



LOIRE VALLEY WINES

2016 Press Kit





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LOIRE

Region of Treasures and Flavours

Loire is a French region renowned not only for its wine growing and gastronomy, but also for its famous castles and magnificent abbeys. This beautiful corner of France, as authentic as it is wild, left its mark throughout the centuries and helped shape history on many accounts. Today, it remains a jewel of French Heritage.

This “Garden of France” overflows with multifaceted treasures and flavours. It features the best varieties of fruit and vegetables, delicious freshwater fish and a myriad of specialties typifying both the simplicity and tradition of French cuisine.

The Loire is also France’s longest river, with a total length of 1,000 km. It begins on Mount Gerbier-de-Jonc, in Ardèche, south of the Massif Central, and ends its long journey in the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Brittany. The Loire River crosses major cities, including Orléans, Blois, Tours and Angers.

The wine-growing regions dotting the river’s banks feature no less than 4,000 companies and 70,000 hectares of vineyards, with 61 appellations of origin. Among France’s many wine-growing territories, the Loire valley leads the pack in white wines, ranks second for rosés, and come in third for AOCs.

Great diversity among backdrops, soil composition and climate enable wine districts to produce one of the richest, most comprehensive selection of wines.

Be they red, rosé or white; still or sparkling; dry or semi-dry, supple or sweet, Loire Wines rank among the very best vintages and enjoy great prestige.



HISTORY OF LOIRE WINES

Intimately Connected to French History

The Loire Valley's history has always been intimately connected to French history.

Wine History Stretching Over 2,000 Years

While the Romans were the first to plant vineyards in Nantes, it wasn't until around 500 AD that wine production truly took off, initially in the Sancerre and Anjou regions, followed by Touraine.

The existence of Pouilly vineyard was therefore officially recognized during the 5th century. In 582, Grégoire de Tours recognized the existence of the Sancerre Châteaumeillant vineyard in his writings.

However, the Reuilly vineyard was not recognized until the beginning of the 7th century, when Dagobert donated Reuilly and its wine production to the monks of Saint-Denis Abbey.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the bourgeoisie supported vineyard development near cities, thereby contributing to the export of Loire Wines.

The Influence of Nobility and Monks

During the 10th century, wine growing proliferates under the stewardship of Cluny Abbey, thereby increasing the reputation of Angers, Sancerre and Orléans wines.

Several abbeys are founded, which contributed to the expansion of the local wine district. At that time, the Seigneur de Menetou donated vineyards to various religious orders, including Saint-Sulpice-Lès-Bourges Abbey.

Lastly, the Coteaux du Giennois vineyard can trace its origins to the St-Benoît-Sur-Loire and De La Charité Abbeys



HISTORY OF LOIRE WINES

Intimately Connected to French History

During the 12th century, the nobility, and especially the Augustine and Benedictine monks, considerably influenced the development of the Sancerre and Pouilly vineyards.

However, it wasn't until 1154, when Henri II Plantagenêt, Count of Anjou, was crowned King of England, that the Angevin vineyard saw considerable expansion. Indeed, the King had Anjou wines served at court and so, for nearly a millennium, French and English rules helped build the reputation of Loire Wines.

Trade and Business Expansion

From 1220 to 1275, franchise charters regulated good wine, collective work and harvest proclamations.

The abolition of "banvin rights", which granted lords exclusive wine trading rights, sparked vineyard expansion around the cities of Angers, Saumur and Orléans.

Evolving means of transportation increased trade and business, which led to the development of standards of quality to deal with competition.

With the advent of rail travel, the Pouilly vineyard supplied Paris' Les Halles district with Chasselas table grapes from 1860 to 1890. However, wine trade with Paris had already begun with the opening of the Briare Canal in 1642.



HISTORY OF LOIRE WINES

Intimately Connected to French History

In the late 19th century, the phylloxera epidemic destroyed many vineyards, which had to be completely resown. It was then that the first unions dedicated to protecting vineyards came into existence.

Renowned Appellations

Once the phylloxera blight had passed, quality research became the top priority. In 1936, the first Muscadet, Quincy, Sancerre and Vouvray AOCs were born.

Pouilly wines were designated as an AOC in 1937.

However, other vineyards took longer to gain recognition.

In 1959, Pinot Noir reds and rosés obtained their AOC designation.

Reuilly wines did not see further expansion until the 1980s.

Châteaumeillant's reputation was mostly due to its famous "grey" wine, which requires pressing the Gamay grapes immediately upon harvesting. Despite these wines' popularity as of 1965, the vineyard obtained its AOC designation only in 2010.



VINEYARD TERROIRS

A River Made for Terroirs

Climate Fluctuations Ensuring Wine Variety and Typicality

The Loire River and its many tributaries play a key role in climate fluctuation and diversity throughout the wine-producing district. Micro-climates are common and highly favourable for the cultivation of the various varieties. As one travels eastward, the climate becomes increasingly semi-continental and temperature fluctuations are more frequent.

