

# SAUVIGNON A GLOBAL GUIDE

SECOND EDITION





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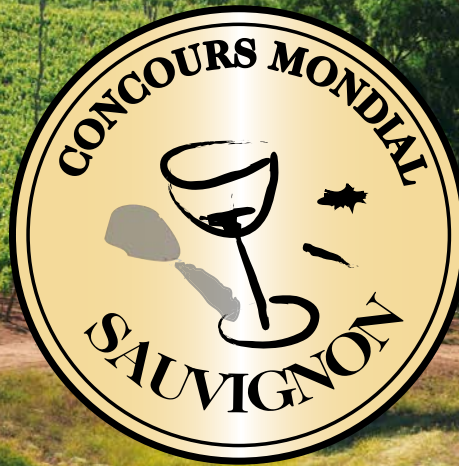
## Essential reading for all Sauvignon enthusiasts

Sauvignon blanc has long been a staple of the varietal range globally, not least of which in its native France where it has allowed leading appellations to secure international acclaim. More recently, it has been prized as a stand-alone varietal, irrespective of its vineyard site, though at the same time, fully reflecting the characteristics of its provenance. Such has been the enthusiasm with which Sauvignon blanc has been embraced worldwide over the past decade or so, that winegrowers have ramped up their efforts to spotlight the variety. They have rolled out extensive experimentations, ranging from oak ageing and fermentation to choice of yeast, lowering alcohol content and even freezing the juice over the winter to produce fresh spring versions, whilst at the same time drilling down on site-specifics to further maximise Sauvignon's potential. Experimentation has bred stylistic diversity, particularly as it has often occurred in areas where producers' hands are not tied by tradition.

The result is an aromatic spectrum and wine profiles that offer universal appeal, and price points that run the gamut from entry-level to high-end. This flurry of activity, and Sauvignon's greater geographical distribution, have considerably broadened its character and longevity, prompting the organisers of the world's leading Sauvignon competition to produce a dedicated guide to Sauvignon styles around the world. Internationally-renowned, locally-based experts have compiled country and region-focused profiles that highlight the significance of Sauvignon blanc in their respective locations along with the most prominent wine styles. The aim is to offer a practical guide for wine professionals and consumers alike, which tracks the varietal's sea-change from a production and marketing perspective in recent years. And in the same way that the varietal itself is constantly evolving, this guide will be revised annually to keep up to speed with the latest developments. For all those dedicated, or would-be followers of Sauvignon blanc, this guide is essential reading.







# France

Gabrielle Vizzavona

Sauvignon blanc is the third most planted white wine grape variety in the world, covering 123,000 hectares. It ranks after Airen (218,000 hectares, used mainly for producing brandy) and Chardonnay (210,000 hectares), its main rival, although the pace of growth for Chardonnay has slowed. The 15<sup>th</sup> most planted *vitis vinifera* variety in the 1990s, Sauvignon has now risen to 8<sup>th</sup> place, with acreage rising by over 3% in the last 15 years.

The world cannot seem to sate its thirst for Sauvignon blanc, a variety whose delicate aromatic spectrum and freshness appeal to consumers. French examples offer an archetypal rendition of Sauvignon that slots right into the current wine zeitgeist favouring light, palatable offerings driven by a lively acidic structure and a multi-faceted array of aromas.

## REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND ORIGINS

In France, Sauvignon blanc covers 29,900 hectares and is the 10<sup>th</sup> most planted variety across the colour spectrum, and the third most widespread white grape in the country. It represents 3.7% of total French vineyard acreage, but covers much larger areas in Languedoc-Roussillon (29% of France's Sauvignon blanc), the Loire (27% of the region's white grape varieties) and Bordeaux (45% of the region's white grape varieties). The Loire and Gironde, its two original French homes, often compete for its relatively blurred geographical origins. Several documents claim it originated in Gironde, where it is mentioned at the turn of the 18th century. However, the Loire seems to be able to lay claim to much older written evidence – it was featured in Rabelais' masterpiece 'Gargantua' in 1534, where it is referred to by its synonym 'Fiers' in chapter 25. It is mentioned again in Sancerre and Pouilly, the heart of the

Centre-Loire Valley region, more than two centuries later, in 1784, under its other synonyms 'Sauvignon fumé' and 'Blanc fumé'. Its DNA also leans more favourably towards its Loire origins, as one of its parents is Savagnin, whose name was mentioned in the Middle Ages. It is therefore part of a family that includes, among other varieties, Silvaner, Verdhelho and Grüner Veltiner, grapes it can sometimes be mistaken for. Similarly, its DNA reveals a connection with Chenin blanc and Trousseau. Its etymology further corroborates this theory – 'Sauvignon' stems from 'sauvage' or wild in French, a moniker that alludes to its leaves, which are uncannily similar to those of a wild vine. Its older synonyms, referred to in the Loire as 'Fié' or 'Fiers', are derived from the Latin 'Ferus', meaning «that which is wild». From here, it allegedly spread to Gironde then spontaneously coupled with Cabernet Franc to birth Cabernet-Sauvignon.

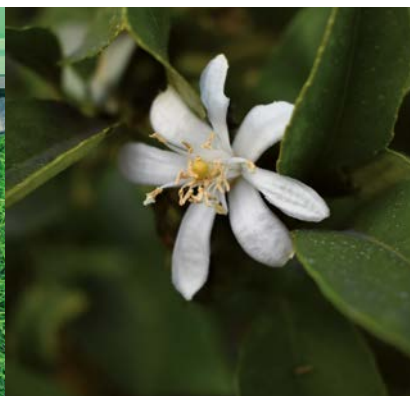
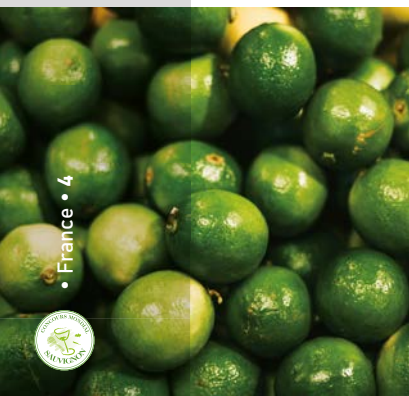
## VINE PHYSIOLOGY

Sauvignon blanc has medium budbreak, it flowers fairly early and is a mid-ripening variety. It is not very productive, but shows a lot of vigour. The growth of its canopy needs to be reined in as it can spread very quickly on over-rich soils. It therefore prefers poor, hard soils, which come in plentiful supply in France. Its small, compact, cone-shaped berries are very prone to powdery mildew, black rot, downy mildew and grapevine trunk diseases. It is also very sensitive to botrytis, which can be a disadvantage, but is also an advantage as it is used to make the great sweet noble rot wines of Bordeaux.

One of Sauvignon blanc's outstanding features is its ability to show sense of place, which is why its aromatic profile can vary depending on the place where it is grown. Particularly easy to single out in blind tastings, it stands out for its substantial freshness, its citrus notes (lemon, grapefruit, orange), white flowers (lime, iris) and

vegetal notes (boxwood, cut grass) in cooler climates. Its herbaceous notes, which can be very pronounced, particularly in the Centre-Loire Valley, stem from its methoxy-pyrazine compound, which occurs in varying degrees in the wines depending on the temperature, the ripeness of the fruit at harvest, their exposure to light and vine vigour. In sunnier vineyard sites, tropical notes (passion fruit, pineapple) often prevail and accompany pink grapefruit aromas which are ascribed to the volatile thiols formed after alcoholic fermentation. They also show varying degrees of intensity depending on the vineyard site, the vintage and vineyard management.

**Some of Sauvignon's synonyms:** *Sauvignon, Blanc Fumé, Fume, Muscat Sylvaner, Sauvignon, Pinot Mestry Bely, Sauvignon Verde, Zeleni Sauvignon, Muscat Sylvaner, Fumé Blanc, Weisser Sauvignon, Sovinjon Bel, Sauvignon Bianco, Sovinjon Bijeli, Sovinjon, Muškatni Silvanac, Sauvignon Bijeli, Sauvignon Blanco.*

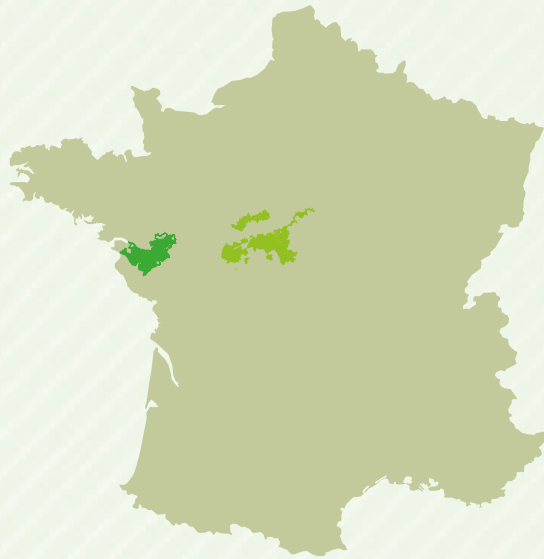




# Major Sauvignon wine regions

## THE LOIRE

Across the Loire Valley, Sauvignon blanc is the second most planted grape variety (28%) after Melon de Bourgogne and ahead of Chenin blanc (27%), covering 9,912 hectares of vines.



## CENTRE-LOIRE VALLEY



In the aftermath of the phylloxera crisis, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, vineyards in the Centre-Loire Valley region were replanted with Sauvignon blanc as their focus, replacing Pinot noir. It gained its regional pedigree and has reigned supreme here ever since. It covers 80.9% of vineyard acreage and is at the core of six appellations: Sancerre, Quincy, Coteaux du Giennois, Menetou-Salon, Reuilly, Pouilly-Fumé & Pouilly-sur-Loire, which enjoy a continental climate with a strong ocean influence.

Wine	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Domaine Quintin Frères - Rive Droite 2021	Coteaux du Giennois	QUINTIN FRÈRES	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine de Bel Air Cuvée Riquette 2021	Pouilly Fumé	DOMAINE DE BEL AIR	<b>Gold Medal</b>
J. de Villebois - Marnes Kimméridgiennes 2019	Pouilly Fumé	VILLEBOIS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Les Adelins 2021	Pouilly Fumé	BOUCHIÉ CHATELLIER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Jacques Rouzé Tradition 2021	Quincy	JACQUES ROUZE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
La Grande Chatelaine 2018	Sancerre	VIGNOBLES JOSEPH MELLOT	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine des Coltabards 2021	Sancerre	DES COLTABARDS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine Daniel Reverdy et Fils 2021	Sancerre	DOMAINE DANIEL REVERDY FILS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Roc de l'Abbaye - L'Antique 2021	Sancerre	ROC DE L'ABBAYE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Roland Tissier Fils Cuvée Tradition 2021	Sancerre	ROLAND TISSIER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Caillottes 2020	Sancerre	JOËL ET SYLVIE CIROTTE	<b>Gold Medal</b> <i>REVELATION</i>
Les Champs Clos 2020	Sancerre	CAVE DES VINS DE SANCERRE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Balland Chapuis Terre des Loups 2021	Coteaux du Giennois	SAGET LA PERRIÈRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Eclaireurs Montagnes Blanches 2021	Coteaux du Giennois	SAGET LA PERRIÈRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Raimbault-Pineau 2021	Coteaux du Giennois	DOMAINE RAIMBAULT PINEAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
La Tour Saint-Martin Fumet 2019	Menetou-Salon	LA TOUR SAINT-MARTIN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Jean-Paul Godinat 2021	Menetou-Salon	LES COTEAUX	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine des Coteaux 2021	Menetou-Salon	LES COTEAUX	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Le Délice d'Alice 2020	Menetou-Salon	DE BACQUET	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine La Gemièrre - La Pointe 2021	Menetou-Salon	DOMAINE LA GEMIÈRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Fraiseau-Leclerc 2021	Menetou-Salon	DOMAINE FRAISEAU LECLERC	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Vieillottes 2020	Pouilly Fumé	CAVES DE POUILLY SUR LOIRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Seguin 2021	Pouilly Fumé	DOMAINE SEGUIN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Benoit Chauveau CroqSilex 2021	Pouilly Fumé	BENOIT CHAUVEAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Champeau 2021	Pouilly Fumé	DOMAINE CHAMPEAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Chailloux Silex 2021	Pouilly Fumé	DOMAINE CHATELAIN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Premier Millésimé 2021	Pouilly Fumé	BOUCHIÉ CHATELLIER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cuvée Les Galfins 2021	Pouilly Fumé	BONNARD	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cuvée Clos du Château Paladi 2019	Pouilly Fumé	DOMAINE MASSON-BLONDELET	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Chantebines 2021	Pouilly Fumé	PABIOT JEAN FILS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Nouzats 2021	Quincy	DOMAINE RENAUDAT VALERY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Adèle Rouzé 2021	Quincy	DOMAINE ADÈLE ROUZÉ	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Grand Rosières 2021	Quincy	DOMAINES DU GRAND ROSIÈRES	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Siret-Courtaud Tradition 2021	Quincy	DOMAINE SIRET-COURTAUD	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Pierre Duret 2021	Quincy	DOMAINE PIERRE DURET	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cuvée Indigène 2020	Quincy	DOMAINE ROUX	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Lignis 2021	Reuilly	DOMAINE RENAUDAT VALERY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
La Raie 2021	Reuilly	LAFOND	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Jean Michel Sorbe 2020	Reuilly	JEAN MICHEL SORBE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Olivier Foucher Cuvée Le Chant du Silex 2021	Sancerre	DOMAINE OLIVIER FOUCHER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
La Côte de Bué 2018	Sancerre	JEAN-MAX ROGER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Vignes du Rocher 2020	Sancerre	VIGNOBLES JOSEPH MELLOT	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château de Sancerre 2020	Sancerre	CHÂTEAU DE SANCERRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Moulin des Vrillères 2021	Sancerre	MOULIN DES VRILLERES	<b>Silver Medal</b>

Perle Blanche 2021	Sancerre	MOULIN DES VRILLERES	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Le Clos de Chaudenay 2020	Sancerre	DOMAINE DANIEL REVERDY FILS	<i>Silver Medal</i>
La Perrière 2021	Sancerre	SAGET LA PERRIÈRE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine Fournier Père et Fils Les Belles Vignes 2021	Sancerre	FOURNIER PÈRE ET FILS	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sancerre N°7 Donatien Bahaud 2019	Sancerre	ORCHIDÉES MAISONS DE VIN	<i>Silver Medal</i>
La Villaudière - Jean-Marie Reverdy Fils 2021	Sancerre	LA VILLAUDIÈRE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Les Charmes 2021	Sancerre	ANDRÉ VATAN	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Henri Bourgeois Grande Réserve 2021	Sancerre	HENRI BOURGEOIS	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Michel Laurent 2020	Sancerre	CAVE DES VINS DE SANCERRE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine des Chasseignes Aurore Dezat et David Girard 2021	Sancerre	DOMAINE DES CHASSEIGNES AURORE DEZAT	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Les Monts Damnés 2020	Sancerre	DOMAINE ANTHONY ET DAVID GIRARD	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Saint Bris Cuvée Héritage Cul Rouge 2020	Saint-Bris	GRIVOT GOISOT	<i>Gold Medal</i>
Fyé Gris 2020	Saint-Bris	DOMAINE PL JF BERSAN	<i>Gold Medal</i>
Domaine Verret 2019	Saint-Bris	DOMAINE VERRET	<i>Gold Medal</i>
Saint Bris Grivot-Goisot 2020	Saint-Bris	GRIVOT GOISOT	<i>Silver Medal</i>



**AOC Sancerre**, a small 15 km triangle, boasts 3,000 hectares of vines planted on an extraordinary layering of soils spanning 15 geological periods. Sauvignon represents 80% of vineyard area. It is planted on three main types of soil, although in the past, winegrowers have listed more than 350 contrasts translating to a commensurate number of named vineyards that have been recognised but are not classified as crus. The soil types are:

- **'Caillottes'**: chalky soils with limestone fragments that yield traditional, clean Sancerre wines displaying citrus and freshly-cut grass aromas.
- **'Terres Blanches'**: clay-limestone soils very rich in marine fossils. These provide the usual basis for single-vineyard wines with incisive freshness and marked minerality, occasionally showing a saline touch on the palate.
- **Clay-silica**: here, the flint-rich soils lend the wines distinctive flinty notes.

