

## CURRENT CONDITIONS OF WINE TOURISM IN UKRAINE

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Wine tourism is a special kind of tourism, which includes tasting, drinking and buying wine directly from the producer. Wine tourism consists of visits to wineries, vineyards and restaurants known to offer unique vintages, as well as organized wine tours, wine festivals or other special events.

Wine production in Ukraine can be broken down geographically into three areas: Crimea, the Bessarabian, Black and Azov Sea area and Transcarpathia.

The Crimea has the largest area devoted to viticulture (63,000 hectares), and the wines from this region are considered the best quality. The Massandra winery, in the Crimea, was built in the 1890s to supply Czar Nicholas II's nearby summer palace.

With 290 days of frost-free days the grapes are able to be harvested ripe and some overripe which add natural sweetness to the wines.

During the Soviet era, Ukraine had more than 75,000 hectares of vineyards under cultivation and supplied most of the wines to the population of the U S S R.

Yields have been too high (occasionally exceeding 200 Hectolitres which corresponds to 11 tonnes of fruit per acre or 26 metric tonnes per hectare), but now they have been dramatically reduced to increase quality.

The most popular grapes of Ukraine are: Rkatsiteli, Aligote, Saperavi, Riesling, Sauvignon Vert, Gewürztraminer, Pinot gris, Sercial, Feteasca, Bastardo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Bastardo Magarach, Golubuk, Saperavi severnyi, Pervenets Magaratcha, Fieltovy Rami, Podarok Magaratcha, Karmraiut, Stepniak, Olimpiiski, and Sorok let Otiabria [1]. Ukraine's vitiviniculture has been traced back to fourth century B C. The climate of the Crimean Peninsula is very conducive for viticulture. Ukraine's climate and geography are generally suitable for grape growing particularly southern Ukraine's a continental climate. Crimea is, perhaps, the best-known of the regions producing wines today. In fact, Crimea's wine industry is

hardly a recent phenomenon, as it is said to have begun 3000 years ago. The potential consumer of Crimean wines is very nearly spoiled for choice. The experts' choice as the region most conducive to viticulture is the south coast. Here you'll find dessert wines made from the Tokay grape, Cabernet and Muscadelle, Madeiras and Cagors, while Sudak and the Eastern Region offer good fortified wines, such as port, made from the Kokur variety[3].

Bessarabia and the Black Sea Region is a home to a wide selection of wines, many of them produced from hybrid grape varieties. The sandy soils of the Lower Dnipro-Kakhov region tend to produce wines with low acid content. Ismail, where wine-making has been a local industry for centuries, falls into some sub-regions, each with its own production characteristics. For example, the south-west (Danube delta) region – the warmest region and, therefore, the one with the longest growing season – is known for its European grapes, the source of local Rieslings, Aligotes, Semillons, Cabernets, Traminers and Muscats [2]. The hilly northern region also features European varieties, such as the Chenin and produces very good table wines and wines for sparkling wine production. The central plain is largely devoted to hybrid viticulture. Lastly, the south-east region's salty soil is not overly conducive to the growing of grapes, yet the area does provide some table wines and wines for making cognac.

Sources offer evidence of wine-making in the Transcarpathian region stretching back to the 12th century. The Beregovoy, Mukhachevo and Uzhgorod regions produce fine dessert wines, among them Furmint, Traminer, Muler-Thurgau and Muscat.

From this brief overview, we see that there is a lively winemaking industry in Ukraine, offering some excellent, moderately priced wines. However, the question remains: who knows about it and what can be done to spread the word?

Overall, worldwide wine consumption is on the rise, with China showing very notable growth in the number of people who regularly drink wine, as prosperity spreads. There is surely some snobbery directed at Ukrainian wines, which tend to be poorly marketed compared to their foreign competition.

One of the ways the better-known wine-producing countries stimulate interest in their wines is through wine tours. A long-established tradition in Europe, where a visitor could easily do a multiple-country trip around the wineries of the Rhone Valley, southern Germany and the wine-rich areas of Italy, younger wine-growing countries like Australia, the United States and South Africa have happily climbed on the bandwagon, generating significant revenues for wine-growers and their respective tourist trades. In addition to the direct economic benefits of thousands of tourists' contribution to the local budget, wine tours have a clear knock-on effect in increasing direct wine sales and exports.

Nowadays wine tourism is an innovative way of tourism development industry.

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