



**Moravian and
Bohemian**

Wine

Cultural Heritage of the Czech Republic



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC





I. History of Czech Winemaking

The winemaking in the Czech Republic stretches back two thousand years. The Czech wines used to have good reputation already in Middle Ages when they were popular among nobility and townsmen, but they were also in demand in Poland, Silesia and at the Imperial Court in Vienna. At present, the wines produced in the Czech Republic rank among the best in Europe and the whole world, which is attested to by plentiful awards received in the most prestigious world wine competitions.

Historical milestones

400 B.C.

Celts – most likely the first growers of grapevine in the territory of Bohemia

833–907

The Great Moravian Empire, Slavs – more reports mentioning the growing of grapevine

1057

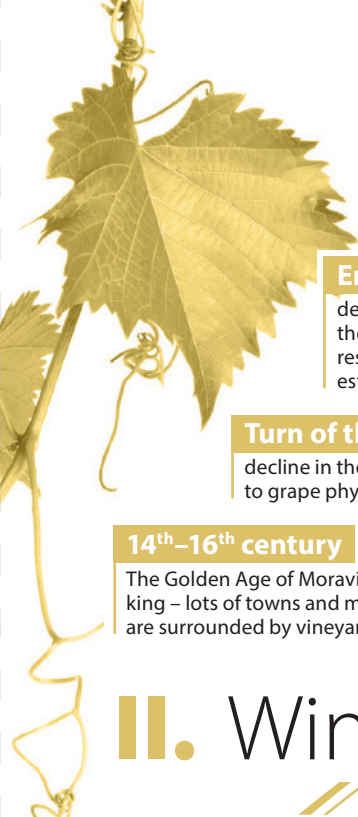
the oldest record of Bohemian vineyards

1101

the earliest written mention of vineyards in Moravia in the foundation charter of the Benedictine Monastery in Třebíč

1346–1378

development of winemaking during the reign of Charles IV



2004

harmonisation of the wine law with the EU legislation, development of the Act on Viticulture and Viticulture

1995

wine law – major changes and an improvement in wine quality

End of the 20th century

development of Bohemian winemaking – the restitution of vineyards and privatisation result in the renewal of family wineries and establishment of new companies

Turn of the 20th century

decline in the area of vineyards due to grape phylloxera

14th–16th century

The Golden Age of Moravian winemaking – lots of towns and monasteries are surrounded by vineyards

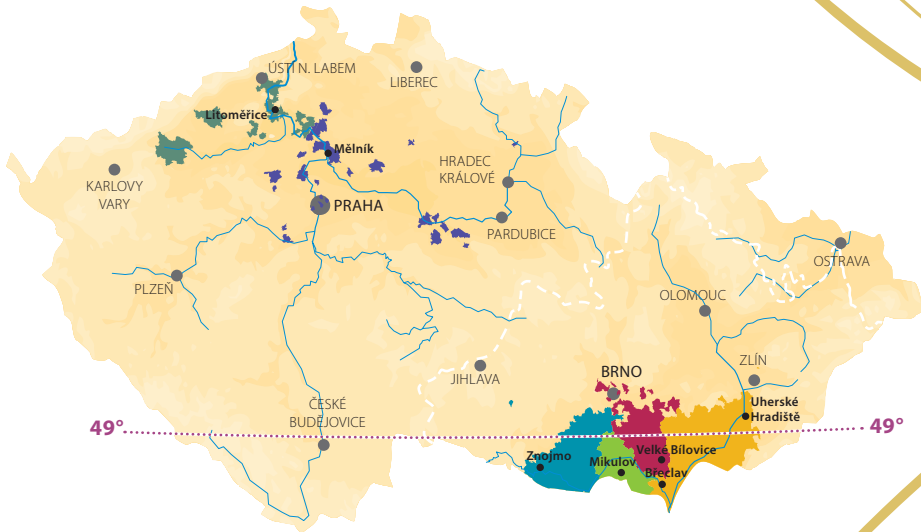


II. Wine in Figures

The Czech Republic has **two wine regions** and **six wine sub-regions**. In 2021, there are approximately 18,000 hectares of vineyards in 383 wine-growing villages and 1,313 vineyards tracks. They are managed by about 14,600 growers. Majority of vineyards (96%) is located in Moravia, the remaining 4% in Bohemia. There are about 850 registered wineries, ranging from large enterprises to small family wineries, and thousands of small private winemakers.