The Loire wine-producing district is divided into **4 main regions** :

Nantes has an ocean climate, characterized by mild falls and winters, as well as hot and often humid summers. Vineyards benefit from average exposure to sunlight, totaling about 2,000 hours per year. Harvesting begins in mid-september due to the early flowering and ripening of the Melon de Bourgogne grape. The soil is mainly rocky, stemming from igneous and metamorphic rocks of the Armorican Structure, which contain gneiss, mica-schist, greenstone and granite. The soil's silicic acid give regional wines their inherent finesse. High-lime soils are a rarity.

Anjou and Saumur get an average amount of sunshine and temperature fluctuations are minor. Like Nantes, winters are mild and summers are hot. In Saumur, hill ranges block western winds. Harvesting usually begins in October, as the Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes ripen relatively late. The soil is comprised of slaty, sandstone, and carboniferous schist from the Armorican Structure, as well as igneous veins. Salty soil is prevalent in Anjou, while Saumur features mostly high-lime soil.



VINEYARD TERROIRS

A River Made for Terroirs

Touraine is characterized by a strong continental influence. Hill ranges provide further protection against western winds. The region gets roughly 1,800 hours of sunshine per year. Summers bring average rainfalls and October is usually dry. The subsoil in western Touraine is mainly comprised of chalky marl from the Paris Basin, and features “perruches” (argillosiliceous) and ‘aubuis” (argilocalcareous on chalk base) soil. The eastern region features sandy soil on clay subsoil. Lastly, terraces on the banks of the Loire River are comprised of sand and gravel.

Centre-Loire’s climate is similar to Touraine’s, albeit with a little more rain (600 to 800 mm) and less sunshine. Temperatures ranges are significant, varying between -1°C in winter and 26°C in summer. The soil is mostly gravel and clay, with acidic, micaschist and sandstone rocks. These conditions are particularly beneficial to Sauvignon Blanc grapes.

A Terroir Steeped in Diverse Influences

A terroir is formed by the combination of several factors, such as soil, climate, varieties, as well as human and historical influences.

The wine district’s northern location, with its variable climate and progressive warming, give its wine a light and fruity character. Fully mature wines gain a pleasant tartness, which grants them not only a fresh aroma, but also great finesse and low alcohol levels.

Loire’s vineyards are the embodiment of their terroir. The inherent diversity in the Loire Valley’s soil, climate, orientation and topography contribute to the quality and typicality of its wines. The combination of various elements yields a selection of wines with unique character and exceptional potential.



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

While most classic French wines come from blends, Loire Wines are generally pressed from a single varietal. Indeed, this process is what gives them their “authenticity”. As a result, their terroir is both noticeable and recognizable upon tasting. For example, a Chenin Blanc from Touraine will feature very different aromas than one from Anjou.

Loire Wines produce an incomparable selection through their colours (white, rosé, red), their types (still, sparkling) and sweetness levels (dry, semi-dry, supple, sweet).

Whites : The Epitome of Loire Wines

With vineyards totaling 20,000 hectares, the Loire Valley is France’s largest white wine district. Its white wines can be elegant, with light amounts of residual sugars or vin de garde, with a complexity characterized by many nuances and aromas, as well as great depth. Loire whites can also be very sweet and bold, yet full of potential. Finally, they can also put forward a sparkling side and turn some heads through their exquisite freshness.

The following varietals contribute to the production of these wines:

Chenin Blanc is one of the most widespread varietals. Once known as the “Plant d’Anjou”, its true potential remains underestimated. This robust varietal buds early and ripens late, and is subject to noble mold, which enables the production of sweet wines. It also yields refreshing dry and semi-dry whites, as well as complex and bold vins de garde and elegant sparkling wines.



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

Its qualities are perfectly expressed within several appellations, namely Anjou Blanc, Bonnezeaux, Coteaux du Layon, Coteaux du Layon Villages, Coteaux du Loir, Jasnières, Saumur Blanc, Savennières, Vouvray and Crémant de Loire (as a single varietal or a blend).

Melon de Bourgogne is an old, highly resistant white varietal; one of France's most popular. Originating in Bourgogne, it yields a low-acidity wine. In Loire, it is exclusively grown in the Nantes region.

Sauvignon Blanc is a varietal that, fermented alone, produces a fresh-tasting wine with signature aromas enhanced by red and black currant, with herbal notes and a unique mineral touch that yield decent tartness. It is found in the Coteaux du Giennois, Menetou-Salon, Pouilly-Fumé, Reuilly, Sancerre, Touraine and Quincy AOCs. The "Fumé Blanc" is produced on prevalent limestone soil featuring flint clay, which gives it gunflint aromas. It is Centre-Loire regions's foremost varietal (75%).

