyons and valleys, and varying elevations produce many different distinct microclimates in the Paso Robles AVA.

The area benefits from the largest swing between high daytime and low nighttime temperatures of any region in California as a result of the cool marine air that flows east through the Templeton Gap and south along the Salinas River Valley from the Monterey Bay. The region's summer is characterized by warm, clear days, generally unencumbered by clouds, fog or severe winds. Daytime high temperatures in the summer typically fall between 85 and 105 degrees Fahrenheit, but nighttime low temperatures usually can drop by 40 to 50 degrees, cooled by a marine layer that moves over the region in the mid to late afternoon. This diurnal fluctuation is considered a key by winemakers and wine grape growers to attain the intense varietal character displayed in wine grapes from the area.

September, October and the first half of November are typically rain-free and warm, giving Paso Robles vines the advantage of time to produce fully mature fruit, while the overnight cooling keeps the grapes' acid chemistry in balance. The first rainfall of the season is typically about two weeks later than Napa or Sonoma, and a month later than Mendocino, giving winemakers the luxury of waiting for optimal ripeness. Winter temperatures tend to dip into the low twenties in the cooler regions, with most vineyards becoming fully dormant by mid-December. Frost is a potential threat through mid-May, especially following a northern weather system.

## RAINFALL

The rainfall of the region, like its climate and soils, varies greatly depending on the vineyard's proximity to the Pacific Ocean and the Templeton Gap. Average annual rainfall for the City of Paso Robles is 15.5 inches, but rainfall ranges from eight inches in the eastern portions of the AVA to as much as 45 inches on the far western ridges. The first rains typically arrive in early-to-mid November, with the heaviest amounts usually occurring January through March. These rain totals are typically dominated by relatively few, but substantial, Pacific storms that can contribute several inches of rain in just a few days.

## ELEVATION

The City of Paso Robles rests at 740 feet above sea level. Paso Robles vineyards east of the Salinas River range from 700 to 1,200 feet in elevation while those to the west range from 850 to 2,000 feet.

## GROWING SEASON

Due to cool nights, warm days, and typically late rains, Paso Robles vines tend to have a longer growing season and grapes have more hang time compared to other wine regions, resulting in fully mature fruit whose acid chemistry is kept in balance through the area's overnight cooling.



# HISTORY

## EARLY YEARS THROUGH 1980s



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Paso Robles was named for its local oak trees, El Paso de Robles, “The Pass of the Oaks.” The name was recorded in 1828 as a rancho where the padres of San Miguel sowed wheat, and the city was founded on the rancho in 1886 and incorporated in 1889. Today the city’s name is commonly shortened to Paso Robles.

The Paso Robles American Viticultural Appellation (AVA) is home to more than 180 wineries and 26,000 vineyard acres focusing on premium wine production. The distinct microclimates and diverse soils, combined with warm days and cool nights, make growing conditions ideal for producing more than 40 wine varietals from Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, to Syrah, Viognier and Roussanne, to Zinfandel, the area’s heritage wine variety.

### EARLY YEARS

The greater Paso Robles region has a rich history of winemaking and wine grape growing that was introduced by the Franciscan Friars beginning circa 1790 at the Asistencia located on the Santa Margarita Ranch, an assistant chapel to Mission San Luis Obispo that still stands preserved today, and at Mission San Miguel, founded in 1797 by Father Lasuen, who succeeded Father Serra (1713-1784) as Presidente of the missions. In 1815 grapes were planted on 22 acres at the mission vineyards three miles north of Mission San Miguel (today’s Vineyard Canyon). The Padres produced wine for sacramental purposes and made brandy for export.

After Mexico secularized the California missions in the 1830s, the mission vineyards were abandoned until European immigrant farmers started to arrive in the mid 1850s following California’s statehood on September 9, 1850. The first to farm wine grapes was a Frenchman, Pierre Hypolite Dallidet, who arrived in San Luis Obispo in 1853, where he purchased land at what is now on the corner of Pacific and Toro Streets, planted a commercial seven acre vineyard and later added a winery. Eventually the vineyard grew to 16 acres and included some of the original mission plantings. More Europeans emigrated to the area, including Englishman Henry Ditmas, who began the area’s first vineyard with imported Zinfandel and Muscat grapes from France and Spain for his 560 acre Rancho Saucelito in nearby Arroyo Grande.