**AOC Pouilly-Fumé** and **Pouilly-sur-Loire** cover 1,342 hectares. Pouilly-Fumé produces only Sauvignon-based white wines, locally called Blanc-Fumé because of the thin layer of bloom that covers the grapes before harvest. The limestone and clayey limestone soils, sometimes rich in flint, the western aspect and proximity to the Loire create a milder climate and lead to higher concentration in the wines, with notes of grapefruit and broom; they do retain minerality and freshness, however. In Pouilly-sur-Loire, Chasselas ranks first, sometimes supplemented by a modicum of Sauvignon blanc.

**Menetou-Salon** is another well-known French appellation. Its soils are characteristically consistent and formed of limestone sediments, very rich in oyster fossils, covered with 602 hectares of vines. Menetou-Salon wines are balanced and fresh with aromas of citrus, stone fruit, white flowers and spices, as well as the occasional distinctive menthol hint.

**Quincy** is probably one of the oldest vineyards in the Loire. Today it has nearly 300 hectares of vines planted entirely to Sauvignon blanc on terraces along the plateau overlooking the Cher valley, home to gravel and sand soils. The grape variety is said to have been brought from the female Beauvoir Abbey by monks from the Order of Citeaux. The light, sun-blessed soils contain varying degrees of clay and yield compelling Sauvignon blanc wines showing notes of

grapefruit, boxwood, acacia and menthol.

**Reuilly** is a small, 279-hectare appellation which produces wines in three colours, and yields ripe Sauvignon blancs with herbal notes (blackcurrant bud, lime blossom) and floral aromas on limestone marl soils, above which are sun-soaked sand and gravel terraces.

Finally, **Coteaux du Giennois**, which only covers 195 hectares (although the area is growing apace), has silica and limestone soils and produces supple and very harmonious Sauvignon blancs delivering aromas of white flowers and quince paste.

Aside from a few nuances and the unique signature style of each winegrower, the wines from these appellations are produced in a fairly similar way. After the harvest, the fruit is pressed very gently to extract the juice without the astringency from the pips and skins. The must is settled, i.e. clarified, before alcoholic fermentation, which is mostly carried out in stainless steel tanks at a cool temperature of between 18 and 22°C. Lengthy fermentation, harnessed by refrigeration, extracts Sauvignon blanc's subtle, delicate aromas and preserves its inherent freshness. The wines are left on fine lees which are removed at bottling, and are not oaked. They can be marketed immediately after bottling or a few months later for the most complex examples.

Export rates vary from one appellation to the next. Sancerre, which has become a household name and is in high demand internationally, exports the vast majority of its wines, particularly to the United States (65%), followed by Pouilly, which exports almost half of its output (46%). Other Centre-Loire Valley appellations, however, have a strong domestic focus (85% for Menetou-Salon, 92% for Quincy, 88% for Reuilly and 73% for Coteaux du Giennois).







**AOC Touraine** Sauvignon blanc shows a degree of fruity exuberance with notes of citrus, white fruit, blackcurrant bud and some exotic touches. Its substantial freshness is counterbalanced by its aromatic intensity. Touraine grows over a mosaic of soils covering the limestone bed rock. Sauvignon blanc can be complemented by a touch of Sauvignon gris. When thiol content reaches its peak, harvesting begins and winemaking techniques aim to preserve this primary aromatic. Use of oak is uncommon, although some winegrowers are experimenting with it, more for its micro-oxygenation effect than for its aromatic potency. The wines are designed to be drunk young, through to 36 months old.

White wines produced within the two village-designated appellations **Touraine-Chenonceaux** (110 hectares) and **Touraine-Oisly** (30 hectares) are made entirely from Sauvignon blanc. Their vineyard sites are warmer and well-drained, so the grapes have to be slightly riper to produce more exotic profiles, greater power, higher alcohol, more volume and greater complexity. For similar levels of ripeness, the growing cycle is longer, instilling greater complexity in the wines which are generally matured on the lees

Sauvignon blanc acreage expanded in Touraine at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, starting in the small village of Oisly, then spreading to the surrounding area from the 1970s. It now extends over 2,800 hectares.

Sauvignon blanc is used to make the following appellations and geographical indications: **Touraine, Touraine-Oisly, Touraine-Chenonceaux, Touraine-Mesland, Haut-Poitou** as well as **white IGP Val de Loire**.

Touraine and its two main village-designated appellations for Sauvignon blanc, Touraine-Oisly and Touraine-Chenonceaux, produce most of the Sauvignon blanc in the Loire Valley (excluding the Centre). It only plays a minor role in the Touraine-Mesland appellation area.

Sauvignon Blanc shows differing features depending on whether it is produced in the Touraine appellation or in the two leading village-designated appellations, Touraine-Chenonceaux and Touraine-Oisly, that were recognised in 2011.

for longer. Their ageing potential can reach 6 or 7 years.

Wines from **Chenonceaux** are more rounded and powerful as a result of warm vineyard soils of sand and deep clay in the eastern part and predominantly limestone, often in the form of outcrops, in the rest of the area.

Wines from **Oisly** are more tense due to the fact that the clay-rich soils entail less water stress for the vine as they retain water.

One in five bottles of Touraine Sauvignon blanc is exported, mainly to the UK, the USA, Belgium and Canada.

**IGP Val de Loire** produces approximately 75,227 hl of Sauvignon blanc. The average price of IGP Val de Loire Sauvignon blanc retailing in supermarkets underscores its move upmarket over the last ten years, rising from an average of 2.90 euros in 2010 to 4 euros in 2019.

Wine	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Parcelles 2021	IGP Val de Loire	RÉTHORÉ DAVY	<b>Gold Medal</b>
SB 2021	IGP Val de Loire	LEBLANC JEAN-CLAUDE ET FILS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine de la Renne 2021	Touraine	DOMAINE DE LA RENNE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine Michaud Eclat de Silex 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE MICHAUD	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine de la Rochette 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE DE LA ROCHETTE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine Jean Christophe Mandard Blanc 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE JEAN CHRISTOPHE MANDARD	<b>Gold Medal</b> <b>BEST SAUVIGNON OF THE COMPETITION</b>
Jean-François Roy 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	JEAN FRANCOIS ROY	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine Joël Delaunay - La Vouïte 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	JOEL DELAUNAY	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine du Salvard 2021	Cheverny	DELAILLE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine du Salvard Vieilles Vignes 2021	Cheverny	DELAILLE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine de la Rablais Sauvignon blanc Saint Georges 2021	IGP Val de Loire	PARIS-SIMONEAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
PIN'UP Sauvignon Blanc 2021	IGP Val de Loire	DOMAINE DE LA COCHE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Vignoble Cogné - Del YS 2021	IGP Val de Loire	VIGNOBLE COGNÉ	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine de Montgilet 2021	IGP Val de Loire	DOMAINE DE MONTGILET	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Lemoine Alain et Gilles Domaine de La Gachère 2021	IGP Val de Loire	LEMOINE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon Gris Le Moulin de la Touche 2021	IGP Val de Loire	LE MOULIN DE LA TOUCHE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Famille Bougrier Collection 2021	IGP Val de Loire	BOUGRIER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Bellevue Sauvignon 2021	Touraine	VAUVY DOMAINE BELLEVUE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château de Pocé 2021	Touraine	DOMAINE CHAINIER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Jean Christophe Mandard Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Touraine	DOMAINE JEAN CHRISTOPHE MANDARD	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Delobel - Angle Droit 2020	Touraine	DOMAINE DELOBEL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Fournier Père et Fils 2021	Touraine	FOURNIER PÈRE ET FILS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
J. de Villebois 2021	Touraine	VILLEBOIS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Roc de Chateaufieux 2021	Touraine	ROC DE CHÂTEAUFIEUX	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine de la Croix Bouquie 2021	Touraine	LIONEL GOSSEAUME	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine de Pierre Le Chemin Rompu 2021	Touraine	LIONEL GOSSEAUME	<b>Silver Medal</b>
La Sauterelle Manoir Blanc 2020	Touraine	MANOIR DE LA VIGNIÈRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Joël Delaunay 2021	Touraine	JOEL DELAUNAY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
La Gourmandière Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Touraine	LA VINICOLE DE TOURAINE - LA GOURMANDIÈRE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Priou Sauvignon 2021	Touraine	DOMAINE PRIOU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Vignoble Gibault Sauvignon 2021	Touraine	VIGNOBLE GIBAULT	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Bellevue Silex des Martinières 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	VAUVY DOMAINE BELLEVUE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine la Bruyère 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	PIERRE CHAINIER SAS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château de Quinçay 2019	Touraine Chenonceaux	CHÂTEAU DE QUINÇAY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Jean-Marc Villemaine 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	VILLEMAINE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine du Chapitre 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE DU CHAPITRE MARYLINE ET FRANÇOIS DESLOGES	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château de Vallagon 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	CAVES DE LA LOIRE - SITE DE OISLY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
TBK 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	LES VIGNERONS DES COTEAUX ROMANAIS	<b>Silver Medal</b>

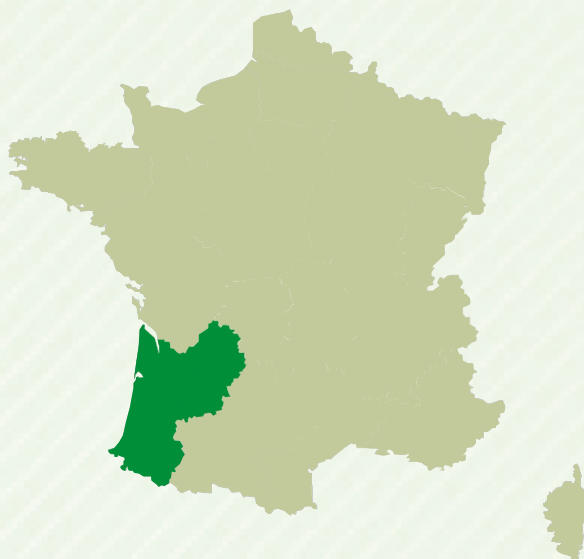
Domaine du Haut Perron 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE GUY ALLION	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine de la Renaudie 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	DOMAINE DE LA RENAUDIE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Les Pionnières 2020	Touraine Chenonceaux	VIGNOBLE DINOCHÉAU	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine Delobel - B de Oisly 2020	Touraine Oisly	DOMAINE DELOBEL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine de Pierre 2020	Touraine Oisly	LIONEL GOSSEAUME	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Domaine Octavie 2020	Touraine Oisly	DOMAINE OCTAVIE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Eloquence 2020	Touraine Oisly	VIGNOBLE DUBREUIL	<i>Silver Medal</i>



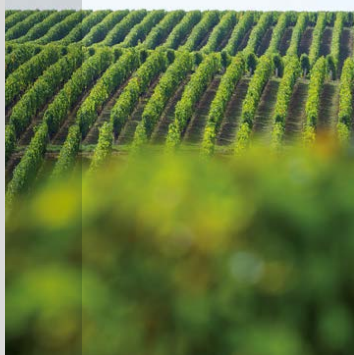


## BORDEAUX

From the Bordeaux blanc appellation, which focuses on Sauvignon as a global varietal A-lister, to the village appellations available in both sweet and dry versions, Sauvignon blanc is a ubiquitous component of white Bordeaux wines.



The idea of an international Sauvignon blanc competition originated in Bordeaux and was promoted by the late, celebrated consultant winemaker Denis Dubourdieu. It combined a desire to broaden the audience for white wines, in a wine region mainly renowned for its reds, with a more varietal-centric communications strategy. Production of dry white wines accounts for just 9% of total output in Bordeaux, dropping to a diminutive 1% for sweet white wines. In Bordeaux, Sauvignon blanc is the benchmark grape variety for dry whites and the second most planted variety (45% of white grape varieties) almost equally with Semillon (47%). Either as a single varietal or blended with Semillon, which it lifts with its chalky tension and aromatic freshness, it has given white Bordeaux wines a second lease of life – they can now ride on the crest of its international reputation and showcase the variety on their labels. In a slightly warmer climate, Sauvignon displays an aromatic spectrum revolving around ripe citrus fruits and white flowers, and is more structured.





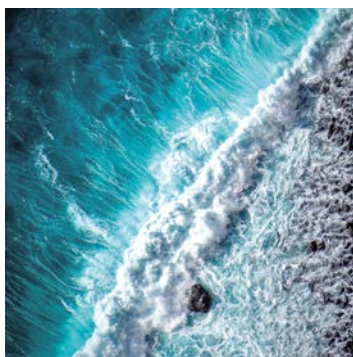
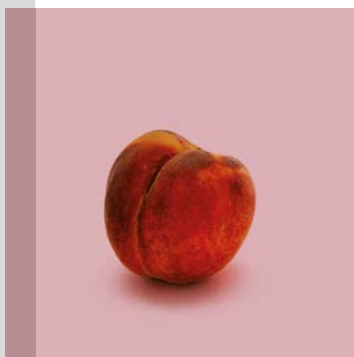
## ENTRE-DEUX-MERS

The Entre-deux-Mers region encompasses 17 appellations and 135 localities sandwiched between the arms of the Gironde with the Dordogne to the North and the Garonne to the South. The area itself, however, should not be mistaken for the appellation. The entire Entre-deux-Mers region (including the AOC of the same name) totals 35,727 hectares, divided between 30,515 hectares of red grape varieties and 5,211 hectares of white grapes. Of the 5,211 hectares planted to white varieties, 2,610 hectares are Sauvignon blanc, i.e. just over half.

The same is true of the Entre-deux-Mers appellation (or E2M, to its friends), which has 1,624 hectares of vines, over half of which is Sauvignon blanc, complemented by its vineyard companions. The overwhelming proportion of Sauvignon blanc in Entre-deux-Mers (both region and appellation) is therefore storied, though appellation specifications stipulate that blending is mandatory. The area produces mainly white wines marketed under the

Bordeaux Blanc appellation, capitalising on the global popularity of the brand name which gives it a competitive edge in export markets. Conversely, E2M AOC – which produces a sizeable 12 million bottles – tends to be drunk domestically. The hillside vineyards, carved out by the rivers, have multiple aspects and are very diverse depending on their proximity to the river – there are layers of sand, limestone and gravel though they are mainly clay-dominant. The Ocean has a significant influence, resulting in a high level of humidity, although vine health is protected by the westerly winds.

Winemaking techniques for dry white Bordeaux wines aim to preserve their intrinsic aromatic purity. After pressing, short skin-contact maceration is frequent, followed by alcoholic fermentation in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks at 18 to 20°C for about a fortnight. This is followed by a short ageing period of 3 to 6 months. Wood is the exception rather than the rule.





## GRAVES AND SAUTERNES

White Graves grow on gravel soils – hence the name – which offer good drainage. The profile of dry Graves whites can vary significantly, with some matured in oak. They are generally a little fatter than their counterparts from the Entre-deux-Mers region, but they still show great freshness and notes of white flowers, citrus and exotic fruits, as well as a touch of menthol. They are more often than not matured in barrels, their extra body allowing them to better integrate the oak.

The Pessac-Léognan appellation, located North of Graves, encompasses ten localities with 71 chateaux, and stretches 20 kilometres starting South of the city of Bordeaux. White wines account for 20% of total production (275 hectares of Sauvignon blanc, Sémillon and Muscadelle) and put Sauvignon centre stage. The appellation is typified by its gravelly soil, unlike the rest of the area as it is very rich in minerals - flint, quartz and jasper. These poor, well-drained soils can lend the wine specific minerality. Blended with Semillon and Muscadelle, the appellation produces remarkably complex whites with smoky minerality and good ageing potential, though this varies from one vintage to the next. The

Sauvignon here displays an array of aromatics led by very ripe citrus fruits and white flowers. The Semillons, which are particularly well suited to clay-limestone soils, are not heavy and show stone fruit and tropical overtones. Most of the whites are slightly oaky, which extends their ageing potential and broadens the mid-palate.

Barsac and Sauternes are the home of the great noble rot sweet wines. The vineyards, set within Graves, cover a diminutive area of just 22 km<sup>2</sup>, i.e. 2% of total Bordeaux vineyard acreage. They enjoy a microclimate, well-drained soils controlling water levels and ideal conditions for botrytis to form: a blanket of damp air covers the vines during the late summer and promotes the development of botrytis cinerea, or noble rot, which refers to the microscopic fungus that affects late harvest Sauternes and Barsac and adds complexity to the grapes and subsequently the wine. Semillon, which is particularly sensitive to the fungus, accounts for 80% of plantings and is complemented by Sauvignon blanc (20% of vineyard acreage) which adds freshness and richness, while the remaining hint of Muscadelle adds exotic notes.