Chardonnay is a white varietal with high potential. While it originated from Bourgogne, it is known in Loire as "Auvernat", and grown on poor, stony and argillosiliceous soil. In Loire, it is mainly used to produce sparkling wines.

Folle Blanche originates from the Southwest region and is used to produce Gros-Plant-du-Pays-Nantais. It adapts very well to a wide variety of climates and soils.



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

Reds : Recognizing Bold Wines

The Loire's red varietals are grown in an area nestled in the Loire Valley covering about 10,000 hectares.

Cultivating single varietals helps produce vins de garde with bold, full-bodied aromas. These wines also stand out through their origins, authenticity and exclusivity.

The Loire's various red varietals are as follows :

Cabernet Franc, previously known as "Breton", is a less tannic varietal than its counterpart, the Cabernet Sauvignon. While the wines derived from it are savoured at a younger age and less astringent, Cabernet Franc still offers good aging potential. The Chinon, Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil, Saumur Rouge, Saumur Puy-Notre-Dame, Saumur Champigny, Anjou Rouge and Anjou Village appellations are pressed as single varietals using Cabernet Franc. In Touraine, it is blended with others varietals, such as Gamay and Côt.

The **Gamay** varietal originated in eastern France, but fares especially well in Touraine. In Centre-Loire, it is blended with the Coteaux du Giennois and Châteaumeillant appellations. When fermented in the traditional manner, through vatting, it yields very ripe fruit aromas, as well as supple wines. Surprising results can also be obtained by blending this varietal with Cabernet Franc or Côt (Malbec).



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

The **Cabernet Sauvignon** varietal adds a black currant aroma and a very dark colour. It complements Cabernet Franc, to which it contributes tannic structure and colour. As such, wines develop a bold, fruity taste on a tannic base, as well as a pleasant tartness. It thrives particularly well on the schist soils of the Anjou Villages Brissac AOCs.

Côt (or Malbec) is an old French red varietal. The wines it yields are highly sought-after for their dark, almost black lilac colour, as well as their fruity aromas featuring plum and tobacco notes. Blueberry, laurel, juniper, spice, cherry and dark chocolate aromas can also be found. This varietal mostly grows in Touraine, specifically in the Cher Valley. In the Touraine AOC vineyard, côt is fermented alone or blended with Cabernet Franc and/or Gamay.

Pinot Noir is a precocious red varietal featuring a slow ripening process and mainly found in Centre-Loire. Its ideal conditions include argillo-calcareous soil and a continental climate. Its famous “noirien” red can be found in the Sancerre, Menetou-Salon and Reuilly AOCs. It is also used in blends in Coteaux du Giennois and Châteaumeillant AOCs.



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

The **Pineau d'Aunis** (Chenin Noir) varietal was gradually replaced by Cabernet Franc. While its annual production is now confidential, its tonic taste and very spicy character make it a most interesting varietal.

It can be found in reds and rosés of the Anjou, Touraine, Rosé de Loire, Coteaux du Loir and Crémant de Loire appellations.

Pineau Meunier is another notable red varietal.

Rosés : a Wide Variety of light, Seductive Options

Without a doubt, the Loire Valley is the French wine-producing district that offers the widest selection of rosés made through several vinification processes and using various varietals. Indeed, rosés represent a quarter of Loire's production of wine with appellations of origin.

The main varietals used to produce rosés are as follows :

Grolleau, Pineau d'Aunis, Gamay, Côt, Cabernet Franc and cabernet Sauvignon.

Rosé wines derived from blends comprises of these varietals, such as Rosé d'Anjou and Cabernet d'Anjou, are semi-dry, fresh, fruity, light and pleasant. They are produced through direct pressing or the maceration of grape must for several hours, which gives them a fairly pronounced colour.

Grolleau, on the other hand, is a declining varietal, despite its 2,855 cultivated hectares in Loire. Originating in Touraine, it yields fruity, easy-to-drink rosés. It is mostly used in Rosé d'Anjou, Touraine Azay-Le-Rideau and Rosé de Loire.



VARIETALS

An Incomparable Wine Selection

The Rosé de Loire is produced in Anjou and Touraine from the Grolleau, Pineau d'Aunis, Gamay, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon varietals.

The Cabernet de Saumur is derived from Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon through dry fermentation. This rosé is very light and very fresh.

Other rosés are also produced in the Châteaumeillant, Chinon, Coteaux d'Ancenis, Coteaux du Giennois, Coteaux du Loir, Menetou-Salon, Reuilly, Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil, Sancerre, Touraine, Touraine Amboise, Touraine Azay-le-Rideau, Touraine Mesland and Touraine Noble-Joué AOCs.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

The Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC - Controlled designation of origin) was developed in 1935 under the initiative of grape growers and Baron Leroy. In 1936, the Institut des Appellations d'Origine (INAO) was founded to officialize AOC throughout France.