### 1880s TO 1920s

Commercial winemaking was introduced in the late 1870s when Indiana rancher Andrew York began planting vineyards on his 240-acre homestead. Within a few years, he found that the vines were yielding more than he could market, prompting him in 1882 to establish Ascension Winery, known today as York Mountain Winery. The family planted some of the area’s earliest Zinfandel vines, making Paso Robles famous for this variety. York initially sold his wines in San Luis Obispo and eventually as far away as San Francisco. Today, York Mountain Winery (located within the York Mountain AVA, adjacent to the Paso Robles AVA ) remains the oldest winery in continuous operation in the county.

Following York’s early success in the wine business, immigrant farming families settled in the area. In 1884 the Ernst family arrived from Geneseo, Illinois, and over the next 20 years planted 25 varieties of wine grapes made into wines receiving wide acclaim. In 1886, Gerd Klintworth planted a vineyard in the Geneseo/Linne area and produced the first white wine in the region. In 1890, Frenchman Adolf Siot planted Zinfandel west of Templeton. In the 1920s, Italian families starting vineyards included Dusi, Martinelli, Busi, Vosti and Bianchi - many of which are still being farmed today by the families’ third and fourth generations.

### 1920s AND 1930s: ZINFANDEL

There was a flurry of viticultural activity in the early 1920s when several families immigrated to the area to establish family vineyards and wineries. The Dusi family purchased a vineyard in 1924; these old head-pruned Zinfandel vines are now owned and cultivated by their son, Benito. Frank Pesenti also planted Zinfandel on his property in 1923, with the guidance of their neighbor Siot, although the Pesenti Winery (now Turley Winery) was not bonded until 1934.

The Paso Robles wine region gained more notoriety when Ignace Paderewski, the famous Polish statesman and concert pianist, visited Paso Robles for the hot springs that brought relief to his ailing hands. He became enchanted with the area and purchased 2,000



acres. In the early 1920s, he planted Petite Sirah and Zinfandel on his Rancho San Ignacio vineyard in the Adelaida area. When Prohibition ended, Paderewski's wine was made at York Mountain Winery. The wines produced from grapes grown on Rancho San Ignacio went on to become award-winners and Paso Robles' reputation as a premier wine region grew.

Of any variety, Zinfandel had a strong influence on the early growth and development of the wine industry in Paso Robles. It remains a key wine varietal for several wineries, including, among others, Peachy Canyon Winery, Turley Wine Cellars, Tobin James Cellars, Norman Vineyards, Four Vines Winery, Castoro Cellars and Nadeau Family Vintners.

### **1960s AND 1970s: CABERNET SAUVIGNON, LARGE PLANTINGS**

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a new generation of vineyard pioneers in the Paso Robles area, bringing university training and financial resources for large plantings. Dr. Stanley Hoffman, under the guidance of U.C. Davis and legendary enologist André Tchelistcheff, planted some of the region's first Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay on his 1,200-acre ranch next to the old Paderewski Ranch in the hills of Adelaida, about five miles west of town. His Hoffman Mountain Ranch Winery (a portion now owned by Adelaida Cellars) was the first large-scale modern facility in the area and one that created a stir in international wine circles in the 1970s with his Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon.

Cabernet Sauvignon remains the leading variety for the Paso Robles appellation, accounting for 38 percent of the region's planted wine grape acreage. Due to the intense varietal character of wine grapes grown in this diverse appellation, Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon wines consistently garner national and international acclaim, including, among others, J. Lohr Vineyards and Wines, Treana Winery, Adelaida Cellars and Chateau Margene.

New wine grape growers also began to cultivate the first large plantings on the east side of the Salinas River. Bob Young planted the area's first large scale commercial vineyard, now known as Rancho Dos Amigos on Shandon Heights. Herman Schwartz, managing partner for a group of investors, planted the 500-acre Rancho Tierra Rejada in 1973 (purchased in 2006 it is now known as Shimmin Canyon Vineyard). From 1973 to 1977 Gary Eberle and Cliff Giacobine planted 700 acres, including the first modern commercial acreage of Syrah in the state and established Estrella River Winery, the largest winery in the area (purchased in 1988 by Nestle/Beringer).

### **1980s: LARGE SCALE WINERIES**

Recognizing the area's unique yet very diverse terroir, the 617,000-acre Paso Robles AVA and adjacent 6,400-acre York Mountain AVA were established in 1983.

Larger vineyards and wineries continued to be established in Paso Robles in the 1980s as growers recognized that favorable soil and climate conditions, combined with reasonably priced and available land, allowed them to grow high-quality wine grapes at more competitive price levels than was possible in other appellations. In 1988, J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines expanded into Paso Robles to focus on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and other red varietals. J. Lohr is the leading producer of Paso Robles AVA wines with an annual production of over 500,000 cases from over 2,000 acres of vineyards that it owns within the appellation. Meridian Vineyards, now owned by Fosters Wine Estates, was also established in 1988 and is one of the most widely nationally distributed brands based in Paso Robles.