Wine Regions in the Czech Republic



Wine Region **Bohemia**

Wine Sub-region:

 Litoměřická

 Mělnická

Wine Region **Moravia**

Wine Sub-region:

 Znojenská

 Mikulovská

 Velkopavlovická

 Slovácká

■ Morava wine region

consists of four wine sub-regions – Znojmo, Mikulov, Velké Pavlovice and Slovácko. The local climatic conditions are similar to those in Alsace (France), Weinviertel (Austria) or the top German wine regions. The South-Moravian landscape and its unique terroir constitute great conditions for wine production.

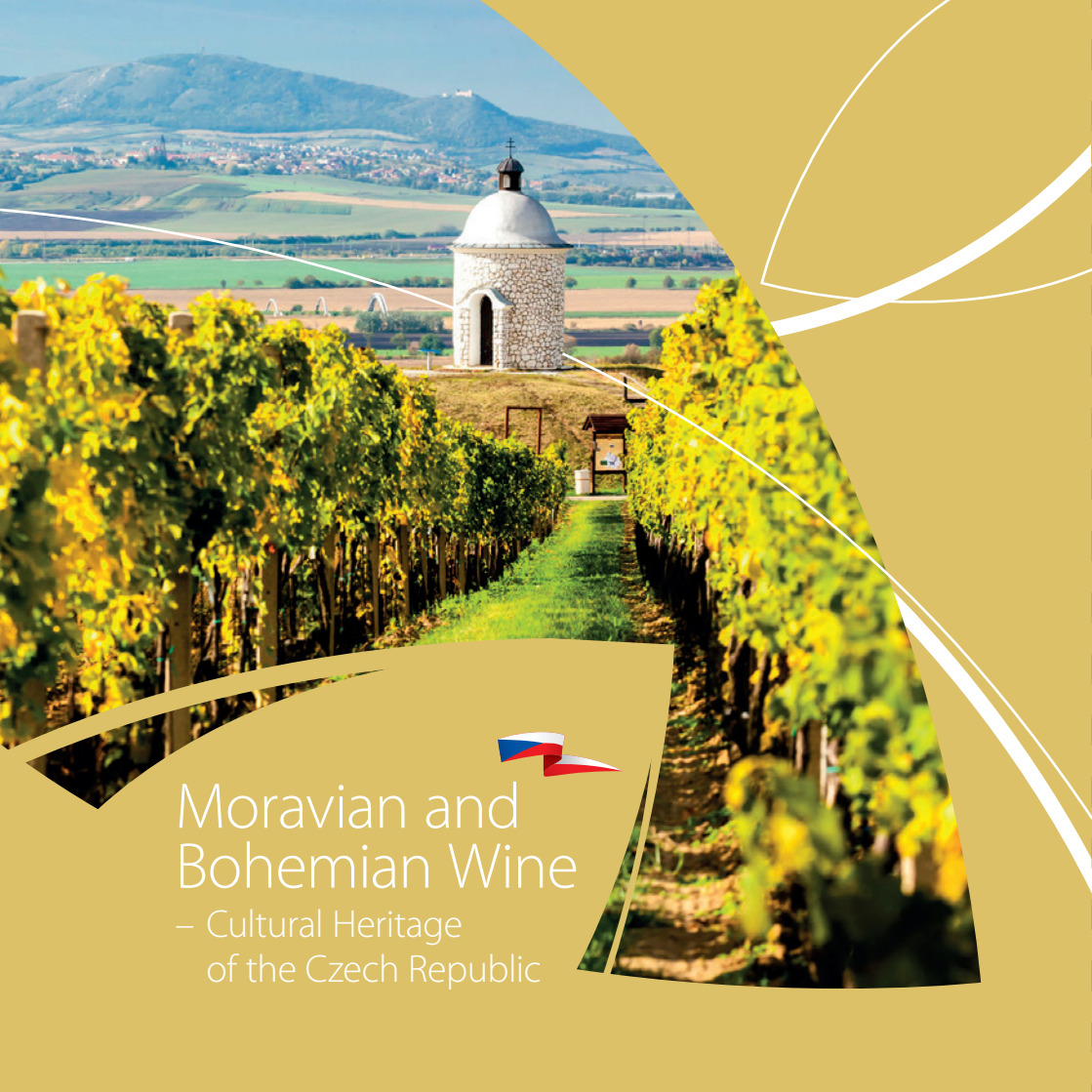
■ Bohemia wine region

is composed of two wine sub-regions – Litoměřice and Mělník. It belongs to the northernmost wine-growing areas in Europe. The areas planted with vineyards are scattered and form separate suitable locations on protected southern slopes, mostly along the banks of Vltava, Elbe, Berounka and Ohře rivers.

■ The Capital of Prague

can also boast of vineyards and thus belongs to just a few European cities where you can find vineyards not only within the city, but directly in its historical core. Vineyards are the Prague's embellishment and pride. And despite their