Wine	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Tutiac Zrp 2020	Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux	VIGNERONS DE TUTIAC	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Château La Freynelle 2021	Bordeaux	VIGNOBLES VERONIQUE BARTHE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Château La Verrière 2021	Bordeaux	ANDRÉ BESSETTE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Château Pedebayle 2019	Graves	CHÂTEAU MAGENCE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Abeille de Fieuzal 2019	Pessac-Léognan	SOCIÉTÉ CHÂTEAU DE FIEUZAL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Château Haut-Grelot Première Cuvée 2021	Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux	JOEL BONNEAU - CHÂTEAU HAUT-GRELOT	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château B de Bastor Lamontagne 2021	Bordeaux	TERRES BORDELAISES	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Galochet 2021	Bordeaux	VIGNERONS DE TUTIAC	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Haut-Riot 2021	Bordeaux	VIGNOBLES LATORSE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Lamothe-Vincent Réserve 2021	Bordeaux	VIGNOBLES VINCENT	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Les Reuilles 2021	Bordeaux	TODESCO PATRICK	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon de Seguin 2021	Bordeaux	BWINE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Yvecourt Sauvignon 2021	Bordeaux	YVON MAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château La Freynelle 2021	Entre-deux-Mers	VIGNOBLES VERONIQUE BARTHE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château La Grande Métairie 2021	Entre-deux-Mers	VIGNOBLES BUFFETEAU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château les Moutins 2021	Entre-deux-Mers	CHÂTEAU HAUT POUGNAN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Excelium 2020	Entre-deux-Mers	BORDEAUX FAMILIES	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Magence 2017	Graves	CHÂTEAU MAGENCE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Magence Symphonie 2017	Graves	CHÂTEAU MAGENCE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Pedebayle 2018	Graves	CHÂTEAU MAGENCE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Clos Maragnac 2018	Graves	CHÂTEAU MAGENCE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Château Lafargue Cuvée Alexandre 2020	Bordeaux	CHÂTEAU LAFARGUE	<b>Silver Medal</b>







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## SOUTH OF FRANCE

There is a risk of confusion here: the vineyards of Occitania are divided into two areas. The South-West, which includes Côtes de Gascogne and Tarn; and the South-East, which includes the wines of Languedoc-Roussillon. The two areas are quite different, both for their history, climate and grape varieties.



### SOUTH-WEST: CÔTES DE GASCOGNE

The South-West region has 3,000 hectares of Sauvignon blanc, 2,800 of which are in the Côtes de Gascogne appellation area. Sauvignon blanc has been grown locally since the 19th century, but remained in the minority for many years. Until, that is, the Armagnac crisis of the 1980s encouraged winegrowers to diversify and branch out into dry white wines, initially regional wines, which subsequently became Côtes de Gascogne in 2009.

**Côtes de Gascogne** produce 85% white wine. The local varietal range has long been dominated by the distillation-suitable varieties that are Ugni blanc, Colombar and Baco. Sauvignon blanc, however, is increasingly becoming a magnet for producers due to the felicitous climate and great aromatic expression. Since 2000, 2,487 hectares of Sauvignon blanc have been planted, bringing the total to 2,823 hectares. Despite this, 45% of the Côtes de Gascogne varietal range is still Colombar, followed in equal parts (18%) by Gros Manseng and Sauvignon blanc.

Sauvignon basks in the region's sunny, damp climate, with its strong Ocean influence and a growing season marked by abundant rainfall

and significant diurnal shifts. The vineyard is sheltered by the Pyrenees to the South and the wooded Landes area to the West. The rolling countryside, a series of hillsides, valleys and rivers, creates an interesting diversity of aspects, coupled with a wide range of soil types, from the deep fawn sands to the West; clay-limestone to the East; and 'boulbènes' (sand, silt and clay) in the centre. Mixed farming, including sunflowers and livestock, enriches the soils with nitrogen, which promotes the development of thiols that are pivotal to the aromatic quality of Sauvignon blanc.

Their proficiency in making wine from the very fragile Colombar grape variety has given Gascon winegrowers a great deal of expertise in protecting these aromatic precursors – thiols are very sensitive to oxygen, but are essential for bringing out all the fruit aromatics in Sauvignon blanc. Utmost care is taken from harvest to bottle to preserve these aromatic precursors, starting with night harvesting and protecting the fruit using dry ice. After de-stemming, cold skin-contact maceration lasting a few days stabilises aromas before alcoholic fermentation kicks off at low temperatures (between 14 and 18°C).

Aside from the odd exception, the wines are not matured.

White Côtes de Gascogne wines are designed to keep their lightness and freshness and to display pronounced notes of citrus, stone fruit and tropical fruit.

The wines are mainly blended, with two main blending partners. Sauvignon blanc is typically combined with a backbone of Colombard, holding a 20% share of the blend. When paired with Colombard, which is even livelier than Sauvignon and revolves around the same aromatic core, it adds balance and bolsters its flavour spectrum, creating light, palatable blends with an ABV of around 11%.

## LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON

Languedoc-Roussillon, with its extensive vineyard acreage, has made huge strides in pulling up vines and replanting higher quality varieties for over 40 years – this has involved grubbing up 230,000 hectares of vines. The crisis it experienced from 2005 to 2010 is once again prompting the region to reinvent itself, favouring a greater diversity of wines; until recently, the range was very red-centric (in 2005, only 15% of the region's vines were white). Competition from New World producer countries has steered the region away from its previous staples – Merlot and Cabernet-Sauvignon – in favour of a higher proportion of whites, considerably broadening the resultant range of wines.

Some of the red varieties were uprooted and replanted, namely with Sauvignon blanc. The shift in acreage towards more white (25%) and rosé varieties (21%) has led the region to invest in modernising its production facilities and gain control over temperatures during the winemaking process.

Over the last twenty years, Sauvignon blanc has seen its area under vine double, rising from 4,525 hectares in 2000 to 8,800 hectares in 2019. Languedoc-Roussillon now produces 29% of French Sauvignon blanc, equating to 450,000 hectolitres and a potential 60 million bottles. Over the last ten years, production has increased by 33% to meet growing demand. Sauvignon is the second most planted white grape variety in the region, after Chardonnay. The primary designation (95%) for its Sauvignon blanc is IGP Pays d'Oc. The varietal has entered the 'Big 5', the most sought-after grape varieties, both in

Sauvignon Blanc can also be blended, generally in equal parts, with Gros Manseng, leading to a more structured, more complex Côtes de Gascogne which has slightly higher alcohol (12.5%) and is more of a food-friendly style. Less than a third of Côtes de Gascogne are single-varietal Sauvignon blanc.

One hundred million bottles of Côtes de Gascogne, 60% bound for export markets, are produced each year, 85 million of them white wines, including 12 million sweet wines. Retailing in France for around 6 euros for the dry wines and 8 for the sweet versions, Côtes de Gascogne have garnered extensive international consumer acclaim.

France and in export markets.

Mainly bottled as single varietal (80%), Sauvignon can also be used for novel blends. The market is largely brand-focused (80%) and driven by large volumes, mainly retailing in supermarkets. In addition to these powerhouses are the small to medium-sized family-run estates, which can offer distinctive creativity, both for the style of the wines and the choice of labelling.

Such is the area under vine, that the soil types and micro-climates are extremely broad-ranging. The cooler areas, such as the foothills of the Cevennes mountains and the Limoux region, produce tenser Sauvignon blancs that complement the warmer, more aromatic wines grown along the valley floors or the coast.

Sauvignon blanc has quickly taken on the Pays d'Oc accent, with vibrant fruitiness and pronounced, exuberant citrus notes, or more tropical aromatics and a measure of roundness when grown in warmer areas.

IGP Pays d'Oc Sauvignon blanc retails for an average 4.50 euros, a significant increment on price points ten years ago.

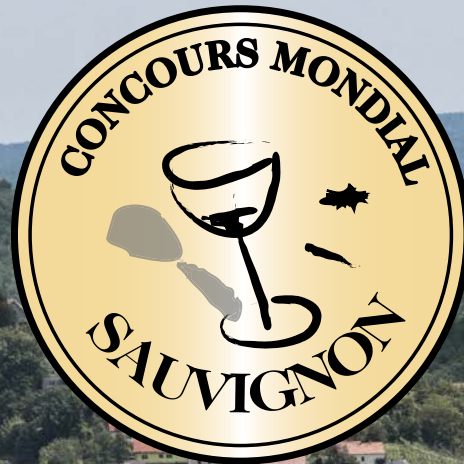
Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Ampelomeryx par Pellehaut 2020	Vin de France	Vin de France	BERAUT	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine Verret 2019	Bourgogne	Saint-Bris	DOMAINE VERRET	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Fyé Gris 2020	Bourgogne	Saint-Bris	DOMAINE PL. JF BERSAN	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Saint Bris Cuvée Héritage Cui Rouge 2020	Bourgogne	Saint-Bris	GRIVOT GOISOT	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Grand Vin Les Verdots 2020	Sud-Ouest	Bergerac sec	VIGNOBLE DES VERDOTS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Domaine les Remparts 2020	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	SILAS DOMAINE LES REMPARTS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Saint Bris Grivot-Goisot 2020	Bourgogne	Saint-Bris	GRIVOT GOISOT	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Baron du Capiscol Sauvignon 2021	Languedoc-Roussillon	Pays d'Oc IGP	ALMA CERSIUS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Code Fascination Sauvignon 2021	Languedoc-Roussillon	Pays d'Oc IGP	ALMA CERSIUS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine KL Le Sud 2020	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Duras	VIGNOBLE DE LA LÈGUE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Seigneur de Berticot 2021	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Duras	TERRE DE VIGNERONS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Chiroulet Miocène 2020	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	FAMILLE FEZAS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Guillaman Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	DOMAINE GUILLAMAN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Mas Sauvignon 2021	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	MAS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Les Esquirots 2021	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	LES HAUTS DE MONTRouGE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Uby N°1 Sauvignon 2021	Sud-Ouest	Côtes de Gascogne IGP	SDU	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Domaine Chante l'Oiseau 2020	Sud-Ouest	Perigord IGP	DOMAINE CHANTE L'OISEAU SARL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Biface Blanc 2021	Vin de France	Vin de France	DESPAGNE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Septembre 2021	Vin de France	Vin de France	JOEL DELAUNAY	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Terres Fumées Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Vin de France	Vin de France	FRANÇOIS LURTON	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Typic 2021	Vin de France	Vin de France	BWINE	<b>Silver Medal</b>











# Styria Austria

Henry Sams and Werner Luttenberger

Austria has a remarkable history as a Central European wine-growing country for premium-quality wines. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for this is the wine-growing associations and viticulture schools founded in the 19th century, such as the Viticulture Teaching and Research Institute Klosterneuburg established in 1860 or those of Marburg in Lower Styria, now Slovenia.

In 1878, the then director Hermann Goethe described Sauvignon blanc with its synonyms "fig grape" or "Muscat Sylvaner" in his handbook of ampelography. This aromatic grape variety was successful in Styria at the end of the 19th/ beginning of the 20th century under the name Muskatsylvaner. By law, since December 2000 only the name Sauvignon blanc is permitted.

Throughout Austria, Styria is THE wine region for Sauvignon blanc and has garnered an excellent international reputation. Lincoln University in New Zealand describes Southern Styria as a special wine region for Sauvignon blanc. Likewise, for decades, world-renowned wine critics and experts including Masters of Wine (MW) have devoted publications to Styrian Sauvignon blanc. With their dry Sauvignon wines, the Styrians play an important role in the great global Sauvignon arena, regularly coming away with accolades from major competitions such as the Concours Mondial du Sauvignon. This recognition has made the Austrians extremely proud.

Styria's area under vine has risen from 2,124 hectares in 1974 to approximately 5,100 hectares currently. The vineyards are planted to a wide mix of varieties and include 910 hectares of Sauvignon blanc, which therefore ranks first in the varietal range. Vines are mostly grown by private, small-scale wineries, who have also achieved commercial success with their wines. Some of them have joined together to form marketing communities, such as the STK, Eruption and SIEME wineries or the Winzer Vulkanland Steiermark. There is a total of around 1,900 vineyards with an average of 2.70 hectares under vine and impressive annual production of around 240,000 hl of quality wines. In individual wineries, more than half of the vineyards are already producing Sauvignon blanc, several of them certified as "sustainable by Austria" but also organic.

A forward-looking, innovative step was taken in Styria in 2018 with the DAC ("Districtus Austriae Controllatus") system of origin. The three wine regions – Vulkanland Steiermark (Styria Volcano Country) DAC, Weststeiermark (Western Styria) DAC and Südsteiermark (Southern Styria) DAC – were officially demarcated. Since then, only designated white grape varieties such as Sauvignon blanc can be marketed as DAC wines. The system, enshrined in law, is defined by a three-level pyramid of origin. The base level is formed by the DAC regional wines, followed by DAC local wines based on the so-called 'Roman' classification model; the DAC vineyard wines are on the top rung of the quality ladder. Harvesting by hand is mandatory at all three levels and generally, the recommendation is to ferment the wines dry.



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Sauvignon blanc is grown in all three Styrian wine regions. There is a distinctive continental climate with different conditions for viticulture. The southeastern region of Styria, 'volcano country', is largely under Pannonian influence. The soil is often influenced by weathered rock containing basalt. Active volcanic activity around six million years ago brought enormous rock masses from the earth's core to the surface and numerous extinct volcanic cones today form fertile landmarks. In this wine region, 1,700 hectares of vineyards are bearing, spread among countless small and very small vineyards in hilly locations. The mild climate continuously ensures physiologically ripe grapes. The resultant Sauvignon blanc wines often display great volume, high alcohol content, spicy minerality, ripe fruit expression and huge potential to mature.

With 640 hectares of vineyards, Western Styria is the smallest wine region in Austria. Here, vines flirt with the sky because the steep vineyards reach up to 600 meters above sea level with mostly exposed slopes. Historical documents attesting to active winegrowing in the region can be found in the cellar registers of monasteries from the 16th century. The vineyards are mainly characterized by lime-free, crystalline soil structures that were formed more than 10 million years ago. Slate, gneiss with a loamy subsoil and the cooler climate at higher altitudes are conducive to producing Sauvignon blanc that is fresh yet powerful, with salty minerality shaped by the terroir.

Southern Styria holds pride of place with 2,750 hectares of vineyards, dotted along the South Styrian Wine Route on the border with Slovenia. It is home to an array of soil types: gravelly to sandy sediment from river deposits during the Tertiary Period from 16 million to around 10 million years ago, and fine silt and clay sediment dating from the era when sea covered the Styrian basin, are both noteworthy examples of soil types in the region. The exposed locations were created by the uplift and subsidence of this former sea of coral reefs, algae rubble and clay-rich limestone marl; fossilized starfish and mussels are the silent witnesses to these upheavals in today's vineyards. The subsoil usually comprises a light gray-white to dark limestone formation; the soils are often characterized by calcareous-clayey loam or loamy sand from limestone.

In the Sausal wine region in Southern Styria, no stone is left unturned – both figuratively and literally. The exposed locations climbing more than 600 m above sea level are strewn with multi-layered primary rock soils. The steep slopes, with a gradient of up to 90 percent, were formed from phyllitic slates from the Paleozoic era more than 250 million years ago. While southern Styria was then flooded by primordial seas, most of the Sausal region formed a compact, island-like elevation. Former coral reefs and marine animals, which influenced the rest of southern Styria with their limestone deposits, did not occur in the Sausal area over 420 meters above sea level. And so today, clay slate, sericite quartzite, green slate, red and blue-black slate or inclusions of potassium feldspar largely characterize the very steep vineyards in Sausal.

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A defining feature of Styria is the large fluctuations between mild daytime temperatures and cool nights, which promotes a long hang-time for the grapes and extended ripening. Naturally, the winemaking techniques play a decisive role in the style of the wines. Sauvignon blanc DAC regional wines are mostly fermented in stainless steel tanks with no malolactic fermentation. The wines are typically easy-drinking and inviting with moderate alcohol content of around 12.5 percent by volume. They show fresh, primary fruit aromas of gooseberries, paprika, grapefruit, blackcurrants, grassy characters, notes of nettles or tropical fruits.