Mid-size wineries were also established during this period. In 1982, Arciero Vineyards and EOS Estate Winery, now with over 700 acres and production at 160,000 cases, pioneered the planting of several premium Italian varietals, as well as substantial plantings of Zinfandel and Petite Sirah. Now owned by Sapphire Brands, EOS Estate Winery is one of many wineries reducing its carbon footprint in Paso Robles by becoming 100% solar powered. In 1983, Wild Horse Winery and Vineyards was established by Kenneth Volk. Now owned by Constellation Brands, it produces 150,000 cases with an average of 15 different varietal wines each year, including a number of heirloom varietals – the largest spectrum of varietal wines to be found in any tasting room in the area. Treana Winery, owned by the Hope family, was established in 1996 and now produces 300,000 cases between the Treana and Liberty School brands. Originally called Hope Farms, the family planted Cabernet Sauvignon in Paso Robles in 1978 and sourced their fruit to Napa.

### **WILD WEST FOOTNOTE**

Paso Robles is sometimes referred to as the wild west of the California wine industry. Outlaws Frank & Jesse James' uncle Drury James was a co-founder of the town of El Paso de Robles and was part owner of the original hot springs hotel, as well as a co-owner of the famous La Panza Ranch 40 miles east of Paso Robles. After holding up a bank in Russellville, Kentucky, on March 20, 1868 the James boys worked their way to Paso Robles and stayed at the La Panza Ranch until December of 1869. Jesse visited his uncle at the hot springs to heal lung problems from his gunshot wounds under the alias "Howard". In 1882, Jesse was murdered by his friend Bob Ford in Missouri and Frank eventually turned himself in to serve three years in prison. Upon his release he lived a quiet, straight life often visiting his Aunt and Uncle in Paso Robles.



# HISTORY

## 1990s TO PRESENT



### 1990s TO PRESENT: INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT, RHÔNES AND BORDEAUX

Gary Eberle planted Syrah in the mid 1970s, and provided plant material from that vineyard to many winemakers in the state, but Rhône varieties did not form an important part of Paso Robles' identity until 1989. That year, the Perrin family (of the Rhône Valley's Chateau de Beaucastel, revered producer of Chateauneuf-du-Pape) and their American importer Robert Haas established their international joint venture, Tablas Creek Vineyard, in the calcareous hills of the Adelaida region northwest of town. With 80 acres planted to the traditional varieties of Chateauneuf-du-Pape, Tablas Creek imported exclusive clonal material from the Rhône Valley, and made those clones available to other interested growers around the state.

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Since 1989, Paso Robles has seen an explosion of plantings of Rhône varieties. Now, in addition to the first Syrah plantings in California, it also has the largest acreage of Syrah, Viognier and Roussanne. Acres planted under Rhône varieties jumped from fewer than 100 acres in 1994 to more than 2,200 in 2006. During that time, at least 10 wineries focusing on Rhône varieties were established. The emerging Paso Robles Rhône movement received a boost in 1993 with Hospice du Rhône, the world's largest Rhône wine celebration. Paso Robles now plays host to more than 3,000 Rhône wine enthusiasts, international media and an A-list of Rhône producers from all over the world.

Since the early 1990s, Paso Robles wines have proven consistent gold medal winners and have been featured regularly in the top rankings of national and international wine reviews. A milestone in the worldwide recognition of Paso Robles Wine Country as a premier wine region came in 2000 when JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery's Bordeaux-style ISOSCELES was named one of the top 10 wines in the world by the Wine Spectator.

### 2000s: BOUTIQUE WINERIES, DOWNTOWN TASTING ROOMS, HOSPITALITY CENTERS

Since 2000, the number of bonded wineries in Paso Robles Wine Country has more than tripled from 50 to more than 180, mostly due to an influx of boutique and small family-owned vineyards and wineries. The appellation's burgeoning reputation has enticed well known Californian wineries from other wine regions, such as Firestone Vineyard (now owned by the Foley Wine Group) and Turley Wine Cellars, to make sizeable investments in Paso Robles, and also seduced a number of winemakers from France, Australia, South Africa and Switzerland eager to find New World applications for their winemaking skills.