small size, which makes them rather a curiosity and rarity, the restored Prague vineyards have become a popular tourist destination and the venue of numerous cultural events.





Moravian and Bohemian Wine

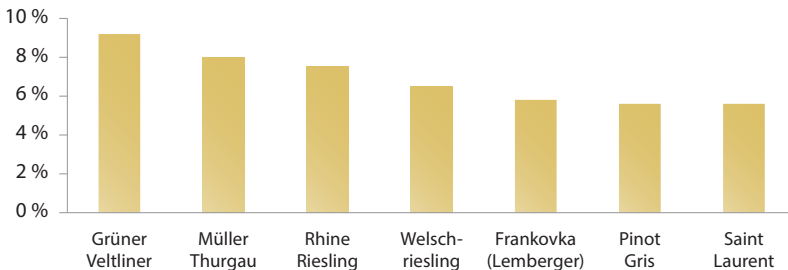
– Cultural Heritage
of the Czech Republic

IV. Composition of Varieties

The Czech Republic ranks among countries with a wealth of varieties. Varieties grown all over the world, but also varieties planted in specific areas only are grown here as well as varieties bred in this very region (such as Pálava and Moravian Muscat or blue varieties such as André and Cabernet Moravia).

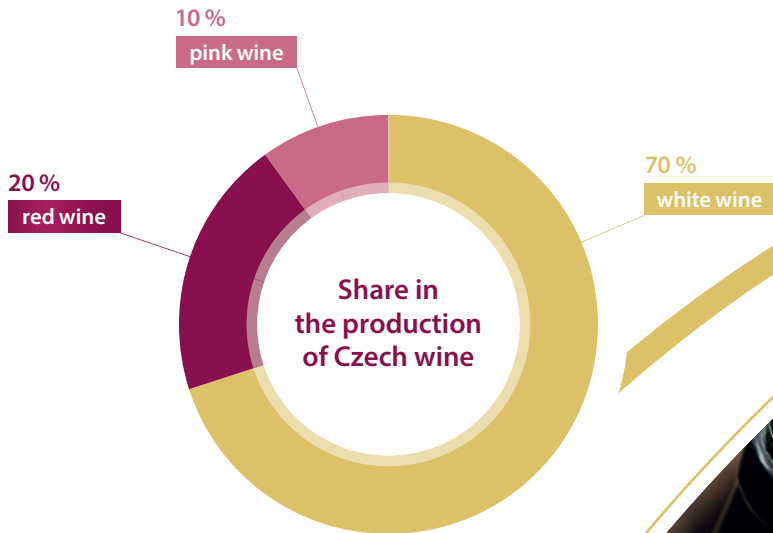
Over the years, the varietal mix has been changing, and currently the most often grown varieties are Grüner Veltliner, Müller Thurgau, Rhine Riesling, Welschriesling, Frankovka (Lemberger), Pinos Gris and Saint Laurent, namely each on the area of more than 1,000 ha, which altogether represents almost half of all the vineyards. They are closely followed by Chardonnay and Sauvignon. 71% of Bohemian vineyards are planted with white grape varieties, the remaining 29% are blue varieties.

