



The Yorkville Highlands Appellation



YORKVILLE HIGHLANDS

Vineyard Acreage Summary

Cabernet Sauvignon	77
Syrah	66
Pinot Noir	49
Merlot	46
Zinfandel	33
Petite Sirah	17
Other Reds	<u>45</u>
Total Red Varietals	333
Sauvignon Blanc	39
Chardonnay	19
Other Whites	<u>10</u>
Total White Varietals	68
Total Planted Acres	401

- ❖ There are **22** vineyards planted averaging **18 acres** each; all of them family-run.
- ❖ There are currently **21** different wine grape varieties planted.
- ❖ Of the total acres planted **83% are reds**; compared with the rest of Mendocino County, where Chardonnay is the most planted variety.
- ❖ **Cabernet Sauvignon** is the most widely planted variety.
- ❖ **Just 1%** of the land mass is planted to vineyard.
- ❖ There are currently **just 41** wines available made from Yorkville Highlands grapes; all produced in very limited quantities.

For more information:
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www.YorkvilleHighlands.org

In the tradition-steeped wine industry an appellation can take

decades, if not centuries, to establish itself as a source of consistently noteworthy wines. Armed with the knowledge that there is a distinct corner of the viticultural world, a small but tenacious group of growers and winemakers in Mendocino County's Yorkville Highlands have begun to turn heads with wines from this young appellation. The Yorkville Highlands appellation consists of approximately 40,000 acres straddling Highway 128 between the Alexander Valley to the southeast and the Anderson Valley to the northwest. The appellation was first approved in 1998 and has since increased its acreage nearly six-fold, with its largest plantings in Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Pinot Noir, and Merlot.

What makes the Yorkville Highlands so special? The vast majority of the Yorkville Highlands' vineyards are planted on a continuous string of bench land between 1,000 and 2,200 feet in elevation. As the warm afternoon air begins to turn hot, cooling breezes blow up into the region from the nearby Pacific Ocean. The bench land vines benefit from this cooling effect, which protects the fruit from over-ripening and causes some of the coldest evening temperatures along the North Coast. These frigid nighttime conditions are essential for preserving grape acidity. The moderated temperatures allow for an extended growing season, with the majority of the fruit being picked late in the season. Mature tannins in the red wines are the result; they are long and complex without being overpowering. Most winemakers of the region agree that Yorkville Highlands fruit can ripen evenly, with acidity, structure, and richness balancing each other in the wines of the appellation.

Yorkville Highlands soils also play an instrumental role in grape development. The gravel and ancient, brittle rock characteristics found in the thin soils on the high benches force the vines to dig deep into the soil. This poor and gravelly soil type probably explains the mineral characteristic of many Yorkville Highlands wines.

In less than a decade, the pioneering growers and winemakers of the Yorkville Highlands have learned a lot about viticulture in the region. They are creating unique, site-specific wines that are beginning to capture the attention of both wine lovers and critics. With their combination of "old world" balanced acidity and minerality, along with "new world" ripeness and forward fruit, the Yorkville Highlands appellation is one of California's most exciting viticultural areas.