DAC local wines from Sauvignon blanc tend to be matured in stainless steel tanks, but also in large wooden vessels. Malolactic fermentation is rarely sought. Depending on the wine region, aromas and flavors have a recognizable, independent style. Aromas range from vegetal notes to gooseberries, exotic yellow fruits such as pineapple, mango, passion fruit and grapefruit to Mediterranean herbs and spices. Depending on the vintage, alcohol content of 12.5 % ABV or more is preferred.

Sauvignon blanc from DAC single vineyards are mainly matured in large oak barrels, but

also develop their full potential in stainless steel tanks. Partly undergoing malolactic fermentation, these single-vineyard wines excel with their nobility, power, volume, density and minerality shaped by the terroir. This style of Sauvignon blanc also gains harmony through its appealingly balanced spicy acidity and full-bodied alcohol. From a sensory perspective, it exudes brilliant notes of cedar wood, tropical fruits, olives, peaches, spicy herbs, tannin components that provide structure, or salty nuances. These are long-lived Sauvignon blancs.

In Styria, Sauvignon blanc is usually produced as a single varietal and dry, but can occasionally be blended with Chardonnay. For "Junker" or young wines – the Austrian counterpart to France's Beaujolais Primeur – Sauvignon blanc is often blended with other early-ripening grape varieties. In exceptional years, sweet wines are also produced from Sauvignon blanc. A case in point is the 2015 Trockenbeerenauslese by Ewald Zweytick, which won a Revelation trophy in the sweet wine category at the 2018 Concours Mondial du Sauvignon. Styrian Sauvignon blanc has also proven successful as a quality sparkling wine.

## 2022 AWARDS • AUSTRIA

Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Leitner Sauvignon blanc 2021	Steiermark		WEINHOF LEITNER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Peter Skoff Sauvignon blanc Ried Kranachberg Reserve 2015	Steiermark		PETER SKOFF - DOMÄNE KRANACHBERG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Anno Dazumal Sauvignon Blanc 2017	Niederösterreich	Kamptal	WEINHANDEL WEIXELBAUM	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Adam Sauvignon blanc Ried Sernauberg 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT ADAM-SCHERERKOGL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Bernd Stelzl Ried Hirritschberg Sauvignon blanc 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT BERND STELZL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ehrenhausen Sauvignon blanc 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT GRABIN	<b>Gold Medal</b>
F.S. Regele Sauvignon Blanc Ried Zoppelberg 2018	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	F S REGELE GESMBHCOKG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Finum Sauvignon blanc Ried Kranachberg 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	PETER SKOFF - DOMÄNE KRANACHBERG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Gross Sauvignon Blanc Trockenbeerenauslese 2017	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT GROSS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Potzinger Sauvignon Blanc Joseph Ried Sulz 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	STEFAN POTZINGER WEINE GMBH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Potzinger Sauvignon Blanc Ried Czamillonberg 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	STEFAN POTZINGER WEINE GMBH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Rosengarten Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT KODOLITSCH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Rosengarten Sauvignon Blanc T.M.S. 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT KODOLITSCH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Barrique Privat Reserve Pöbnitzberg 2012	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT MUSTER BERNHARD	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc DAC Ried Nebeneegg 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WINERY PICHLER-SCHOBER	<b>Gold Medal</b>

Sauvignon Blanc Die Sieme Leutschach 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	FAMILIENWEINGUT OBERER GERMUTH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Ehrenhausen 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT MARKO	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Gottscheber DAC 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WINERY ADAM-LIELEG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Karnerberg 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT FAMILIE MANFRED BIRNSTINGL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Pockenberg 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT MUSTER BERNHARD	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Schiesskogel 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT HOLLER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Steinbruch 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	LANDESWEINGUT SILBERBERG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Welles 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT RIEGELNEGG OLWITSCHHOF	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Steinkogl 2021	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	KOLLERHOF AM EICHBERG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Tschermonegg Sauvignon Blanc Sieme Gamlitz 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT TSCHERMONEGG	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Weingut Wildbacher 2017	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT WILDBACHER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Wruß Sauvignon Blanc Gamlitz DAC 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT WRUSS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Große STK Ried Buch Sauvignon blanc 2019	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT FRAUWALLNER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Schemming Große Lage Eruption Sauvignon blanc 2020	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT PFEIFER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Schemming Sauvignon blanc 2020	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT PFEIFER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Hochstrandl Alte Reben DAC 2019	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT KRISPEL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc St. Anna am Aigen Ortswein DAC 2020	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINHOF SCHARL JOSEF - CHARAKTERWEINE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc vom Schloss 2018	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINSCHLOSS KOARL THALLER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc vom Schloss 2019	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINSCHLOSS KOARL THALLER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Weingut Posch 2018	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT POSCH	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Große Reserve 2016	Niederösterreich	Weinviertel	WEINGUT URBAN	<b>Gold Medal</b> <b>REVELATION</b>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Leitenberg 2020	Niederösterreich	Weinviertel	WEINGUT URBAN	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Braunegg Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT SCHILCHEREI JÖBSTL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Greisdorf Sauvignon Blanc Reserve 2018	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT LANGMANN	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Ried Rettenberg Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 2019	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT HARING PICHLIPPI	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Lamberg 2018	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT CHRISTIAN REITERER	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Hochgrail Weststeiermark DAC 2020	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT FAMILIE HIDEN - HIDEN STEPHAN, FRANZ UND MARIA	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc Panoramaedition 2021	Steiermark		PANORAMAWEINHOF STRABLEGG - LEITNER	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Weinhof Deutsch Sauvignon Blanc 2019	Steiermark		WEINHOF DEUTSCH	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Weinbau Heinzl 2021	Niederösterreich	Kamptal	WEINBAU HEINZL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Adam Sauvignon blanc Ried Sernauberg 2018	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT ADAM-SCHERERKOGL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Bockmoar Sauvignon blanc 2021	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT BOCKMOAR	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Menhart Gamlitz Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINBAU FRANZ UND KARL MENHART	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Menhart Ried Sernauberg Sauvignon Blanc 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINBAU FRANZ UND KARL MENHART	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Peter Skoff Sauvignon blanc Ried Kranachberg 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	PETER SKOFF - DOMÄNE KRANACHBERG	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Pongratz Sauvignon blanc Ried Kranachberg 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT PONGRATZ	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Potzinger Sauvignon Blanc Joseph Fassreserve Ried Sulz 2018	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	STEFAN POTZINGER WEINE GMBH	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Ried Sernauberg Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT RIEGELNEGG OLWITSCHHOF	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Ried Sernauberg Sauvignon blanc 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT KARL MELCHER	<b>Silver Medal</b>



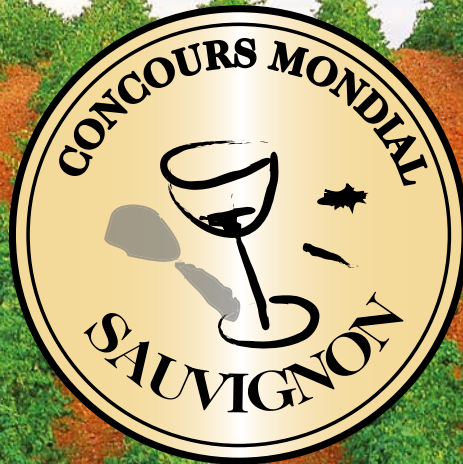
Riegelnegg Sauvignon Blanc Ried Gamlitzberg DAC 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINHOF RIEGELNEGG STAMMHAUS	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignin Blanc Medigon 2018	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WINERY PICHLER-SCHOBER	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Eichberg DAC 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT GRILL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Fossil Ried Steinbruch 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT CHRISTIAN U. JOHANN ZWEYTICK	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Naturverbrunden 2021	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	KOLLERHOF AM EICHBERG	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Reserve Ried Mosergut 2018	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT FELBERJÖRGL/TEMMELE HANS-PETER U. MB	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Kreuzegg 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT FELBERJÖRGL/TEMMELE HANS-PETER U. MB	<i>Silver Medal</i> <i>REVELATION</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Obegg DAC 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT SKOFF ORIGINAL GMBH	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Oberglanz 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT REPOLUSK	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Ried Sernauberg Exzellenz 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT RIEGELNEGG OLWITSCHHOF	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Ried Urlkogel 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT ELSNEGG	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Royal DAC 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT SKOFF ORIGINAL GMBH	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Royal Steiermark 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT SKOFF ORIGINAL GMBH	<i>Silver Medal</i>
SB Sauvignon Blanc Beerenauslese 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	EWALD ZWEYTICK WEIN	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Skoff Original Sauvignon Blanc Ried Kranachberg DAC 2019	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT SKOFF ORIGINAL GMBH	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Tschermonegg Sauvignon Ried Lubekogel 2020	Steiermark	Südsteiermark	WEINGUT TSCHERMONEGG	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon blanc Klassik 2020	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINSCHLOSS KOARL THALLER	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Sauvignon Blanc Neusetzberg DAC 2019	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT KRISPEL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Wolfgang Lang Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Steiermark	Vulkanland Steiermark	WEINGUT WOLFGANG LANG	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Eibiswald Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT HARING PICHLIPPI	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Ried Greisdorf Sauvignon Blanc 2019	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT LANGMANN	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Stainz Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Steiermark	Weststeiermark	WEINGUT LANGMANN	<i>Silver Medal</i>











# Italy

Antonio Paolini and  
Maurizio Valeriani

Production of Sauvignon blanc in Italy is anything but insignificant. However, it is mainly centred in the north-eastern part of the country. Italy has 3,750 hectares of bearing Sauvignon vineyards (2018 data) and over 1,350 ha of those are located in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, with a further 600 ha or so in Veneto and just under 450 ha in Trentino-Alto Adige. Acreage has continued to grow, despite a concurrent boom in plantings of Glera for Prosecco production and the native grape Ribolla Gialla.

## REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION



Despite this high level of concentration in the North-East, another 1,500 hectares are grown throughout the country. Grown as a stand-alone grape, with a single varietal mentioned on the label, in Umbria, Tuscany, Abruzzo, Apulia, and above all in Sicily, Sauvignon is grown virtually nationwide. Its distinctive aromatic profile – which is gratifyingly recognisable to tasters of all levels of experience – has often led producers to favour it and nurture it as a complementary variety in blends with local grapes, particularly ones that display more neutral and less immediately intriguing aromas and flavours.

## WINE PROFILES

There are significant differences between the wines grown in the three flagship Sauvignon regions. The most subtle, acidic, taut and fine renditions are generally those from the Adige region. But even within these regions there are profound differences depending on vineyard elevation, for instance. The Bassa Atesina bearing the Vigneti delle Dolomiti appellation and the high and steep, cool and rocky Valle Isarco, are the extremes. Vineyard soil types obviously factor into the equation too, as does the individual style of the producer. Some companies, especially the large co-operatives which are widespread across the region, have focused on producing more powerful and ambitious Sauvignon with structure, that are aimed at challenging the 'champions' of the global wine industry.

Full flavour, greater structure and breadth on the palate – along with less pronounced acidity – are generally the character traits associated with Friulian Sauvignon. In the various designations and wine areas, producers have shared the same commitment, but the results in terms of style are quite different. This is true of the Collio area, particularly the zone that intersects with neighbouring Slovenia, Colli Orientali, Isonzo, etc. The latest trend is a resurgence of the use of amphora for maturing the wines, which in some cases have superseded the ubiquitous stainless steel tanks and wood. In the latter case, new wood is generally used sparingly and often as a blending component with Sauvignon fermented and stored in tanks.





## HISTORY

The history of Sauvignon blanc's arrival in the region is extraordinary and deserves to be told. Over a century and a half ago, Count de La Tour, the owner of extensive vineyards in Capriva – where the historic and highly acclaimed Villa Russiz estate is still very much alive – and a fanatical wine and viticulture enthusiast, fell in love with Sauvignon blanc after he tasted some at the World Fair in Paris. As there was a strict ban on exporting rooted vine cuttings from France, the Count 'solved' the problem by hiding some in huge baskets of flowers sent back as gifts for the Countess. In Friuli, Sauvignon therefore became both a guest of honour – a Sunday wine and one for foreign guests, as per local drinking traditions – and an important resource. Rauscedo in Friuli is the largest grapevine nursery in Italy and has been decisive in many ways in paving the way for

the development of modern Italian ampelography, both during the period of research into high productivity in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, and after the turning point in the mid-1980s when Italy went down the quality route. The nursery created and rolled out the R3 clone, which then dominated production at national level.

Venetian production is diverse and definitely less consistent in terms of standards and positioning than the other two leading regions. It does boast prominent examples, that have tremendous clout and drive research – including Inama Vulcaia Fumé and Miani, to name just two – and consequential ambitions, but it is also home to a small army of labels with decidedly simpler blends and objectives.



## NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Sauvignon's fortunes have been chequered and intermittent in other regions, especially when it is made as a single varietal. Generally speaking, its obvious proponents are export-oriented producers who have tackled a grape variety that speaks a bit of every language, like Cabernet, Chardonnay, Merlot and Riesling. It is therefore found in Piedmont, as part of renowned ranges like that of Gaja; in Tuscany, where it is produced by elite artisan wineries such as Castello di Ama

or deluxe brands supported by prominent names such as Ornellaia, though in some cases it has been replaced by other choices; in Umbria, at Castello della Sala, a prized local branch of the formidable Antinori 'system'; in Lazio, in the eclectic and distinctly catholic range, in terms of varietal choices, by Casale del Giglio; in Sicily, in the authoritative Tasca d'Almerita collection. In addition to these are numerous other estates with a more 'funky' approach.

## THE FUTURE

By way of a conclusion, it would be fair to say that Italian Sauvignon's broad-reaching and immediate success is less of a whirlwind than it was twenty or twenty-five years ago. The main reasons for this are the rediscovery and rise to prominence of native white varieties and increased knowledge among average consumers. The flipside of this is that wine enthusiasts have become more discriminating in their tastes whilst critics and wine tasters have become increasingly demanding. Consequently, while the more aggressive styles of Sauvignon, characterised by

a profusion of pyrazine-style accents – and often made from underripe grapes – have been less successful, there has been greater appreciation for balance, harmony and finesse both in the approach to the nose and in the overall aroma and flavour balance.

The future of Sauvignon in Italy – in view of all the above – points towards stability or even a decline from a volume perspective, but with a tangible rise in average quality.