The most widespread varieties in the Czech Republic



The Moravian and Bohemian wines are characterised by their interesting spectrum of aromas, richness in extract, and harmony of full body and fresh acidity of white wines. Recently, also red wines have begun to gain ground, which are thanks to the state-of-the-art winemaking technologies full and distinct, but also silky and velvety, with typical pleasant fruity aromas.

In recent years, rosé wines have become a true phenomenon – they are beautiful not only thanks to their colour, but also thanks to their exceptional youthful character. It is produced by short maceration of crushed blue grapes.





▹ Grüner Veltliner

It is the most often grown Czech variety suitable for production of a broad range of wine categories, including ice and straw wines. The nose and palate of this greenish yellow wine reveal the soil composition of the vineyard. Sometimes the aroma of lime tree blossom prevails, some other time the one of bitter almonds, while yet another time the wine has spicy tones, changing into the tones of green peppercorn.

▹ Müller Thurgau

It is a variety grown in all the northernmost wine regions both in Europe and overseas. The wines of greenish yellow colour with muscadel and fruity aroma, with tones of grapefruits and peaches are the best when drunk young and fresh. This is also why it is the predominant variety marketed under the Saint Martin's wine label – each year approximately 500,000 bottles are made available during the Saint Martin's Day celebration, which constitutes roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of all the saint Martin's wines.

🍃 Rhine Riesling

One of the best white grape varieties grown all over the world. The wines pride in a wide range of aromas of lime tree blossoms, peaches, apricots or pineapple, in dependence on the type of soil and year. They develop kerosene tones with age. Rhine Riesling is popular among all kinds of wine experts (sommeliers, wine growers, tasters and wine merchants). A proof thereof is its leading position in the number of represented varieties in the collections of the Wine Salon of the Czech Republic, enjoyed for several years.

🍃 Welschriesling

The fresh medium-bodied wine of greenish yellow colour with spicy acidity is the most frequently grown variety in Mikulov region. Fruit tones of currant or gooseberry are predominant, while later the tones of wild flowers appear. Popular and sought-after are especially the wines with the typical light botrytis-derived flavour. This variety is also used for the production of ice and straw wines or sparkling wines.



Pinot Gris

Harmonious wines made of a French grape variety, grown all over the world, are typically full, soft and with a long-lasting aftertaste. The sweet honey flavour contains some orange tones. One hundred years ago, this variety was grown exclusively in mixed plantings. However, thanks to its popularity it enriched the list of varieties grown in the Czech Republic on more than 1,000 hectares and the area under this variety continues to grow.

Frankovka (Lemberger)

The variety, cultivated mainly in Central Europe, has become the most widespread blue grape variety in the Czech Republic. Due to its late ripening, it is grown almost exclusively in Moravia, in Velké Pavlovice sub-region in particular. The wines are ruby colour with purple flashes. The vintage wines develop pleasant spicy flavour with cinnamon and blackberry aroma. It is a noble variety withstanding any fashion trends and is sought after by a growing number of wine lovers. Thanks to its aroma of raspberries, red currant and cherries, Frankovka is also a perfect choice for production of rosé wines.

Saint Laurent

This blue variety produces velvety glossy dark red wine harmonious on the palate, carrying the aroma of sour cherries, black currant or dried plums and is strong and full in flavour. Even though in the Czech Republic it lost its leading position to Frankovka, it still takes another first place – the largest areas of Saint Laurent in the world are located in the Czech Republic.



