



BEGINNER

MICHIGAN WINES

Content contributed by Jenny Parker, Imperial Beverage

Each year, Michigan's wine, grapes, and grape juice products and related industries ...

- produce nearly \$790 million of total economic value to the State of Michigan
- pay more than \$42 million in state and local taxes in Michigan, and an additional \$42 million in federal taxes
- account for more than 5,000 jobs across the state, for a payroll of more than \$190 million

Michigan has a unique and diversified agriculture – second only to California. Michigan ranks 4th among states for grape production and ranks 13th among states for wine production. With a long history of quality fruit production and the influence of the Great Lakes, Michigan has over 90 wineries. Michigan wine growers claim over 50 wine grape varieties planted in the state. Their styles vary from fruit-forward wines to bone dry wines and fortified wines to late harvest and ice wines.

“**"Lake effect" protects the vines with snow in winter, retards bud break in spring helping avoid frost damage, and extends the growing season by up to four weeks.**”

The overall wine quality is good/excellent and improving. Currently there are over 2,000 acres of wine grapes, with Riesling being the leading white and Pinot Noir being the leading red grape varieties planted. Four wine trails also dot the state leading to increased tourism and consumer awareness of this great Michigan treasure.

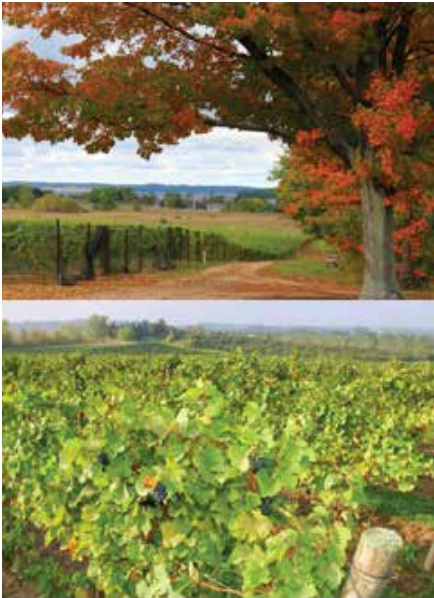
Growing popularity of Michigan wine is leading to the number of wineries increasing. Acreage is increasing, quality is increasing and industry members are working together –creating wine trails, raising funds to supplement state funding, expanding research and educational programs – both informal professional development and programs leading to accreditation are growing at a high rate.

Michigan has four AVA's (Accredited Viticultural Areas). In the northwest part of the state, near Traverse City, is the Leelanau Peninsula and the Old Mission Peninsula. This area grows 51% of Michigan's wine grapes. In the southwest part of the state is the Lake Michigan Shore and Fennville appellations, where 45% of Michigan's wine grapes are grown.



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The western shore of Michigan's lower peninsula has been the primary region of commercial wine grape production in the state. Harvest starts around the state (for early hybrid varieties) at the end of August and in the southwest it may extend into November for late-ripening parcels. Most of Michigan's quality wine grapes grow within 25 miles of Lake Michigan. Here, the "lake effect" protects the vines with snow in winter, retards bud break in spring helping avoid frost damage, and extends the growing season by up to four weeks.