The result is many young boutique wineries are quickly gaining recognition and a following for their innovative and proprietary Paso Robles blends of Bordeaux, Rhône and Zinfandel varieties, including, among many others, L'Aventure, Linne Calodo Cellars, Anglim Winery, Halter Ranch Vineyard, Midnight Cellars, Pipestone Vineyards, Villicana Winery and Wild Coyote. With the dramatic increase of small wineries has come a focus on downtown tasting rooms, including Anglim Winery, Arroyo Robles Winery, Clayhouse Vineyards, D'Anbino Vineyards & Cellars, Edward Sellers Vineyards & Wines, The Midlife Crisis Winery, Ortman Family Winery, Pianetta Winery and Vihuela Winery.

Several mid-to-larger size operations also have been building a hospitality focus for their showcase wineries. In addition to their tasting facility, Justin's complex includes the recently completed Isosceles Center, Just Inn and Deborah's Room. Others include the J. Lohr Wine Center, Robert Hall Winery Hospitality Center, Vina Robles Hospitality Center, Niner Wine Estates, Eagle Castle Winery, Firestone Vineyard and the caves at Eberle Winery. And the future looks bright with some of the most influential members of the wine press urging their readers to discover the wines from Paso Robles. In the June 30, 2005 issue of Wine Advocate, Robert M. Parker, Jr. asserts "there is no question that a decade from now, the top viticultural areas of Santa Barbara, Santa Rita Hills and the limestone hillsides west of Paso Robles will be as well-known as the glamorous vineyards of Napa Valley."



# WINES

Paso Robles winemakers and wine grape growers are in accord when they say “Quality wine begins in the vineyard.” Paso Robles wines tend to be deeply colored and rich due to the intensity of the sun, with fairly bright acidity due to the cool nights. However, beyond these generalizations, the region’s diversity prevents easy characterization of its wines.



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## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF PASO ROBLES VARIETAL WINES

The wine grapes of the Paso Robles American Viticultural Appellation (AVA) display intense varietal character due in part to the large swing between warm days and cool nights. With a longer growing season, Paso Robles wine grapes have more hang time compared to other wine regions, resulting in mature fruit with balanced acid chemistry.

As described in his book *Matt Kramer’s New California Wine: Making Sense of Napa Valley, Sonoma, Central Coast and Beyond* (2004), “You can pick just about any Paso Robles red, whether Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Zinfandel, Merlot or Pinot Noir, and you will find the following:

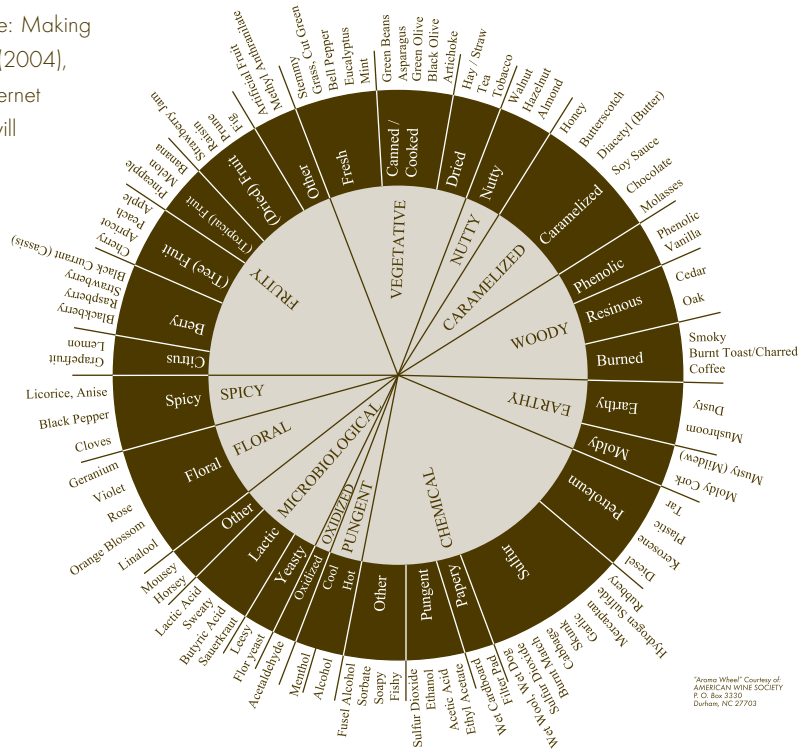
- Soft, sometimes seemingly nonexistent, tannins.
- Intense, deep color verging on the opaque.
- An unmistakable scent and taste of dark chocolate.
- A soft lushness with a velvety ‘mouth feel.’
- Above all, a rich, opulent, voluptuous fruitiness, often with a whiff of violets.”