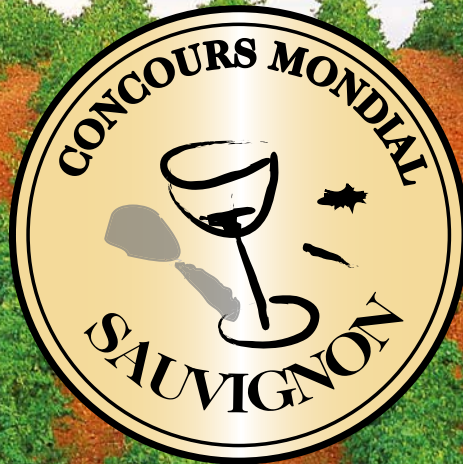
Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Sauvignon Genesis 2019	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	AZIENDA VALENTINO BUTUSSI SSA	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Mulino delle Tolle Sauvignon 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Aquileia DOC	SOCIETÀ AGRICOLA MULINO DELLE TOLLE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Casa Quaranta 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli DOC	CANTINA DI RAUSCEDO S.C.A.	<b>Gold Medal</b> <b>REVELATION</b>
Sauvignon Bortolusso 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Trevezie IGT	AZ. AGR. BORTOLUSSO	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Sauvignon Bortolusso 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Trevezie IGT	AZ. AGR. BORTOLUSSO	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Cantina Rauscedo Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Venezia Giulia IGT	CANTINA DI RAUSCEDO S.C.A.	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Pitars Bianco Tureis 2018	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Venezia Giulia IGT	PITARS S.N.C. DI PITTARO PAOLO E F.LLI SOCIETÀ AGRICOLA	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Cantina La Vis Vich Sauvignon 2019	Trentino Alto Adige	Vigneti delle Dolomiti IGT	GLV SRL	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Mervin Sauvignon Blanc Riserva 2019	Trentino Alto Adige	Alto Adige Sauvignon DOC	KELLEREI MERAN	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Ploner Sauvignon Exclusiv 2020	Trentino Alto Adige	Alto Adige Sauvignon DOC	WEINGUT PLONERHOF D. TUTZER ERHART SCHAFFER HERTA	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cozzarolo Sauvignon 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	AZ. AGR. COZZAROLO GIOVANNI BATTISTA	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Gori Sauvignon Busse Ben 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	GORI AGRICOLA SRL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Griollo Iole Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	SOC. AGR. GRILLO IOLE S.S.	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Perusini Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	PERUSINI SOCIETÀ AGRICOLA S.S.	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Rocca Bernarda Sagrivit Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	ROCCA BERNARDA SAGRIVIT SRL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon Biele Zoe 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	CIVAGROUP DISTRIBUZIONE SRL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon blanc di Rosa Bosco 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Colli Orientali del Friuli DOC	SOCIETÀ AGRICOLA LUIGI DE PUPPI	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Foffani Sauvignon Superiore 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Aquileia DOC	AZ. AGR. FOFFANI	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cormons Sauvignon 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli DOC	CANTINA PRODUTTORI CORMONS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Forchir Sauvignon 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli DOC	AZ. FORCHIR DI BIANCHINI G.AMP;C. S.S.A	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Pitars Sauvignon Braida Santa Cecilia 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli DOC	PITARS S.N.C. DI PITTARO PAOLO E F.LLI SOCIETÀ AGRICOLA	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon Cabert 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli DOC	CABERT - CANTINA DI BERTIOLO SPA	<b>Silver Medal</b>
I Magredi Sauvignon Blanc Friuli Grave 2021	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Grave DOC	I MAGREDI SRL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sauvignon Superiore Tenuta di Sequals 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Grave DOC	CANTINA VINI ARMANI A.S.R.L.	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Isonzo Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Isonzo DOC	AZIENDA AGRICOLA SGUBIN RENZO	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Tenuta Luisa Sauvignon 2020	Friuli Venezia Giulia	Friuli Isonzo DOC	TENUTA LUISA	<b>Silver Medal</b>



I Ginepri 2020	Lombardia	Oltrepò Pavese DOC	AZ. AGR. LA SBERCIA	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Isolabella Della Croce Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Piemonte	Piemonte DOC	BORGIO ISOLABELLA S.S.	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Kaid Sauvignon 2021	Sicilia	Sicilia DOC	ALESSANDRO DI CAMPOREALE	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Cantina La Vis Sauvignon Classici 2021	Trentino Alto Adige	Trentino DOC	GLV SRL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Bosco della Donna Sauvignon 2020	Veneto	Trevezie IGT	BORGIO STAJNBECH	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Chiesa Vecchia Sauvignon 2020	Veneto	Veneto IGT	AZIENDA AGRICOLA CHIESA VECCHIA	<i>Silver Medal</i>







# Spain

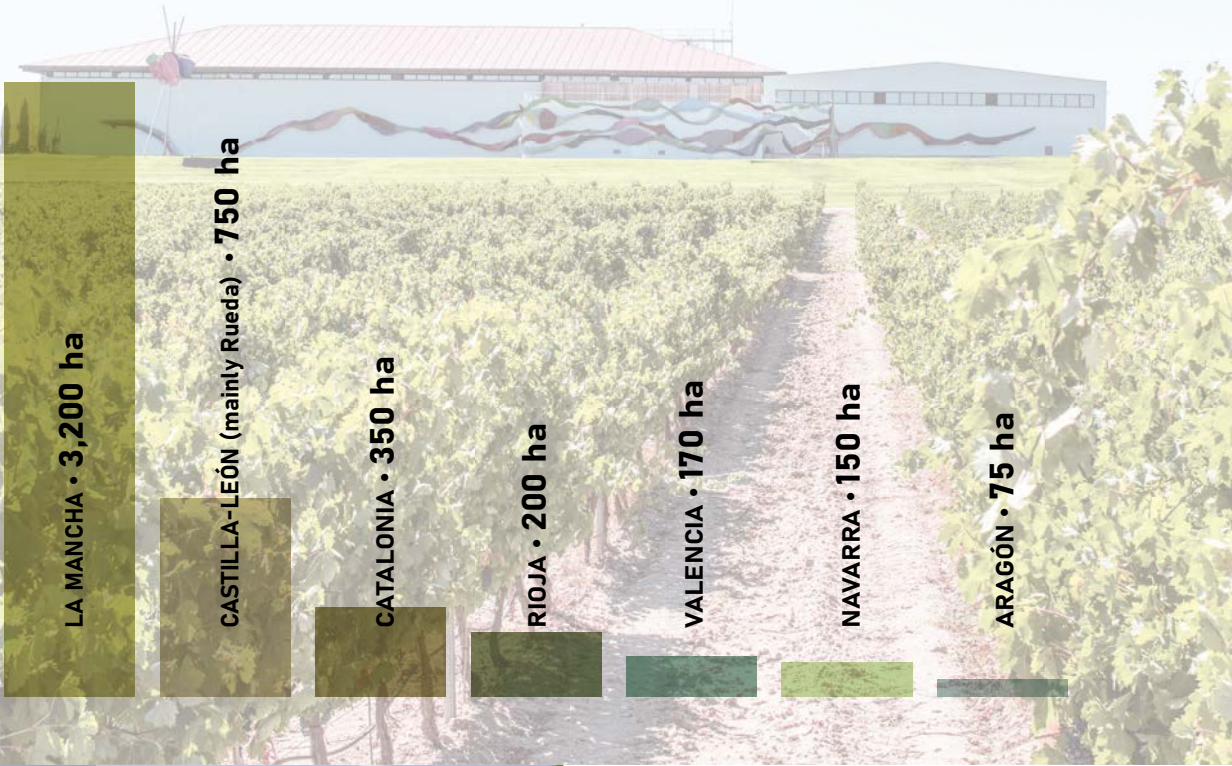
Pedro Ballesteros MW

Sauvignon was first introduced to Spain in 1973 when the Marqués de Riscal winery chose Rueda as the region for producing young fruity wines with character. Much of it is used to reinforce the aromatics of Rueda's flagship variety, Verdejo. But there is a relevant number of wines that are technically varietal Sauvignon. After Rueda, Torres in Catalonia planted Sauvignon for producing a Fumé Blanc style, which is still popular.

The region with the largest area planted with Sauvignon is La Mancha, mainly for commercial styles. Relevant new Sauvignon vineyards are being planted in Rioja. Only a few wines have been marketed so far, yet without a clear identity. There is also Sauvignon in Navarra, Aragón and Valencia.



## REGIONAL SAUVIGNON DISTRIBUTION



## PREDOMINANT CLIMATE PATTERNS AND SOIL TYPES



### There are two main types of climate:

Continental, marked by high altitude, high daily temperature variation and little rain during the season, in Rueda; and Mediterranean, moderated by a degree of altitude and trellising, in Catalonia.

## WINE PROFILES

The typical wine profile in Rueda is an intensely aromatic, almost New World style, with moderate acidity, giving an impression of volume. The wines are very clean and marked by the varietal. A few wines are fermented or shortly aged in oak, but 99% of the wines are bottled young, with no oak contact. Cold maceration,

low-temperature fermentation are the norm. The dominance of Verdejo plantings has played in favour of Sauvignon wines, since the vines tend to be older.

In Catalonia, there are two styles. The Fumé Blanc style shows evidence of oak ageing, relevant alcohol levels, around 14-14.5%, moderate acidity and

a very Californian feeling of dry sweetness. The best examples have a long finish.

The second style is simpler, quite aromatic, with fair acidity: it is not too dissimilar from the La Mancha style – the wines are simple and deliver gooseberry aromas, they are not very fresh but clean.

## TYPICAL ALCOHOL CONTENT

In Rueda, alcohol content ranges from 12.5 to 14%. In Catalonia 13.5-14.5%. In La Mancha 11.5-13.5%



## AROMATIC TYPICITY

In Rueda, Sauvignon has more in common with New Zealand and South Africa than with Sancerre, and little in common with un-oaked Bordeaux. It is much higher in acidity, then shows well-defined gooseberry aromas, sometimes minty and herbaceous hints, little or no pipi de chat and intense tropical fruit.

The oaked versions from Catalonia have evidence of spice and toast from the oak and intense tropical fruit with no hint of herbs. On the palate, they are powerful, well-structured and well-defined, and can sometimes be long – the finish is an excellent indicator of quality.

La Mancha wines offer an array of aromas along the lines of Rueda, but normally less intense, with more ripe fruit than subtler gooseberry, and few signs of spice and herbs.

## OTHER POSSIBLE AROMAS

A few wines are kept in lees contact for one week, developing typical aromas, but this is rare.



## SPECIFIC WINEMAKING

### TECHNIQUES

As mentioned before, cold maceration, low-temperature fermentation and no or partial malolactic fermentation are used for most wines. Fermentation in oak, with a few months' ageing are used for oaky versions.



## VARIETALS COMMONLY

### BLENDED WITH SAUVIGNON

In Rueda, Verdejo is blended with Sauvignon, although in most cases Sauvignon does not feature on the label, along with Palomino and Viura; in this case, it is the opposite, the neutral varieties are not stated on the label.

In La Mancha, up to 15% of the very neutral Airén variety is blended with Sauvignon, but in all other cases, there is practically no blending.



## AGEING CAPACITY AND USE

### OF OAK

Most wines are made to keep for 1-2 years. The best examples in Rueda can improve over 3 to 5 years.

In Catalonia, the best oaked versions can improve over 10 years.

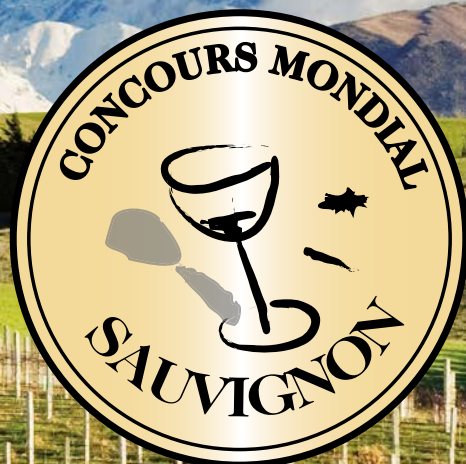




Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Epilogo 2021	Castilla-la-Mancha	La Mancha	COOP. JESUS DEL PERDON - BODEGAS YUNTERO. S.C. DE CLM	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Translations 2021	Castilla-la-Mancha	La Mancha	J. GARCÍA CARRIÓN	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Casa de Illana Alma 2021	Castilla-la-Mancha	Ribera del Jucar	VINOE TRADEX SL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Cuarenta Vendimias Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Castilla-y-León	Rueda	BODEGA CUATRO RAYAS S. COOP. AGROALIMENTARIA	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Diez Siglos 2021	Castilla-y-León	Rueda	DIEZ SIGLOS DE VERDEJO SL	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Mantel Blanco 2021	Castilla-y-León	Rueda	ALVAREZ Y DIEZ S.A	<i>Silver Medal</i>
Finca del Mar Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Valencia	Utiel-Requena	VICENTE GANDIA PLA.S.A.U	<i>Silver Medal</i>







# New Zealand

Emma Jenkins MW

In 1973, Marlborough's first Sauvignon blanc vines were planted. The variety quickly and emphatically established itself as the country's flagship wine, cementing its reputation on a world stage. These days, Sauvignon blanc represents around 75% of plantings and 85% of New Zealand's exports, most of which are made in the evocatively aromatic, pure-fruited Marlborough style – think vibrant passionfruit, red capsicum, grapefruit and freshly-cut grass. However, an increasing number of producers are

exploring the subtleties of sub-regionality and/or alternative winemaking styles incorporating wild ferments, lees and oak, and dedicated industry research into low-alcohol styles has yielded wines that moderate alcohol and calories whilst retaining classic varietal characteristics. Marlborough may dominate New Zealand's hectareage and exports, but Sauvignon blanc is grown the length and breadth of the country, providing a diverse array of styles to explore.





New Zealand comprises a long, slender mountainous pair of main islands spanning 13 latitudes, and as such has a surprisingly diverse array of wine regions from the sub-tropical climates of Northland, to the world's most southerly vineyards in Central Otago. Sauvignon blanc is planted in all of New Zealand's wine regions, though as expected, Marlborough dominates production by a significant margin. As a generalization, the more northerly regions produce styles rich in ripe stonefruit and melon flavours with an affinity for oak-ageing, whilst the southerly regions' cooler climates and longer growing seasons emphasise vibrantly pure fruit profiles of passionfruit, tropical fruits, capsicum, gooseberry and grapefruit/lime, and crisp acidity.

**1 Marlborough** is New Zealand's largest region for Sauvignon blanc, blessed with high sunshine, low rainfall, and a long growing season with a significant diurnal shift throughout. This intensifies the naturally vibrant varietal character of Sauvignon blanc whilst retaining characteristic high crisp acidity. The soils are mostly stony old riverbeds but towards the hills, deeper clay-based, wind-blown loess soils can produce richer, more textural wines. Most wines are blended from fruit across the main valleys but there is an increasing number of sub-regional wines on offer: the main Wairau Valley fruit tends to deliver a ripe, pungent wine style; the clay-based Southern Valleys soils can produce a stonefruit-rich, textural style; while a more herbaceous (tomato stalk, basil and jalapeno) and citrus/mineral

fruit profile comes from the cooler Awatere Valley.

**2 Hawke's Bay** on the North Island's eastern coast has a temperate maritime-influenced climate, which typically delivers a riper, rounder style of Sauvignon blanc with relatively lower acidity and rich tropical fruit flavours. There are a number of well-regarded oak-influenced styles from this region.

**3 Nelson** is an hour or so drive west of Marlborough over a mountain range and vies with it for the title of New Zealand's sunniest region. Nelson's Sauvignon blancs are vividly aromatic with a rich medley of tropical fruit, citrus, lime, basil with generously-fruity palates.

**4 Canterbury & North Canterbury** (home to the sub-region of Waipara) on the South Island's central eastern coast produce elegant Sauvignon blanc with good intensity, bright minerality and clear varietal typicity.

**5 Wairarapa** is likely better known for sub-region Martinborough's world class Pinot noir, but it also produces small volumes of expressive Sauvignon blanc, displaying fine minerality and crunchy acidity.

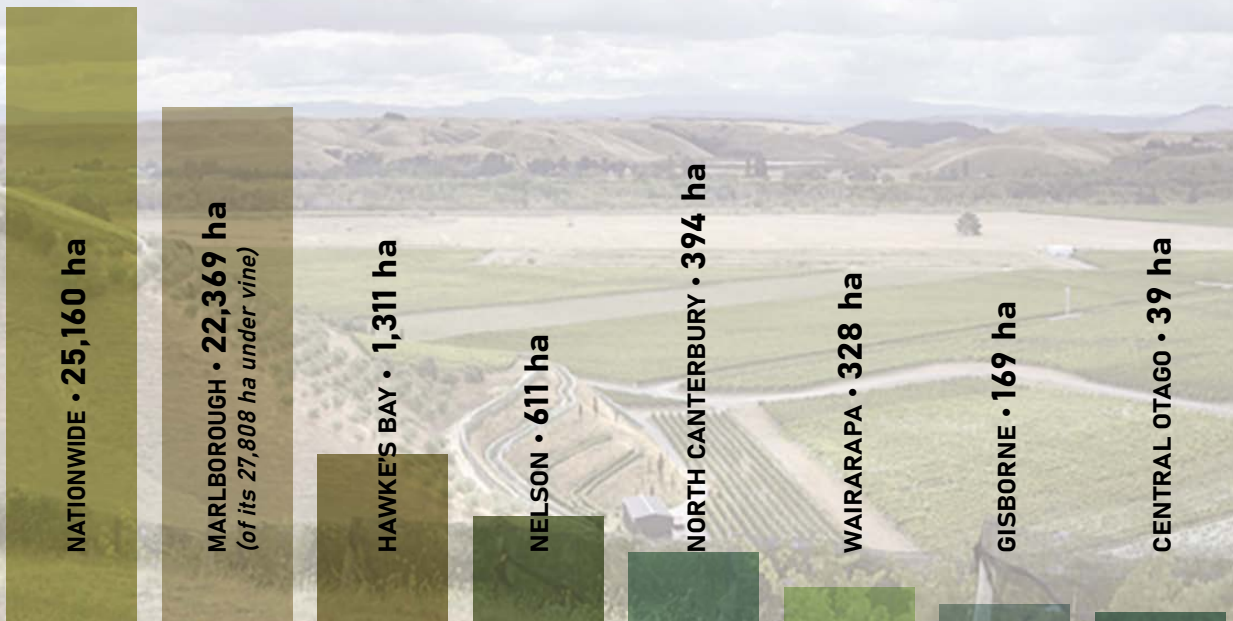
**6 Gisborne**, on North Island's east coast (to the north of Hawke's Bay), enjoys a mild sunny climate, which is reflected in its generously fruited, fuller-bodied, rounded tropical styles of Sauvignon.

