

Ohio Grape Facts

Grapes successfully grown in Ohio

American

Catawba
Concord
Norton

Hybrid

Aurora
Chambourcin
Chancellor
Chardonel
DeChaunac
Foch
Frontenac
Seyval
Traminette
Vidal Blanc

Vinifera

Cabernet Franc
Cabernet Sauvignon
Chardonnay
Gewürztraminer
Pinot Gris
Pinto Noir
Riesling

Table grapes

Reliance
Mars

Key grapes for Ohio

Chambourcin grapes are being used for still and sparkling wines. Cold resistant these grapes make a full-bodied wine with deep red color. Ohio wineries are taming this grape to produce excellent rosés along with the satisfying still wines.

Vidal Blanc is the grape of choice for Ohio ice wines. A winter hardy grape Ohio winemakers also use it to make delicious white wines from sweet to dry with the scent of currants. Its thick skin and slow ripening habit makes it an excellent grape to leave on the vines for picking after the grapes have frozen for ice wine.

Cabernet Franc is a versatile winter hardy black grape used by Ohio winemakers for styles from rosé to ice wine. Grown all over the state, this grape makes a well-balance, fruity wine.

Cabernet Sauvignon made from Ohio grapes has a much fruitier character and acid balance. The grape is grown successfully in the Lake Erie appellation and in southern Ohio in the Ohio River Valley appellation. Each has a distinct appeal based upon the winemaker's style and *terroir*.

Pinot Gris is a relatively new grape for Ohio and does extremely well north of I-70. Wine made from this Ohio-grown grape has been chosen Best of Show and Director's Choice in California wine competitions for the past few years. This grape produces a light, fruity, white wine that Ohio consumers really enjoy.

Pinot Noir is a grape known to be challenging in the best of growing conditions. Yet, in Ohio several small production wineries make world-class wines from this grape. When the vines are perfectly sited and the vineyard manager is diligent, Ohio Pinot Noirs compare with the best in the world.

Riesling, known as the Queen of grapes, thrives along the Lake Erie shores and in other areas of Ohio. Ohio Rieslings rival some of Germany's best and account for much of Ohio's reputation in winemaking. Some Ohio Rieslings end up at Late Harvest and even ice wines depending upon the onset of winter.

Ohio Grape Production

With more than 2,200 acres of Ohio vineyards it would seem that Ohio's grape production should meet the needs of Ohio winemakers. But with research and emphasis on excellence, Ohio grape growers are limiting tons per acre production in order to harvest the highest quality wine grapes. Fewer grapes concentrate the flavors.

Average production per acre since 2004 has been between 1.5 and 4.0 tons.

Ohio's Concord grape growers have endured extreme pressure from weather during the past five years. That, combined with the aging of the grower population, imposes a severe strain on the future of Concords in Ohio.

The Ohio State University Extension office has estimated that it can cost between \$10 – 15,000 per to establish and maintain an acre of high-quality wine grapes in Ohio. It can take up to three years or more to get a significant harvest.

High quality vinifera grapes grown in Ohio have been sold for between \$1,200 – \$2,000 per ton depending upon the variety.