These distinct characteristics are found throughout the region’s most widely planted grapes. Aromas typically associated with these varietals include:

- Cabernet Sauvignon – black raspberry, black cherry, cassis, tobacco/cedar and cocoa.
- Merlot – cherries, sweet spice, fresh/dried herbs, olives, red and black berries and cocoa.
- Syrah – blackberry, white pepper, black pepper, smoky, tar, blueberry, violets, roasted game, leather and dried herbs.
- Zinfandel – black pepper, sweet “zin” spice, red/black berries, jammy, fruit bomb, wild bramble berry, raisins and prunes.

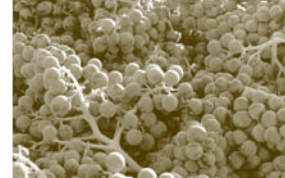
Paso Robles whites can be distinguished with the following flavors.

- Chardonnay – floral, peach, apricot, nectarine, lightly spiced pear and light minerality.
- Viognier – peach, apricot, citrus blossom, floral, wet stone, honeysuckle and sweet spice.
- Roussanne – honey, lemon-lime, floral, apricot, corn, pear, allspice and lanolin.



# PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY ALLIANCE

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance - [www.pasowine.com](http://www.pasowine.com) - is responsible for marketing and promotional programs designed to strengthen brand awareness locally, regionally and nationally, and attract wine enthusiasts to Paso Robles Wine Country. Focusing on both grower and vintner interests, Wine Country Alliance efforts include trade and consumer outreach, media relations and visits, buyer tours, educational and research programs to ensure quality wine grape growing and wine production, legislative monitoring and support of the Wine Institute's international outreach programs. The Alliance also partners promotions and activities with the Wine Institute, California Winegrape Growers (CAWG), Central Coast Vineyard Team (CCVT), Family Winemakers and Zinfandel Advocates & Producers (ZAP). The Alliance represents nearly 500 members, including wineries, wine grape growers, hospitality partners and related associate businesses. In addition to four annual consumer events that showcase the region, the organization produces an annual Tour Brochure and annual Membership Directory, The Wine Country News, and The Cluster Times-Herald (a quarterly newsletter for the Wine Country Alliance's ambassador program). Starting in 2005, the Wine Country Alliance initiated a national market tour to promote Paso Robles Wine Country. These national Grand Tastings target trade and media in top tier U.S. markets - to date: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Ft. Lauderdale, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, New York, Orange County, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, Tampa and Washington, D.C. - with an average of 30 participating wineries who showcase quality wines of the region.



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## ANNUAL EVENTS

The Paso Robles wine community works together to welcome wine enthusiasts throughout the year with four annual events that focus on the region.

- **Paso Robles Zinfandel Festival**, a celebration of Paso Robles' heritage grape and the second largest Zinfandel tasting in the world, is held the third weekend in March. The Grand Tasting, held on Saturday evening, spotlights locally produced Zinfandels and a collectible Winemakers Master Zinfandel Blend that is only available at the live auction. The Zinfandel Festival kicks off Friday afternoon with a RESERVE event featuring barrel sample and reserve tier wines. A portion of proceeds from the annual live and silent auction Saturday benefits local vineyard workers and their families with health, education and social services.
- **Paso Robles Wine Festival** garners both regional and national attention as the largest outdoor wine festival by a single wine region in California with over 6,000 tickets typically sold. The event, held annually at the Paso Robles City Park on the third Saturday of May, offers wine enthusiasts the opportunity to taste wine from more than 80 Paso Robles wineries and to enjoy the region's epicurean delights including organic, sustainable and artisanal foods. The festival kicks off Friday afternoon with RESERVE, a special event offering a tasting of barrel, reserve and library wines and a live and silent auction, with a portion of proceeds benefitting local vineyard workers and their families with health, education and social services. The entire weekend is framed by individual events by over 100 of the area's wineries.
- **Harvest Wine Weekend**, held the third weekend in October, provides an opportunity for consumers to enjoy self-guided tours of wineries who celebrate the vintage with a cornucopia of activities, including special winemaker dinners, exclusive barrel samples, seminars, barbeques, live music and winery tours.
- **CRAVE** - A Paso Robles Wine Experience. A new event in 2008, CRAVE targets the "millennial" demographic (ages 21-29) - the next generation of wine consumers - with an educational and fun varietal wine tasting experience with 65 wineries participating in a contemporary lounge-like atmosphere.