**7 Central Otago** is New Zealand's most southerly region for winegrowing and best known for its arresting styles of Pinot noir but there is a small number of well-regarded Sauvignon blancs. Generally, these are made in a linear, lighter-bodied style, delicately aromatic with gooseberry, pineapple, capsicum and fresh herbs, and firm, citrusy acidity.

*New Zealand has recently enacted Geographical Indication (GI) legislation protecting its wine regions and styles.*



## REGIONAL SAUVIGNON DISTRIBUTION



326,058 tonnes produced, representing 74% of production and 86% of exports. (2020 figures)

## PREDOMINANT CLIMATE PATTERNS AND SOIL TYPES

Overall, New Zealand has a cool-temperate, maritime-influenced climate though due to its long thin mountainous topography, regions that are within a few hundred kilometres (at most) from one another can be markedly different in terms of climate influences. Most regions have a moderating maritime influence and summer temperatures seldom rise above 30 degrees Celsius. Cooling sea-breezes and/or proximity to mountain ranges deliver long growing seasons and significant diurnal shifts are a feature of all but the most northerly regions. Central Otago has the closest conditions to a continental climate within New Zealand, and courtesy of the strong rain shadow effect of the Southern Alps to its west, also experiences the lowest rainfall in an NZ wine region, at around 400 mm a year.

New Zealand's soils are diverse, reflecting its youth and volcanic, mountainous origin. Most wine regions are centred around old river plains and feature stony, free-draining soils based upon the predominant greywacke sandstone. However, there is a wide range of clay and windblown, loess-based soils found in vineyards as well as old glacier valleys of schist/granite in Central Otago. Limestone is relatively rare in New Zealand, though there are a few pockets in Central Hawke's Bay, North Canterbury and North Otago. Typically, New Zealand Sauvignon vineyards are on flat or gently undulating land, but increasingly producers are exploring the hillsides, particularly in Marlborough's Southern Valleys sub-region.



## WINE PROFILES

New Zealand Sauvignon blanc, and especially that of Marlborough, is renowned for its highly aromatic, pure-fruited style, courtesy of high sunshine hours and a long-growing season without extreme heat aligned with cool overnight temperatures. This, alongside typically neutral winemaking practices, preserves and enhances both varietal expression as well as high natural acidity, leading to evocatively fruity, crisp wines of moderate body and alcohol and notable fruit intensity.



## TYPICAL ALCOHOL CONTENT

Most New Zealand Sauvignon blanc is within 12.5-13.5% alcohol by volume (abv), though there is a growing demand for low-alcohol styles in the 8-10% abv range. Increasingly these wines are made without the more typical manipulation in the winery (e.g., spinning cone), instead resulting from pioneering viticultural techniques targeting the sugar-production pathways of the vine. New Zealand Winegrowers and the New Zealand Government have partnered to provide funding to further this research.



## AROMATIC TYPICITY

New Zealand Sauvignon blanc is renowned for its highly fruity, strongly varietal wines. There is usually an abundance of ripe passionfruit, tropical fruit, capsicum, citrus (especially grapefruit and limes), and depending on style and region, cut grass, tomato leaf, basil, lime, jalapeno, box hedge and wet stone/mineral notes are common. These are aligned with fresh fruity palates with abundant, zesty natural acidity.



## OTHER POSSIBLE AROMAS

Oak-fermented and aged, lees-influenced and/or wild fermented wines are an increasingly important part of the New Zealand Sauvignon winescape. Depending on style, these may have more restrained aromatic profiles with stonefruit and tropical notes, spice and lees elements, and broader, textural palates. Presence of oak itself in these wines varies depending on choice of oak age and/or size. Most producers of oaked Sauvignon aim for a more subtle than overt oak influence, seeking texture and complexity rather than obvious oak aromas/flavours.



## SPECIFIC WINEMAKING

### TECHNIQUES

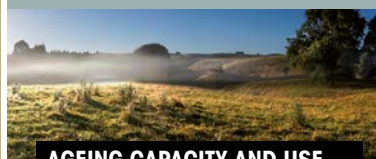
The majority of New Zealand Sauvignon blanc is cool fermented in neutral stainless steel to preserve its fruity, varietal freshness, and bottled within six months of harvest. From this baseline, numerous producers also make wines with extended lees contact, degrees of oak-influence (encompassing old and new, large and small) to add further complexity and ageing potential. There is a range of low-alcohol examples, and a small number of Sauvignons made as natural/skin-contact wines.



## VARIETALS COMMONLY

### BLENDED WITH SAUVIGNON

The vast majority of New Zealand Sauvignon blanc is 100% varietal; there is a scant handful of wines with Semillon as a blending partner.



## AGEING CAPACITY AND USE

### OF OAK

The majority of New Zealand Sauvignon blancs are intended to be at their best within 1-2 years of vintage but some of the more restrained, textural examples have pleasing potential for development over 3-6+ years, and there are some that continue to surprise and reward for many years onwards. The better oak-aged examples are best with 5-8 years of cellaring.

## A light future for Sauvignon blanc

Sharon Nagel

The no and low alcohol market is forecasted to grow by 31% by 2024 according to research by the IWSR. As drinks companies around the world prepare to cash in on the trend, New Zealand winegrowers are already well ahead of the curve with their NZ Lighter Wines programme launched in 2014.



At a Dan Murphy's tasting in Australia, consumer verbatim feedback on NZ Lighter Wines included: "Wow – this is very easy to drink!" and "I'm surprised with the taste! You can't tell it's lighter."

### Replicating Marlborough Sauvignon typicity at 9/9.5% ABV

Several years ago, a clutch of New Zealand wine companies had a Eureka moment. Spearheaded by John Forrest of Forrest Wines, they made the-then pioneering decision to explore ways of reducing alcohol content in their wines, ring fencing 17 million NZD (or 10 million euros) over a seven-year period for the largest research and development initiative ever undertaken by the country's wine industry. Its remit is to position New Zealand as the world's leading producer of wines containing less than 10%

alcohol by volume and what makes it unique is that the alcohol reduction is achieved naturally. Canopy management, suitable site selection and use of specific yeast strains are all part of an extensive toolkit used by the eighteen firms\* that teamed up with the authorities at the start of the programme. To protect New Zealand's premium image, the quality of the wines must be on a par with their conventional counterparts, and the distinctive typicity of Marlborough Sauvignon needs to be replicated if consumers are to be encouraged to make the transition from 12.5/13% ABV to 9.5 or even 9%.

### The importance of merchandising and labelling

Medical researcher John Forrest blazed the trail. He experimented relentlessly with canopy management – removing leaves at critical points to adjust the rate of sugar accumulation or leaving them to provide shade and promote more delicate aromas – until he successfully produced lower alcohol Sauvignon that has captured both a trade and consumer audience worldwide. A broad range of wines from the Lighter Wines programme are now widely retailed at prices

comparable to full-strength counterparts and have garnered significant acclaim. They sell well, often ranking among the top SKUs in the Sauvignon category and cornering a 7% share of the New Zealand wine market for Sauvignon blanc. In addition to their intrinsic quality, another reason for this is the merchandising research that has gone into the programme: "Most of the Lighter Wine offerings from New Zealand are range extensions of full strength wines and are therefore presented next to each other with subtle differentiations", explains Richard Lee, the project's head of marketing. From a consumer perspective, the wording on the labelling is also crucial: "In tests, "naturally lower in alcohol" was found to be the most appealing to consumers and "dealcoholized" the least", said Lee. Waitrose wine buyer Alexandra Mawson confirmed the findings: "As a buyer, I want reassurance about how the alcohol levels have been brought down. I'm not interested in artificial techniques", she said, adding that consumers also reject residual sugar.



Dr John Forrest is a firm believer in the power of canopy management to naturally reduce alcohol content





The LCBO in Ontario chose not to flag NZ Lighter Wines initially to test consumer reactions. Now it promotes them as such.



The wording on the labelling has a significant impact on consumer choice, but the intrinsic quality of the wines is essential for ensuring repeat purchases

## “45% of premium wine drinkers are likely to purchase lighter wines”

But the proof of the wines' success is also in the (blind) tasting and they are regularly entered into open classes in competitions to benchmark their quality against their conventional counterparts; some of them outperform their full-strength alter egos. As the wellness, health and consequential moderation trend continues to sweep across the globe and a

broadening range of lighter wines creates a virtuous circle of supply and demand, New Zealand's Lighter Wines programme looks set to gain even greater traction. *“The leading operators in the project predict around 10% of their current range will be produced as lighter wines by the mid-late 2020s, mirroring their confidence in market potential”,* said the programme's manager and technical advisor Dr David Jordan. *“45% of premium wine drinkers are likely to purchase lighter wines, provided they find comparable flavour to*

*their normal wine of choice. Sauvignon blanc drinkers are more likely to do so than other drinkers”,* added Lee. With senior beer executives predicting that by 2025, 20% of global beer sales will be lower in alcohol or alcohol-free, the timing is right for the wine industry to plug the gap. *“We feel that we are on the cusp of delivering a new part of wine's future”,* concluded Lee, and with the number of social and economic indicators at an all-time high, it isn't hard to agree.

\* Accolade Wines, Allan Scott Wines, Constellation Brands, Forrest Wines, Giesen, Indevin, Kono, Lawson's Dry Hills, Marisco Vineyards, Mount Riley Wines, Mt Difficulty Wines, Pernod Ricard, Runner Duck Estate, Spy Valley Wines, Villa Maria, Whitehaven, Wither Hills and Yealands

In response to consumer demand, New Zealand now has mid-strength wines (6-7% abv) and alcohol-free. Giesen, a member of the programme, launched the world's first alcohol-free Marlborough Sauvignon blanc in 2020. There is no doubt that alcohol-free is growing fast in New Zealand.

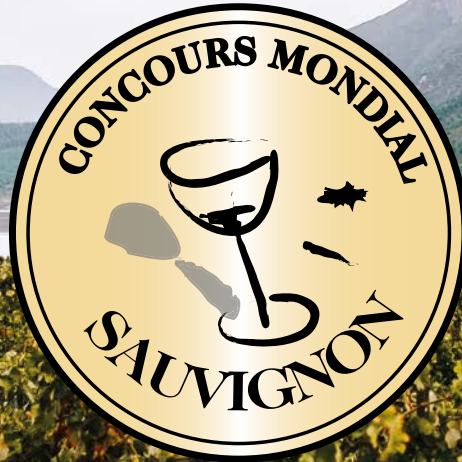


Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Brancott Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	PERNOD RICARD WINEMAKERS NEW ZEALAND	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Lake Chalice The Raptor Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	LAKE CHALICE WINES	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Saint Clair Wairau Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	SAINT CLAIR FAMILY ESTATE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Delta Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	DELTA ESTATE WINES	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Marlborough Sun Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	MARLBOROUGH VALLEY WINES LTD	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Rimapere Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	COMPAGNIE VINICOLE BARON EDMOND DE ROTHSCHILD	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Saint Clair James Sinclair Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	SAINT CLAIR FAMILY ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Saint Clair Pioneer Block 3 43 Degrees Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	SAINT CLAIR FAMILY ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Saint Clair Vicar's Choice Sauvignon Blanc Bubbles 2021	South Island	Marlborough	SAINT CLAIR FAMILY ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Stoneleigh Latitude Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	PERNOD RICARD WINEMAKERS NEW ZEALAND	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Stoneleigh Sauvignon Blanc 2021	South Island	Marlborough	PERNOD RICARD WINEMAKERS NEW ZEALAND	<b>Silver Medal</b>









# South Africa

Sharon Nagel

South Africa is often classed among 'New' World winegrowing countries but its vinous history actually dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Cape's first governor, Jan van Riebeeck planted a vineyard and harvested the country's first wines in 1659. The introduction of Sauvignon to South Africa can be less precisely dated but it is known that Sauvignon vines were planted at the highly lauded Groot Constantia estate in the late 1880s. According to Sauvignon Blanc South Africa, the first commercial Sauvignon varietal wine was produced by Verdun (now Asara) in 1977, with Backsberg and De Wetshof entering the fray

in 1980. The oldest Sauvignon vineyards were planted in 1965 at Spice Route, with Bloemendal joining in the early 1970s. Currently, Sauvignon holds a 10.5% share of total wine grape acreage in South Africa and is the fourth-most planted grape in the country, irrespective of colour. Although Stellenbosch tops the league table for acreage, Sauvignon is widely distributed across all the winegrowing regions of South Africa. The extremely varied geology and topography that characterise the Western Cape create myriad vineyard sites and as many variations on a theme for Sauvignon.





## REGIONAL SAUVIGNON DISTRIBUTION



A significant chunk of Sauvignon vines are located in Stellenbosch (2,619 ha in 2019), but there are also extensive areas in Robertson (1,597 ha), Breede-kloof (1,232 ha) and Swartland (1,157 ha), followed by Paarl (921 ha), the Cape South Coast (782 ha), Worcester (626 ha) and Olifants River (589 ha). Interestingly, Sauvignon is grown in both cool and warm areas, with the proximity of two major oceans – the Atlantic and the Indian oceans – and varying elevations and aspects moderating the heat; the cooler southern and eastern slopes are favoured for more delicate varieties such as Sauvignon. Also, the rugged terrain and lofty peaks across the Western Cape offer a welcome source of shade, restricting the amount of sunlight hours to no more than ten on the longest day in mid-summer. Elevations can range from 50 m for some of the lowest vineyards in the country to over 600 m in the mountains.

## PREDOMINANT CLIMATE PATTERNS AND SOIL TYPES

South Africa's climate is Mediterranean and many of its wine regions are located along the coastal area, thereby benefiting from cool sea breezes and seasonal fog. Frost is rarely a problem though in recent years drought has proved to be a major headache for South Africa's winegrowers. The poetically, and for vines, aptly-named south-easterly wind – the Cape Doctor – sweeps across the south-western Cape over the summer and spring, lowering the temperature by several degrees and limiting the spread of disease. Cool climate regions such as Elgin, Durbanville and Elim have pioneered the production of quality Sauvignon in South Africa but whilst it might seem counter-intuitive to plant the varietal in warmer regions such as the Breede river valley, the resultant wines have garnered attention and accolades in recent years.

South Africa prides itself on being home to some of the world's oldest viticultural soils, which can date back to 1,000-500 million years ago. Its rich geological tapestry is reflected in the range of soil types, running the gamut from shale/schist to granite and sandstone. The country's three most important soil types are classed as being derived either from Table Mountain sandstone, granite or shale. Winegrowers capitalise on the infinite possibilities afforded by the pronounced differences in geology and topography, planting vines along the valley floors, over rolling hills and up steep mountain slopes. When combined with varying aspects and micro-climates, the reason for South African Sauvignon's broad stylistic spectrum becomes self-explanatory.



## WINE PROFILES

According to prominent Sauvignon advocates such as RJ Botha, winemaker at Kleine Zalze and chair of Sauvignon Blanc SA, the varietal's popularity stems from the fact that producers have not "allowed themselves to be boxed into definite stylistic

parameters". This willingness to capitalise on site-expressiveness and experiment, both in the vineyard and the winery, has spawned a range of profiles that encompasses all the major flavour and aroma features you would expect to find in

Sauvignon, irrespective of its country of origin. Both flavour and texture are bolstered by increased use of oak, or at least partial oak fermentation or ageing, and time spent on the lees, for example.



## TYPICAL ALCOHOL CONTENT

As you would expect of a relatively warm climate, many South African Sauvignons fall within the 12.5-13.5% ABV bracket, though some can weigh in at a hefty 14.5% ABV. Researchers such as Dr Carien Coetzee are encouraging producers to consider lower alcohol versions, due to

growing market demand, and have flagged up the potential for Sauvignon blanc to tick all the requisite boxes: its potent aromatics; sensory factors such as sweetness and sufficient acidity that can compensate for possible loss of body; and consumer trust and familiarity with the varietal.



