

the **right** place & time

Napa Valley Harvest 2012

1. **The yield of wine grapes in Napa Valley is generally ½ the statewide average.** One of the key reasons for this is that Napa Valley **vintners bring only the very best grapes** to fruition which is the reason Napa Valley is the renowned quality leader.
2. **Much of Napa Valley's wine grapes are harvested at night. This is good for the farm workers,** as there is less heat, they are not exposed to bees and snakes, and are more productive due to cooler conditions; **good for winemaking**, as when grapes are picked at cooler temperatures, they stay firmer and don't start to macerate and ferment before the winemaker can choreograph the process; **and good for the environment** as no refrigeration is needed to cool the grapes at the winery and there are fewer trucks on the road during daytime hours.
3. **Although Cabernet Sauvignon grapes are 12% of the California wine grape harvest, they account for 41% of the wine grape harvest in Napa Valley, usually generating nearly 60% of the value.** But Napa Valley, with its rare, dry Mediterranean climate grows a wide range of fine wine grapes...from Albarino to Zinfandel. The top varieties are Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir (in descending order). Overall, the region's quality-focused wines lead the American wine industry—interestingly, at just 4% of California's wine production, Napa Valley has a mighty value of 34% of California's wine industry's economic impact on the US economy.
4. **Nearly all of Napa Valley's wine grapes are picked by hand**, the culmination of an artisan approach to agriculture throughout the year. Twenty years ago, vineyard workers typically made only three passes through the vineyard: "prune, sucker and pick." Now, **workers typically make more than 20 passes through the vineyard before harvest**, for viticultural practices such as pruning, shoot pulling, trellising, canopy management, "green harvesting," cluster management, and site specific irrigation decisions. In just the harvest phase alone, picking fruit perfectly ripe can mean 3, 4 or even 5 passes.
5. **Harvest in Napa Valley generally runs from mid-August to early November**, with grapes for sparkling wine picked first and grapes for Cabernet Sauvignon among the last to be picked. Harvest usually kicks off in mid-August, generally starting in Carneros for sparkling wine. Different varieties and the order in which they are usually picked then proceeds from cooler regions for Chardonnay and aromatic whites, moving to lighter bodied reds such as Merlot and Pinot Noir. Finally comes valley floor Cabernet Sauvignon, then hillside Cabernet and in many years, delicious late-harvest wines.

To follow Napa Valley harvest 2012 visit
napavintners.com/harvest or #NVHarvest

fun napa valley facts

By the numbers

- One barrel of wine equals 20 cases, which equals 1200 glasses.
- A ton of grapes makes about 720 bottles of wine, or 60 cases.
- One vine annually produces 4 - 6 bottles of wine, or 20 - 30 glasses.
- Each bottle of wine contains about 2.8 pounds of grapes; that means it takes about a half a pound of grapes to produce a five-ounce glass of wine.
- There are between 15 and 45 clusters of grapes per vine.
- One acre of land is home to between 900 - 1300 vines.

All fun facts are estimates. Exact numbers may vary based on yields, planting widths, age of vine, and wine grape variety among other factors.

Vineyard Facts

- The first vines in Napa Valley were planted in 1838-1839 by George Yount.
- Napa's reputation in the world of wine is large, yet accounts for only 4% of California's total wine production.
- In 1968, Napa Valley vintners and other community leaders established the nation's first Agriculture Preserve, to protect open space and prevent future over-development of 38,000 acres. Since its adoption, not one acre of land has been removed from the Preserve.
- Only 9% of Napa County (485,000 acres) is planted to grapes or about 45,000 acres under cultivation.
- Nearly 47,000 acres of land are enrolled in Napa Green Certified Land, a signature land and environmental certification program; more than 26,000 acres have been certified.

Harvest Stats

- Napa County has the highest wine grape value in California.
- In the past several years, the top three varieties in bearing acres planted were Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Merlot.
- These three varieties together accounted for almost 73% of all production and over 77% of the total wine grape value.
- In 2011, approximately 50,846.7 tons of Cabernet Sauvignon were harvested and sold at an average price of \$4,660 per ton.
- Black wine grape tonnage in 2011 was 89,835 for an average of 2.7 tons per acre.
- White wine grape tonnage in 2011 was 32,037 for an average of 3.11 tons per acre.
- Most popular varietals in Napa Valley (in order of popularity) along with the total percentage of the 2011 harvest: Cabernet Sauvignon – 55.96%, Chardonnay – 11.19%, Merlot – 10.10%, Sauvignon Blanc – 3.66%, Pinot Noir – 3.6%, Zinfandel – 2.48%