



WINE YAKIMA VALLEY

AN ASSOCIATION OF GROWERS AND WINERIES

Yakima Valley Wine Country Fast Facts and Wine Terminology

Yakima Valley Fast Facts: What's Different About Yakima Valley

- Yakima Valley vineyards produce more than one-third of Washington State's grapes, and its fruit is a key ingredient in more than half of all Washington wines.
- One-third of the vineyards in Washington are located in the Yakima Valley AVA.
- Since 2004, the number of wineries located in the Yakima Valley has grown from 47 to over 82 in 2009—that's an increase of almost 75 percent in the past five years.
- Nearly 15 percent of Washington State's wineries are located in the Yakima Valley AVA.

Helpful Wine Fast Facts:

- One barrel of wine equals roughly 20 cases, which equals 1,200 glasses.
- A ton of grapes makes about 720 bottles of wine, or 60 cases.
- One vine annually produces between four and six bottles of wine, or between 20 and 30 glasses.
- Each bottle of wine contains about 2.8 pounds of grapes; therefore each 5-ounce glass of wine contains a little over half a pound of grapes.
- There are between 15 and 45 clusters of grapes per vine.
- One acre of land is home to between 726 and 1,300 vines.

Wine Terminology:

AMERICAN VITICULTURAL AREA—An AVA is a designated geographical region that has unique climate, soil and physical features, which distinguish it from surrounding areas.

FERMENTATION—A natural process in which yeast cells metabolize fruit sugars in grape juice, converting them into alcohol and carbon dioxide (CO₂, along with the heat created by fermentation, dissipate). Sparkling wines are made from still wines which then undergo a second fermentation in the bottle in which the CO₂ is retained.

MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION—A secondary fermentation that can be allowed or initiated that converts malic acid into lactic acid, lowering the acidity in the wine and giving it a rounder mouthfeel. Red wines almost always go through a complete malolactic fermentation. White wines can be made with full, partial or no malolactic depending on the style chosen by the winemaker.

COLD SOAK—The depth and character of red wines can be enhanced by letting the grapes soak in their own juice before fermentation begins. Temperatures are kept low to postpone fermentation.

PUNCH DOWN—Since the color and most of the flavor in red wines is derived from the skins, it is important to extract as much as possible from fermentation. The creation of CO₂ during fermentation causes the skins to rise

(like a root beer float), forming a cap. The cap needs to be pushed down and broken up so that the color, flavor and tannin can be extracted by the fermenting juice. This can be done by hand, or with mechanical assistance. An alternative to punching down is pumping over. This is done by drawing the liquid off the bottom of the fermenter and irrigating the cap.

FREE RUN—The first juice that runs out of the press before little or any pressure is applied. This juice, often lower in phenolics, is sometimes drawn off and fermented separately into wine of delicate structure and perfume.

PHENOLICS—Tannins (responsible for astringency and bitterness) and pigment (color). Phenolics are present in the skins, seeds, and stems of the grapes.

GRAVITY FLOW—A case of the old made new again. Wineries used to be built into hillsides so juice would flow down naturally from the press to the fermenter. This design is popular again, because pumps can “bruise” the juice and create harsh flavors.

CLONAL SELECTION—Grapevines are genetically unstable, resulting, over time, in variations from vine to vine. A vine that gives particularly good grapes can be cloned by taking cuttings which are propagated in nurseries. Different clones of one variety can be selected to suit the vineyard site and the winemaker’s goal.

MOUTHFEEL—One of the man aesthetic components of wine, sometimes called “body” or “weight.” It is just what it says – how the wine feels in your mouth.

FINISH—The aftertaste (and feel) a wine leaves with you after you’ve swallowed a bit. A “long” finish is usually considered a good thing, a lingering reminder of flavors and aroma on a refreshed palate.