

# Southern Oregon

**Location:** The Southern Oregon AVA exists in the southwest portion of the state, stretching 125 miles from south of Eugene to the California border, and 60 miles at its widest between the Cascade Mountain Range to the east and the Coast Range to the west. It encompasses Umpqua Valley, Rogue Valley, Red Hill Douglas County, and Applegate Valley appellations.

**Wine history:** Southern Oregon has the oldest history of grape growing in the state. It dates back to 1852 with an early area settler named Peter Britt, who operated a winery in Jacksonville. Post-prohibition winemaking started in 1961 when vintner Richard Sommer migrated from University of California at Davis and founded Hillcrest Vineyards in the Umpqua Valley. Impressed with the diversity of growing conditions in this area, other winemakers began planting roots in the 1970s, resulting in a patchwork of vineyards growing both cool- and warm-climate varieties. Today, this winegrowing region continues to grow and turn out a great variety of high-quality wines. The appellation became official in 2004.

**Climate:** While this region provides the warmest growing conditions in Oregon, there exist cool microclimates within its varied hillsides and valleys that enable Southern Oregon to successfully grow both cool- and warm-climate varieties. This area receives significantly less rainfall than other viticultural areas in Oregon (40 percent less than the Willamette Valley) and is generally a warm, sunny, arid climate.

**Soils:** Southern Oregon's soils are varied and complex, though generally derived from bedrock, specifically from the 200 million year old Klamath Mountains, which are comprised of sedimentary rocks, to the west.

**Topography:** The Southern Oregon appellation contains a varied, mountainous topography with vineyards typically situated in high mountain valleys at elevations between 1,000 to 2,000 feet. The lofty southern coastal mountains provide a barrier to the west, blocking marine air and casting a rain shadow to the area's south and east.

## Predominant varieties

Pinot Noir

Merlot

Cabernet Sauvignon

Pinot Gris

Syrah

Chardonnay

Cabernet franc

Riesling

Tempranillo

Gewurztraminer

Viognieri

## While you're here...

Throughout the vast region of Southern Oregon, there is a creative spirit that spreads beyond incredible winemaking. There is a thriving arts community that includes galleries, museums and a pair of award-winning festivals celebrating music and art: The Britt Festival in Jacksonville and The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. The area is ripe with culinary endeavors, from artisan chocolate making (and the Ashland Chocolate Festival), to chef-owned restaurants serving wine-friendly food that highlights the area's bounty, including line-caught salmon, winter pears and award-winning cheeses.

Southern Oregon is also home to North America's deepest lake, Crater Lake, Oregon Caves National Monument, mountains to ski and hike, beautiful public courses to golf, wilderness to explore and legendary rivers to fish and raft.

Below are some links to help you plan your trip to Southern Oregon:

### **Southern Oregon Wineries Association**

A visit to a winery in Southern Oregon can involve much more than just tasting wine. Located in beautiful valleys with stunning vistas, a family member or winemaker may be pouring wine in the tasting room, or be nearby to share stories and special wines with you. Many wines are only available at the winery or have very limited distribution, so be sure to take some wines home to share your discovery of Southern Oregon wineries with friends and family.

### **Applegate Valley Wineries Association**

Life slows a pace or two in the picturesque Applegate Valley. Small wineries with big wines can be found all along the meandering roads and rivers. Come meet our grape growers, step into their vineyards and share a glass of wine. If you haven't visited the Applegate Wine Trail, then you haven't truly experienced southern Oregon wine country.

### **Umpqua Valley Wineries Association**

The complex topography of the Umpqua Valley, formed by the convergence of three mountain ranges of varying ages and structure, contributes to the occurrence of varied soil types and the many sub-valleys known as the Hundred Valleys of the Umpqua. The rich diversity of landscapes and climates provide a wide range of conditions needed to produce an exciting array of grape