SVATO
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Svatovavřínecké
Moravské mladé zemské víno

V. Specialities



● Saint Martin's wine®

The trademark for the season's first wines, a glass of which is raised to toast on Saint Martin's day on 11 November. Fresh, young wines are made exclusively from early varieties such as Müller Thurgau, Veltliner Frührot or Moravian Muscat, from red varieties such as Blauer Portugieser and Saint Laurent, while the rosé Saint Martin's wines and clarets are from Blauer Portugieser, Zweigeltrebe and Saint Laurent varieties. The Saint Martin's wine is recognised by a special trademark on labels and caps.

● Ice wine (quality wine with the special attribute of ice wine)

The Czech Republic is one of a few countries, the climatic conditions of which make it possible to produce this special type of wine. It is a rare, very sweet wine produced by pressing frozen grapes harvested at the temperature not lower than -7°C , the obtained must shall have the sugar content of at least 27°NM . The grapes must not thaw during pressing and since some of the water remains in grapes in the form of ice crystals, the pressed juice is very concentrated.

● Bio (organic) wine

In line with global trends, also the Czech winemakers tend to switch to environmentally friendly wine growing and wine making. For a few years now the wines from integrated production are commonly offered in the market and the supply of organic wines or even biodynamic wines has increased as well. The so-called PIWI varieties are much more often grown in vineyards, i.e. varieties of vine resistant to fungal diseases, which are therefore more fitting for production of organic wines and have also been bred here.

VI. Culture and Tradition



A wide range of grown varieties, a large number of winemakers, a variability of vintages and types of produced wines in the Czech Republic open up ample opportunities for wine lovers to learn about them. The popularity of wine has been growing hand in hand with the development of wine tourism.

Each year more than 1,000 wine-related events are held:

- Tasting of wines from competitions – international or regional or just local tastings
- Open cellars days and festivals in wineries
- Services of open cellars in selected villages
- Vintage festivals (usually in September/October), some of which are history-related and offer lots of cultural events (Znojmo, Mikulov, Mělník, Karlštejn) and drinking of half-fermented wine (fermented grape must), which is not commonly consumed abroad
- Saint Martin's events (in November) – festivals of young saint Martin's wines, tastings and roasted goose menus offered in lots of restaurants
- Tastings and rosé wine festivals – the biggest is held in Prague on 1 May

Most events also provide the opportunity to enjoy local folk traditions, if nothing else in the form of cimbalom music or performers in folk costumes.



More opportunities to learn about the Czech wine and winemaking are offered by:


- ✦ Wineries, wine cellars, wine shops, restaurants and accommodation related to wine
- ✦ Nature trails through vineyards
- ✦ Moravian cellar lanes (incl. mobile application)
- ✦ Dense network of wine trails in both Bohemia and Moravia
- ✦ Historical cellars and modern winery architecture
- ✦ Observation towers in vineyards
- ✦ Interactive exhibition on the Czech as well as world viticulture and viniculture (Mikulov Chateau)

VII. Wine from the Czech Republic at First Glance



Since 2015, the wines coming from the Czech Republic are clearly recognisable thanks to their logo with a wine glass in national colours on the bottle neck or label.





Sources: ÚKZÚZ Brno (Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture), as of 31. 12. 2019; Svaz vinařů ČR (Czech Grape and Wine Producer Association), as of 31. 12. 2020; Vinařský fond (Wine Fund); Národní vinařské centrum, o.p.s. (National Wine Centre); Shutterstock; 123rf.com / gkrphoto, Paul Grecaud, Marcin Jucha, stokkete, fedorkondratenko, Elena Shchipkova, Richard Semik, Ewa Mazur, Natalia Pascari, gstockstudio, Olga Ionina, Dmytro Panchenko, rostislavsedlacek, Olga Yastremska, Petr Pohudka, Yulia Grigoryeva, nikkphoto; www.vinazmoravyvinazcech.cz



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