



## California's Sacramento Valley Wine Region

In the Sacramento Valley, agriculture and politics collide and have equally important roles. The region is home to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, the California State Capital and a variety of economy-driving crops including grapes. The vineyards, orchards and fields on the valley floor are surrounded by the rugged hills and gentle snow-capped mountains that are typical of the region. This region exemplifies the diversity of the California landscape—a bustling, political city, meandering rivers and drawbridges, the Sutter Buttes and rural, peaceful towns. Discover the land where in vines we trust!

### **Description: A Haven for Wine and Politics**

The Sacramento Valley runs for approximately 120 miles from Red Bluff in the northern end of the valley to the city of Stockton. Bordered by the Sierra Nevada to the east and the Coast Ranges to the west, the region includes the counties of Sacramento, San Joaquin (Lodi), and Yolo (Clarksburg) and is home to 13 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs).

### **History: A River Runs Through It**

The Sacramento Valley was discovered by Spanish explorers in the 1500s but remained virtually uninhabited until the 1849 California Gold Rush. The Sacramento River served as the main means of transportation for gold-seekers traveling from San Francisco to the gold mines in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. By the mid-1850s, many miners who did not "strike it rich," recognized the potential of a new business: agriculture. The first grapes were planted in the 1850s, and irrigation was introduced in the 1880s, when the agriculture industry in the region blossomed. Today the Sacramento River continues to play the important role of transporting agricultural goods to market.

### **Climate: The Mediterranean Feel**

The Sacramento Valley has a Mediterranean climate with temperate winters and warm summers and cooling delta breezes. The winters are cool and moist with fog that may last for a week or more whereas summers are clear and dry. The Zinfandel grape naturally thrives in this sunny and warm atmosphere. And the Chardonnay grape demonstrates its versatility and also thrives in the many microclimates of this valley.

### **Geography: Water, Water Everywhere**

Because it was once a vast series of [wetlands](#), the Sacramento Valley has extremely fertile soil that is perfect for winegrape growing. The [Sacramento River](#), the largest river in California, runs through the middle of the valley providing water to the vineyards, orchards and fields. Also, abundant waters from the Sierra Nevada mountain range drain into the Sacramento River and soil of this region contributing to the fertile earth. The moist soil and Mediterranean climate of this region work together to provide an ideal environment for flavorful grapes to thrive.

## **Varietals: Fun and Full of Flavor**

The Sacramento Valley is best known for its full-flavored Chardonnay, which is the leading varietal in the region. In the southern part of the region, where the Sacramento Valley and the San Joaquin Valley meet, old vine Zinfandel, bold Petite Sirah and dry Chenin Blanc grapes flourish.

## **American Viticultural Areas**

American Viticultural Areas, or AVAs, are delimited grape growing areas distinguishable by geographic climatic and historic features - which are sometimes noted on bottles of California wine. AVA boundaries have been delineated in a petition filed and accepted by the U.S. Government. Following is a list of the AVAs in the Sacramento Valley.

### **Sacramento County**

Alta Mesa  
Borden Ranch  
Clarksburg  
Consumnes River  
Jahant  
Lodi  
Sloughhouse

### **Yolo County**

Capay Valley  
Clarksburg  
Dunnigan Hills

Merritt Island

### **San Joaquin County**

Borden Ranch  
Clement Hills  
Consumnes River  
Lodi  
Mokelumne River  
River Junction  
Tracy Hills

### **Solano County**

Clarksburg

## **Explore the Sacramento Valley**

Follow the links below to learn more about the Sacramento Valley:

Clarksburg Winegrowers Association  
Lodi  
Lodi Appellation Winery Association  
Lodi District Grape Growers Association  
Lodi Woodbridge Winegrape Commission  
Sacramento  
Shasta Cascade Viticulture Association  
Yolo County

[www.clarksburgwinegrowers.com](http://www.clarksburgwinegrowers.com)  
[www.visitlodi.com](http://www.visitlodi.com)  
[www.lodiwines.com](http://www.lodiwines.com)  
[www.ldgga.org](http://www.ldgga.org)  
[www.lodiwine.com](http://www.lodiwine.com)  
[www.sacramentocvb.org](http://www.sacramentocvb.org)  
[www.shastacascadeviticultureassociation.org](http://www.shastacascadeviticultureassociation.org)  
[www.yolocvb.org](http://www.yolocvb.org)