## AROMATIC TYPICITY

Four major profiles can be identified in South African Sauvignons: tropical and yellow fruit flavours; spicy and herbaceous; flinty and mineral; and lime, green melon and grapefruit. Many South African producers have moved away from the green, pyrazine-dominant style that was ubiquitous between 10 to 15 years ago, though capsicum, asparagus, peas, grass and nettles are all typical features still commonly associated with cooler climate areas. Instead, growers

have focused on developing lush tropical flavours – papaya, guava, banana and pineapple, for instance – whilst at the same time turning up the volume on minerality and maritime salinity. In the warmer climate areas, tropical and yellow fruit flavours can be coupled with stonefruit (apricot, peach, nectarine), citrus and also floral notes, such as orange blossom and geranium. Herbaceous profiles commonly feature gooseberry, tomato vine, grass and herbs, whilst the most austere mineral styles revolve

around gunflint, pebbles, steel and smokiness coupled with earthy undertones of mushroom, damp earth and rainfall. The cooler climate areas can deliver zippy, racy flavours, aromas of fresh citrus paired with spring buds, white flowers and typical clean, refreshing Sauvignon characters. One common thread running through South African Sauvignon is fynbos, a nod to the country's endemic natural shrubland, and its outstanding biodiversity.





## OTHER POSSIBLE AROMAS

South African Sauvignon producers are increasingly looking to wood to add complexity and longevity to their wines. As a bellwether for industry trends, the Sauvignon Blanc SA Top 10 competition revealed that the majority of award-winning wines in 2020 received some form and percentage of oak contact during production, either at fermentation

stage or for maturation. However, the use of large oak vessels and/or used or neutral barrels in many of the wines underscored an intention to seek subtle influence rather than overt oaky flavours. Also, increased reliance on natural wild yeast along with the presence of gross and fine lees for varying durations are further broadening the aromatic spectrum and flavour profiles.



## VARIETALS COMMONLY

### BLENDED WITH SAUVIGNON

In addition to its single varietal styles, South Africa delivers blends with Sémillon, a combination that undoubtedly originated in Bordeaux. Other blending partners include Chenin, Chardonnay and Viognier.

## SPECIFIC WINEMAKING

### TECHNIQUES

To achieve balance and retain Sauvignon's hallmark freshness, South African producers use stainless steel, sometimes in combination with oak, which they often use sparingly to soften acidity and add depth and complexity. In a bid to push the envelope, some estates are experimenting with skin-contact

maceration to add texture, whilst enhancing product differentiation and food pairing versatility. Wild ferments, lees contact with bâtonnage and use of Carboxymethyl Cellulose (CMC) to cold stabilise the wines are all part of a growing toolkit South African producers use to bolster expressiveness and variety in their wines.



## HOW INNOVATION IS GIVING

### WINERIES AN EDGE

Thys Louw, owner of Diemersdal Wine Estate in Durbanville, has not only experimented with skin-contact maceration – he has pushed the boundaries of Sauvignon winemaking even further by producing a winter-fermented version. In 2017, he turned the South African wine industry on its head by freezing the juice of machine-harvested Sauvignon grapes for four months in plastic tanks placed in refrigerated shipping containers, then gently thawing it in the winter

sun and fermenting and vinifying it as per normal practice. The resultant wine delivers intense aromas of gooseberries, guava and sweet grapefruit with a core of minerality and a rich, mouth-filling texture. Compared to its non-frozen counterpart, it showed unexpectedly high concentrations of volatile thiols responsible for Sauvignon's tropical fruit, grapefruit and tomato leaf aromas. In addition to its enhanced flavour attributes, the wine offers the added bonus

of alleviating some of the harvest pressure on the winery. From a marketing perspective, winter fermentation is also a USP and the wine's timely release, several months after conventional Sauvignons, bolsters its competitive edge.

Sources:  
Sauvignon Blanc SA

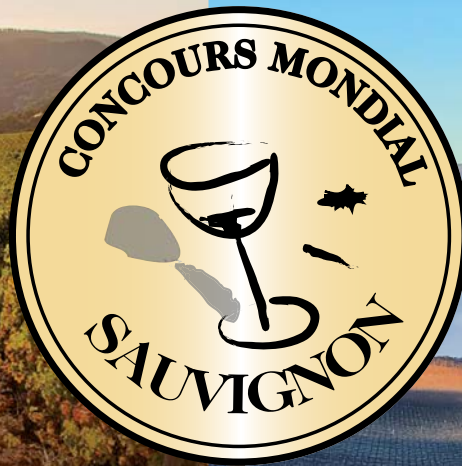
Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Delaire Graff Coastal Cuvee Sauvignon Blanc 2017	Coastal Region		DELAIRE GRAFF ESTATE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Diemersdal The Journal Sauvignon blanc 2021	Coastal Region	Cape Town	DIEMERSDAL WINE ESTATE	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Elgin Vintners Sandstone 2021	Cape South Coast	Elgin	ELGIN VINTNERS	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Vrede en Lust Blanc Fume 2019	Cape South Coast	Elgin	VREDE EN LUST FARMS PARTNERSHIP	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Diemersdal The Journal Sauvignon blanc 2021			DIEMERSDAL WINE ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Neethlingshof Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2021			STONE PINE WINES - NEETHLINGSHOF ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Turtle House Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Wine of South Africa		DOMAINE BOYAR INTERNATIONAL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Zevenwacht 360 Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Western Cape		ZEVENWACHT WINE ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Ghost Corner The Bowline 2019	Cape South Coast	Cape Agulhas	CEDERBERG CELLARS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Ghost Corner Wild Ferment 2020	Cape South Coast	Cape Agulhas	CEDERBERG CELLARS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Diemersdal Winter Ferment Sauvignon blanc 2021	Coastal Region	Cape Town	DIEMERSDAL WINE ESTATE	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cederberg Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Western Cape	Cederberg	CEDERBERG CELLARS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Groote Post Seasalter 2021	Coastal Region	Darling	GROOTE POST VINEYARDS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Elgin Vintners Sauvignon blanc 2021	Cape South Coast	Elgin	ELGIN VINTNERS	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Sing-A-Wing Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Coastal Region	Stellenbosch	UVA MIRA VINEYARDS	<b>Silver Medal REVELATION</b>
Alvi's Drift Signature Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Breede River Valley	Worcester	ALVI'S DRIFT WINES INTERNATIONAL	<b>Silver Medal</b>
Cilmor Winemaker's Selection Sauvignon Blanc - Semillon 2021	Breede River Valley	Worcester	CILMOR WINERY	<b>Silver Medal</b>











# California Washington

Deborah Parker Wong

## CALIFORNIA

The Sauvignon blanc grape first came to California in the second half of the 19th century. Charles Wetmore, the president and CEO of the state's viticultural commission, brought Sauvignon blanc and Sémillon cuttings from Château d'Yquem in Bordeaux to Livermore Valley in the late 1870s. Those cuttings became known as clone 1 and were first planted in Napa Valley at Inglenook winery in 1881 and eventually at Beaulieu whose Sauvignon blanc was awarded a gold medal at the 1915 International Wine Exposition held in San Francisco.

After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the variety was grown in Napa Valley for its high yields and used to produce a wine marketed as "*Sauterne*" or "*Haut Sauterne*," a sweet, cloying jug wine, the better examples of which were made by Inglenook, Larkmead, Eschol (now Trefethen), and Robert Mondavi Winery. Dry Sauvignon blanc first gained recognition in Napa Valley when it was modelled after the wines of the Pouilly-Fumé region of the Loire Valley and marketed in 1968 by Mondavi as Fumé Blanc. Mondavi found success with Fumé Blanc and he didn't seek to protect or copyright the name allowing the industry to freely adopt it.

In addition to Mondavi which makes "*I Block*" Fumé Blanc from vines planted in 1949 (believed

to be the state's oldest plantings), a handful of well-known California producers label their Sauvignon blanc wines Fumé Blanc including Dry Creek Vineyards, Ferrari-Carano, Grgich Hills, Murphy Goode and J. Lohr. Typically the wines are lightly oaked but unoaked wines have also been labelled as Fumé Blanc.

## WASHINGTON

Sauvignon blanc was introduced to Washington State in 1942. It was planted at Washington State University's Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (IAREC) in Prosser in what is now the Yakima Valley AVA. The plant material was sourced from La Fata Brothers in St. Helena, Calif. and was, undoubtedly, clone 1. White wine production in Washington has historically focused on the cool-climate varieties of Riesling and Gewurztraminer; Sauvignon blanc acreage only began to increase over the last fifteen years from 287 ha (710 acres) in 2002 to 587 ha (1,451 acres) by 2017. The majority of Sauvignon Blanc plantings are found in the contiguous counties of Benton (1090 acres under vine), Klickitat (137), Yakima (100) and Franklin (76). Fumé Blanc labelling by Washington producers is now an artifact of the Mondavi era, and at last count there were only two wineries using that labelling term.





This overview is confined to the Sauvignon blanc wines of California and Washington, the states which rank first and second for wine production in the US, as they report the most acres planted to the variety. Of the nation's top ten winegrowing states, Sauvignon blanc is not being grown in sufficient commercial quantities in the remaining eight states to warrant consideration at this time.

## REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Over the last decade, plantings of Sauvignon blanc in California have increased by 15 percent with Napa, Sonoma, and Lake Counties accounting for the majority of plantings followed by Monterey, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Mendocino and the Central Coast. In 2019, the variety was fourth in tons (120,521 T) crushed behind Chardonnay, French Colombard and Pinot Gris. Hectareage in California in 2019

stood at 6,371.

Over the last fifteen years, plantings in Washington State have doubled and the variety ranks fourth behind Riesling, Pinot Gris and Chardonnay with an area under vine of 587 hectares in 2019. The 2019 Sauvignon blanc crush came in at 8,740 T. In US States such as New York, Texas, Michigan and Virginia, there are diminutive plantings of Sauvignon blanc.

## KEY SUB REGIONS

# California

### Napa County

Saint Helena and Calistoga, which are Napa Valley's warmest AVAs, have older vine Sauvignon blanc vineyards that produce outstanding examples of a variety often thought to be better suited to a cooler climate. Winemakers precisely time their picking decisions and make multiple passes during harvest to ensure the natural acidity and precursors necessary for medium-bodied, bright, aromatic styles showing ripe citrus, stone fruit and tropical fruit flavors. Vineyards in Rutherford and Oakville are typically planted closer to the Napa River on fluvial, gravelly loam soils that produce wines not unlike those found in Bordeaux (the origin of California's clone 1) but with greater fruit intensity and significantly higher price tags.

Napa Valley producers have been successful with a segment dubbed "*Super Sauvignons*" for their flamboyant style often involving several different harvest passes in the vineyard, fermentation and aging in a variety of vessels including stainless steel barrels and tanks, concrete eggs, amphora, new and neutral barrels of acacia and oak, and winemaking practices like lees aging and stirring. Producers of triple-digit Napa Valley Cabernet-Sauvignon can easily command prices well in excess of \$50 for their Sauvignon blanc wines.



## Sonoma County

There are around 1,100 hectares of Sauvignon blanc planted in Sonoma County and producers there - historically Geysers Peak Winery - often release their wines as early as January following harvest. The style is crisp and lively, with citrus flavors, a slight grassiness, medium to high acidity, and little or no significant oak influence. Several of Sonoma's sub AVAs are noted Sauvignon blanc terroirs. In warm

**Alexander Valley** which is well known for ripening Bordeaux varieties on the mid slopes of the Mayacamas, Sauvignon blanc is at home in the gravelly soils. In the **Dry Creek Valley** AVA which is best known for Zinfandel, Dry Creek Vineyard and Winery's DCV3 site is the original Sauvignon blanc

planted in the **Dry Creek Valley AVA. Russian River Valley** may produce the most New Zealand-style Sauvignon blanc due to the maritime influence of the Petaluma Gap and the fractured sandstone and sandy loam Goldridge soil. **Bennett Valley** is more an alluvial bench than a valley. The volcanic history of the region produced Goulding-Toomes-Guenoc Association soils that include lava flow, tuff beds, sandstone, gravel and some conglomerate. Sauvignon blanc is planted in a frigid nook in the middle of the county. Sauvignon blanc is also grown in **Sonoma Valley** and on **Sonoma Mountain**.

and old vine vineyards many of which were planted in the 70s, 80s and 90s produce wines of intensity and quality showing a broad range of flavors from citrus, stone fruit, and tropical fruits like papaya and melon to fresh fig. Long Valley, another transverse valley that lies north of High Valley, has recently been planted to aromatic French clones by the region's top grower.

## Lake County

One of the state's most relevant terroirs for Sauvignon blanc lies about one hour north of Napa County. The Lake County AVA and key sub-AVAs of Kelseyville Bench and High Valley grow a prodigious amount of the variety on red volcanic soils and colluvial benchlands in a high elevation, Mediterranean climate that is moderated by the largest freshwater lake in California. The combination of altitude

## Central Coast

Producers here are elevating the grape in a variety of styles, from brisk, grassy, mineral-driven versions that recall the Loire Valley to richer Sémillon-blends modeled after Bordeaux.

**Happy Canyon**, the warmest AVA in Santa Barbara County, with its marine soils and high diurnal shift, has several sought-after producers who make wines that show grassy lime and key lime notes or ripe tropical fruits like melon and fig that are balanced with natural acidity and a mineral spine.





# Washington

The large Columbia Valley AVA and its sub AVAs most relevant for Sauvignon Blanc production include: the Yakima Valley, Wahluke Slope, Horse Heaven Hills, and the pending White Bluffs AVA which is home to the state's oldest plantings of Sauvignon blanc at Sagemoor Farm. The Cascade Mountains to the west cast a rain shadow over the region which is a higher-elevation plateau with an arid continental climate, a marked diurnal shift and exceedingly low rainfall that averages 150 – 200 mm annually. **Yakima Valley AVA** grows more than one-third of all the vinifera wine grapes in the state

and has a range of cooler to warmer meso climates with moderate to deep silt-loam soils layered over gravel or directly onto basalt bedrock.

**Horse Heaven Hills** was first planted in 1972 and its proximity to the Columbia River creates 30% more wind and moderates temperature extremes reducing the risk from frost. Steep, south-facing slopes and well-drained soils of wind-blown sand and loess, Missoula Flood sediment, and hill slope rubble from the Columbia River basalt bedrock.

**Wahluke Slope** has one of the driest, warmest climates in the state, allowing nearly

complete control of vine vigor and ripening through irrigation. With uniform soils of deep, wind-blown sand and wind as a delimiting factor. Most vineyards here lie below 1,000 feet and have been planted within the last 15 years. The proposed **White Bluffs AVA** is a broad plateau that rises 200 feet above the surrounding landscape. The soils of loess and fine sand are thin allowing the vine roots to reach the high clay content Ringold Formation that retains water and reduces vine stress during dry conditions.



## WINE PROFILES • CALIFORNIA

Most of California's Sauvignon blanc wines will fall in to one of three style camps: lean, racy, acid-driven styles with predominately floral, leafy, grassy (fresh or dry), herbal (tarragon, mints), vegetal (asparagus, boxwood), citrus (lime, lemon, grapefruit, pomelo), tree fruits (green apple, pears) and light stone fruit (white peach,

nectarine) and delicate tropical flavors (lychee and passion fruit). More powerful wines from warmer sites show ripe citrus (Meyer lemon, orange), stone fruit (yellow peach, apricot) and tropical fruits (pineapple, mango, guava, honeydew melon, fresh fig) with no pyrazines or overt secondary flavors from oak but often enhanced by neutral

oak aging and lees aging and stirring techniques. Rich, partial or full barrel fermentation and malolactic with golden apple, ripe pear, grilled peaches, pineapple, and secondary notes of vanilla and brown spices, honeycomb, crème fraiche, custard and in general tasting more like Chardonnay.

## WINE PROFILES • WASHINGTON

Green fruit and pyrazine descriptors are far more common for Washington Sauvignon blanc wines than in California. Also, as most wines are under \$20 there is less barrel fermentation and oak aging apparent. A trend noted across several commercial examples and wines from smaller producers, TA can be

on the low side hovering under 5 g/l and up to 6.5 g/l and pH can also be low ranging from 3-3.5. Alcohols are lower than we see in California and wines range from 12% to 14% with the average being 13% ABV. Lean, racy flavors: lime zest, Key Lime juice, lemongrass, grapefruit, honeydew melon, grassiness,

Granny Smith apple, clementine, Bosc pear, herbs, spearmint, thyme, lavender, sage, salinity. More powerful: lemon meringue, grilled peach, dried apricot, sweet herbs, juniper berry, cantaloupe melon, creaminess, nuttiness.



### TYPICAL ALCOHOL CONTENT

California Sauvignon Blanc typically doesn't exceed 14.5% in alcohol and with rare exceptions is found under 13%. Producers strive to retain acidity and balance in the wines and vinify them to bone dryness to avoid the perception of additional sweetness from alcohol. Acidity is typically above 6 g/l to balance fruit and alcohol and it's rare to find a flabby wine.

