

Walla Walla Valley AVA

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- Established 1984.
- The AVA is located inside the Columbia Valley AVA at the base of the Blue Mountains in the southeast corner of Washington and extends into the northeastern corner of Oregon.
- The Valley is located on latitude 46°, straddling the line between the Burgundy and Bordeaux regions of France.
- City of Walla Walla is the major commercial area of the region.
- Most of the valley's wineries are in Washington State but almost half of the winegrowing acreage is in Oregon.
- In 1998 there were 20 wineries in the AVA. Today, in 2010, there are over 90 wineries and the number is still growing.
- Currently there are 52 vineyards in Washington and 31 in Oregon with more being planted and developed. Elevations range from 650 feet to 1,500 feet.
- The Blue Mountains form the eastern borders of the valley. Drainages from the mountains provide most of the water in the Walla Walla Valley AVA.
- **Climate:** Very little rainfall (irrigation is necessary). Continental climate zone characterized by hot days and cool nights. The valley is known to have sudden frost and extreme cold spells that can heavily damage vineyards and disrupt production. Average rainfall in Walla Walla is 12.5 inches. Annual average temperatures range from a low of 27 degrees to a high of 91 degrees.
- **Soil:** Wind deposited silt referred to as *loess*, which provides very good drainage for the vineyards. Soils also consist of well-drained loam, silt, and cobbles brought by a series of massive floods (Missoula floods) around 15,000 years ago. Lava flows filled the Walla Walla Valley 15 million years ago which left behind a basalt bedrock that underlies the Valley.
- **Grape Varieties:** International and Domestic Varietals. Walla Walla Valley is known mainly for its production of Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, and Merlot. Italian varieties such as Sangiovese Barbera are showing promising results. Major white varietals include Viognier, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc as well as lesser plantings of Riesling, Pinot Gris, Rousanne, Marsanne and Gewurtraminer.



Map Reference: Wikipedia. January 4, 2010.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walla_Walla_Valley_AVA