Washington manages to deliver significantly lower alcohol examples ranging from 12 to 14.5% with 13% ABV being the norm with lower overall acidity and pH.



### SPECIFIC WINEMAKING

#### TECHNIQUES

California winemakers seem to be using every possible technique to produce wines that are complex and have abundant natural acidity. Multiple harvests at different brix levels, lees aging techniques and lees stirring are employed to add viscosity and texture to the wines. Malolactic conversion is typically avoided as preserving acidity in the wines is a priority. Fermentation can take place in one or several kinds of vessels although stainless steel is the most common for moderately-priced wines while "Super Sauvignons" can see a combination of stainless steel, concrete egg, new and neutral oak, chestnut or acacia, barrels or large format, even amphora although still a rare choice.

Winemakers in Washington employ stainless and some neutral oak but price points here dictate more straightforward work in the cellar.



### VARIETALS COMMONLY

#### BLENDED WITH SAUVIGNON

Semillon and Sauvignon Musqué are the two most common blending partners for Sauvignon blanc in California and Washington. Among the 31 clones of Sauvignon blanc listed by the UC Davis Foundation Plant Services is the Musqué clone first imported from the Gironde region of France in the 1960s. Known as Sauvignon Musqué for decades, it was renamed Sauvignon blanc clone 27 after genetic testing in 2001. It was initially planted in what is now the Arroyo Secco AVA in Monterey County which today has the most acres under vine, 5% (420 acres) of the AVA is planted to the variety only exceeded by Chardonnay and Pinot Noir in acreage. Sauvignon Musqué has more overt floral, leafy and citrus-driven aromas of tangerine and is typically blended in small quantities with clone 1 for lift and aromatic finesse. Only occasionally will these clones be dominant in blends.

As in Bordeaux, Semillon is not as aromatic and used to add body and viscosity to blends rounding off the sharp edges of malic acidity that can be present in less ripe Sauvignon blanc. Semillon can make up as much as 10% of a blend.

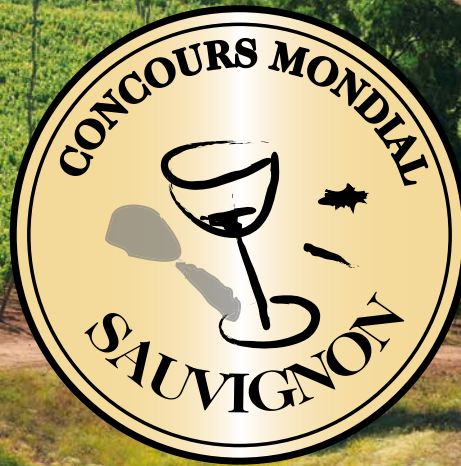
The full version of this presentation can be found at [www.cmsauvignon.com](http://www.cmsauvignon.com)











# Chile

Cecilia Torres

Sauvignon Blanc was introduced to Chile in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in mixed plantings with Sauvignon Vert (Sauvignonasse) and Sauvignon Gris. However, the most relevant introduction and redevelopment of the Sauvignon blanc grape variety began at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more specifically between 1987-1990, and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Clones such as 1 and 5 from Davis and others such as 242 of French origin were then rolled out.

As a result of market globalisation, particularly demand from the English market for fresh, young wines, concurrently with the arrival of Miguel Torres in Chile and the development of stainless steel tanks and fermentation at controlled temperatures, the concept of winemaking was

revolutionised. The combination of the two marked the advent of fresh, fruity wines that did not undergo barrel ageing and were bottled the same year.

Chilean winegrowers and winemakers such as Pablo Morandé developed Sauvignon blanc highly successfully in the Casablanca Valley and today it has spread throughout Chile in the quest to secure a distinctive identity or to find a site that lends it unique terroir-driven characters.

The total area planted to Sauvignon blanc in 2019 was 15,222 hectares, making it the second most planted variety in the country after Cabernet-Sauvignon.



## SUB-REGIONS IN CHILE



## WINEMAKING



Winemaking and ageing styles vary from 100% stainless steel or combinations ranging from 10-30% of the wine fermented in barrels (225 litres) or wooden foudres (300-500 litres). The choice depends on the style of individual winemakers. Fermentation ensues at controlled temperatures after cold maceration (10°C) for 10-12 hours. Ageing on fine lees is a valued technique, giving the wine greater complexity, whilst malolactic fermentation is not favoured, as winemakers prefer to retain the natural acidity of the grapes and freshness and fruitiness of the wine.

Ageing potential is in the range of 3-4 years, although market demand shows a preference for wines from the year of harvest.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

Chile's wine regions are located in the central part of the country, 500 km North of Santiago and 400 km South. As winegrowers search for cooler areas, there are now vineyards 800 km South of Santiago, two such examples being Futroneo and Lago Ranco.

Although Chile's wine regions are defined as having a Mediterranean climate with significant influence from the Pacific Ocean, the Andes and the central valleys intertwined with the Coastal Mountains give rise to a number of microclimates and extensive diversity of soils from North to South.

**1 Limarí Valley, Ovalle / Talinay**

Limestone soils on granite rock provide very good drainage and do not encourage vine vigour. Limestone also provides fine porosity and structures the clay, creating an extensive network in the soil which fosters water and air retention and is vital for good root development throughout the soil profile. The vineyards are located 12 km from the Pacific Ocean and enjoy predominantly cool coastal breezes with the mercury never rising above 24°C in the summer, creating ideal conditions for the fruit to ripen slowly and reach peak ripeness. The atmosphere in the area is particularly light and bright. The wines show great elegance and minerality, with aromas of spring flowers and citrus undertones, a complex palate and the mouth-filling volume typical of these limestone soils. ABV 13.5-14%.

**2 Casablanca Valley**

Located 25-30 km from the Pacific Ocean, the valley has a semi-arid Mediterranean climate with morning mist due to the influence of the Ocean. During the summer season, it has a wide temperature range fluctuating between 13°C and 32°C, with annual rainfall of 400 mm, mainly concentrated in winter. The soils are very diverse, ranging from medium to coarse-textured, deep to alluvial, fine-textured and sandy with low moisture retention capacity. The vineyards are planted on varying inclines of gentle hillsides at elevations of between 250-400 m above sea level. The wines deliver citrus notes, pineapple and in some cases sea salt, spices such as white pepper and herbal notes, such as tomato leaf, artichoke and green chilli. The palate displays citrus tones, spicy and

herbal notes with fresh acidity. ABV 13.5-13.8%

**3 Leyda Valley** The soils stem directly from the granite rock of the coastal batholithic region formed 200 million years ago during the Jurassic period. The soils are finely textured, the thin surface layer is clay loam (clayey / sandy) and red clay followed by a sedimentary layer of cracked clay. The subsoil is sedimentary and limestone in some sectors and quartz granite in others, ending in granite rock. The valley is mostly home to rolling hills where the sunlight hits different slopes at varying levels of exposure. The vineyards are located 10-15 km from the sea, cooled by the South Pacific breeze and the coastal mist of the summer season. The wines reveal aromas of lime and lemongrass, combined

with blackcurrant leaves, fennel and gunpowder. They deliver vibrant acidity and fine minerality on the palate with citrus notes (fresh grapefruit, passion fruit). ABV 13-13.5%.

**4 San Antonio Valley** This area is home to a great diversity of soils with limestone and red clay, along with poor, thin soils on granite rock. The climate and aspect of the vineyards are extremely significant here. The vineyards are planted 6 km from the Pacific Ocean and enjoy cool mornings and morning mists. There has been a pivotal transition from own rooted Sauvignon blanc to the present-day use of rootstock. The wines are fresh with natural acidity, aromas of lime, flowers, minerality, pepper, freshly-cut grass and asparagus. On the palate, they are complex with crisp acidity and austere but





with citrus, herbal and spicy nuances. The wines have substantial cellaring potential and will keep for over 5 years. ABV 13.5-13.8%

**5 Maule Region** This region produces the largest amount of Sauvignon blanc in Chile (7,712 ha) and its diverse weather patterns and soils pave the way for a wide range of styles. However, high yielding vines produce less interesting wines or wines with less varietal typicity and a large share of them are bound for domestic consumption. As part of the search for even cooler climates, Sauvignon blanc can also be found in the far South of Chile. Vineyards in the Araucanía region, Malleco (Traiguén) and Los Ríos region (Lago Ranco) deserve a mention and a brief description.

**6 Araucanía Region,** Malleco Province (Traiguén) The soils here have a high percentage of red clay of volcanic origin. They are rich in organic matter, deep and have very good water retention. The climate is cold and wet with 1,000 mm of rainfall during the winter season but the summers are dry and temperate, promoting ripening of the berries. The wines retain their natural acidity, developing fine, elegant aromas, mineral notes of citrus and tropical fruits. They display good volume and concentration on the palate, with fresh acidity and pleasant persistence. ABV 12.5-13%.

**7 Los Rios Region** (Lago Ranco) Vineyards in Trumaos de Laderas grow in a cold, rainy climate but are not affected by spring frosts. Rainfall is in the range of 1,000-1,100 mm and is mainly concentrated in

winter, however it is common for rainfall to reach 50-90 mm during the ripening period. Maximum summer temperatures are in the region of 24-25°C, dropping to a low of 8°C which restricts proper vineyard development. The lakes have a significant influence, generating cool breezes. The wines are fairly austere on the nose and palate with a piercing natural acidity making them fresh and pleasantly persistent. Aromas are fairly herbal with asparagus, mint and lemon peel. Predominant acidity and fresh flavours make for palate-pleasing wines. The location of the vineyards limits output and harvesting is fairly late in the season compared with more northerly regions, generally taking place between the third and fourth week of April. ABV is also relatively low at 12-12.5%.

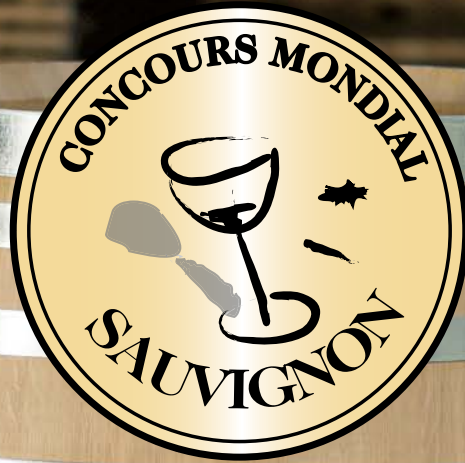
## 2022 AWARDS • CHILE

Wine	Region	Appellation	Producer	Medal
Reservado Concha y Toro Sauvignon Blanc Pedro Jiménez 2021			VIÑA CONCHA Y TORO S.A.	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Viñedos Lo Abarca Nº2 Sauvignon Blanc 2020	Valle de San Antonio y Leyda		VIÑA CASA MARIN	<b>Gold Medal</b>
Casillero del Diablo Sauvignon Blanc 2021	Valle del Central		VIÑA CONCHA Y TORO S.A.	<b>Silver Medal</b>



## Never the twain shall meet?

For many, fermenting or ageing Sauvignon in oak seems, at best, counter-intuitive. After all, Sauvignon is the go-to variety for lovers of crisp, fresh, pure fruit-driven styles, right? As Sauvignon scales new heights of popularity, however, its producers are increasingly looking to wood to add depth, complexity and ageability. And the results can be impressive, providing it is used sparingly and judiciously.



# Sauvignon and oak

Sharon Nagel





### Thiols, terpenes and pyrazines

Some white grape varieties inherently lend themselves to barrel maturation and/or fermentation. Chardonnay and Sémillon are obvious examples. In others, like Sauvignon, more delicate, volatile aromatics have long encouraged producers to steer clear of wood. However, spurred on by a desire for experimentation, and improved price points, growers are increasingly seeking to reconcile the need to preserve Sauvignon's intrinsic varietal aromas with the micro-oxygenation afforded by oak. In reality, the variety's broad aromatic spectrum means that there can be no "one size fits all" approach.

### Freshness and tension are key

Successful use of oak with Sauvignon therefore implies a judicious choice of wood and, more importantly, an appropriate vessel format. *"Nowadays, it probably seems trite to say it, but the larger the format, the better the end result in terms of aroma, particularly in the case of Sauvignon's thiol aromas. It is only natural that aromatic integrity should be better preserved with a puncheon or a tun than with a 225-litre barrel"*, says Claude Gros. More than just the container's size, however, its shape also has an impact: *"In my opinion, a round tun is much less effective than an oval one. With Sauvignon's very delicate thiol aromas, you preserve its potential much better with an oval tun"*.

*"A lot of people refer simplistically to Sauvignon's thiol aromas", concurs French consultant winemaker and cooperage expert Claude Gros. "In both Sauvignon blanc and gris, you also have terpenes and pyrazines". These stylistic differences are not arcane concepts, they have a direct influence on how oak can and should be used. "Thiol aromas are very fragile in relation to oxygen so when they come into contact with new oak, production of peroxides deteriorates them. Terpenes, however, are much more resistant to oxygen, as are pyrazines".*

Another disadvantage of using smaller formats is the sweetness imparted by the oak. *"Sauvignon is all about freshness and tension and oak can add sweet characters that make it feel heavy. When the surface area of wood in contact with the wine is higher, as with smaller barrels, the sweetness is more pronounced. When the ratio is lower, the result is greater depth in the wine, but without the sweetness. The wine is more mineral, tense and fresh, which is what consumers expect of a Sauvignon – they are not looking for the fat and volume of a Meursault"*.

## Alternative strategies

Before the fruit even reaches the winery, however, there are also issues for winegrowers to contend with, and one of the most obvious is climate change. *“In a region like Languedoc, styles are leaning more heavily towards terpenes because the weather and climate change – more heat and earlier harvests – are making it more challenging to produce thiol aromas”*. Elsewhere, staggering harvest dates can provide a mix of thiols, terpenes and pyrazines, making Sauvignon better equipped to

## Revealing intrinsic characters

Ultimately, there is no hard and fast rule for using oak with Sauvignon. *“There are examples where oak has produced magnificent results”* – think Dagueneau in the Loire – *and others where monumental wines have been achieved without as much as a modicum of oak”*, think Ladoucette, says Claude Gros. For those producers who choose to embrace oak, particularly large formats and/or used oak, the potential results are wines showing greater depth, complexity, length and longevity due to higher resistance to oxidation. For Claude Gros, there is one main rule of thumb: *“Oak has to be implicit rather than explicit. In a way the issue is slightly schizophrenic because wood is used to enhance the wine, but mustn’t be overt. Due to modern winemaking techniques, we have less to hide and more to show and oak should be used to reveal inherent characters and not as a mask”*.

withstand oxidation, and more suitable for oak fermentation or maturation. *“If growers restrict themselves to thiol aromas, they have no other option than to use large vessels, or possibly a very light toast. With terpene aromas, however, they can use slightly more obvious or more Burgundy-style toasts, where the charred or smoke effect recalls typical Sauvignon aromas, including a degree of minerality”*. Another successful strategy is to blend Sauvignon with other varieties, such as Sémillon, that are more suited to oak.



## Are Sauvignon aromas incompatible with oak?

Sauvignon has long proved elusive to winemakers seeking to add complexity and ageability to wines through oak. Bordeaux-based researcher Valérie Lavigne, a contributor to the Sauvignon blanc editorial group, studied how the requisite, managed oxidation provided by wood could be reconciled with the need to protect Sauvignon’s volatile aromas. She and her team compared the aromatic evolution of the same Sauvignon wine fermented and then aged in stainless steel tanks, in new barrels, in barrels used for 2 wines, and in 50-hectolitre wooden conical vats. Part of the study involved a comparative tasting of the different maturation methods. Tasters were asked to classify the samples according to the intensity of Sauvignon’s typicity and the intensity of the woody aroma. The results clearly showed that the intensity of fruit character for the same Sauvignon wine aged in stainless steel vats or wooden conical vats was not significantly different. The supply of oxygen, which is very moderate in a large wooden container, did not seem to alter the fruity aroma of the young wine. Conversely, the intensity of the fruit character perceived in wines aged in barrels, and particularly in new barrels, was clearly reduced. A statistical interpretation of the tasting results showed that the wine made in new casks was judged to be the least fruity, based on the typical characters of the grape variety. Barrels used for two wines and the stainless steel tank ranked between the two, whilst wine matured in wooden vats was considered more typical. To read the full summary of the research: <https://cmsauvignon.com/en/are-sauvignon-aromas-incompatible-with-oak/>





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