The Loire valley wine district features 61 appellations across 4 regions.

Main Appellations of the Nantes Region

Derived from the “Melon de Bourgogne” varietal, the Muscadet appellation ranks among the world’s most renowned appellations.

Muscadets and Gros-Plant-du-Pays-Nantais

Located west of the Loire region, the grape-growing territory of the Muscadet and Gros-Plant-du-Pays-Nantais appellations covered 9,000 hectares in 2010.

Muscadet production totals 400,000 hectoliters, including 100,000 hl of the Muscadet generic appellations, 300,000 hl of regional Muscadets (Muscadet-sèvre-et-Maine, Muscadet-Coteaux-de-la-Loire, etc) and 3,000 hl of newly created communal crus (Clisson, Le Pallet and Gorges). Gros-Plant-du-Pays-Nantais production totals 40,000 hl.

The concept of “sur lie” (on lees), legalized in 1977, is characteristic of wines from better production areas that wintered in constant contact with their lees, which grants them added authenticity, suppleness and freshness.

Such appellations as the Gros-Plant-du-Pays-Nantais, Muscadet, Muscadet-Sèvre-et-Maine, Muscadet-Côte-de-Grandlieu and Muscadet-Coteaux-de-la-Loire may all fall under this category.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Muscadet Sèvre et Maine, Muscadet Coteaux de la Loire, Muscadet Côtes de Grandlieu

The Muscadet Sèvre et Maine appellation owes its namesake to two rivers : the petite Maine and the Sèvre Nantaise. It covers over 5,900 hectares southeast of Nantes.

The Muscadet Coteaux de la Loire appellation covers 150 hectares in the Ancenis region, located upstream of Nantes, on both banks of the Loire River.

Southeast of Nantes, the Muscadet Côtes de Grandlieu appellation covers nearly 200 hectares.

AOC: Coteaux d’Ancenis

Main Appellations of Anjou and Saumurois

This region produces Loire’s best sweet wines, several sparkling wines and an exceptional white wine : the Savennières.

This grape-producing territory’s prevalent varietals are the Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Franc.

The Anjou appellation covers 128 municipalities of the Department of Maine-et-Loire, 14 municipalities of the department of Deux-Sèvres and 9 municipalities of the department of Vienne.

This totals 930 hectares of reds, 500 hectares of whites and 60 hectares of sparkling wines.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Red varieties include Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pineau d'Aunis and Gamay (unblended fermentation like the Anjou Gamay).

Chenin Blanc is prevalent within white wines and is sometimes blended with Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay.

Savennières

This appellation covers 160 hectares across 3 municipalities south of Angers, on the Loire Rivers' right bank. This dry white wine is derived exclusively from Chenin Blanc (Pineau de la Loire). Besides the generic appellation, two more are notable, namely Savennières Roche-aux-Moines and Savennières Coulée-de-Serrant.

Saumur

At the heart of the departments of Maine-et-Loire, Vienne and Deux-Sèvres, this appellation covers 2,000 hectares of red varieties and 1,600 hectares of white varieties.

The Cabernet Franc variety remains prevalent in red wines, to which Cabernet Sauvignon and Pineau d'Aunis are added.

Among white wines, the main variety, Chenin Blanc, is complemented by Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

Since 2009, the Saumur appellation also features the new Saumur Puy-Notre-Dame appellation (red wine). The Saumur AOC adjoins the famous Saumur Champigny AOC (red wine).



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

The Saumur AOC also produces the Saumur Mousseux.

Other AOC production areas : Anjou Coteaux-de-la-Loire, Anjou Villages, Anjou Villages Brissac, Bonnezeaux, Cabernet d'Anjou, Cabernet de Saumur, Coteaux de l'Aubance, Coteaux du Layon, Coteaux du Layon Villages, Coteaux de Saumur, Crémant de Loire, Quarts de Chaume, Rosé d'Anjou, Rosé de Loire.

Main Appellations of Touraine

The main varietals are Cabernet Franc, Chenin Blanc, Gamay and Sauvignon.

Chinon

This appellation covers 2,300 hectares across Vienne, up to the Loire River. Red wines alone account for 85% of total production. Like rosés, they are pressed almost exclusively from Cabernet Franc. Red wines are divided into two categories : light red wines from sandy and gravelly soil, and bold red wines from argillocalcareous soils on hills and plateaus. White wines, pressed from Chenin, represents only 2% of the Chinon AOC's production.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

The Saint-Nicolas-de-Bourgueil appellation's lighter reds account for 80% of production.

Touraine

This appellation's production covers 4,800 hectares. Most of the vineyard is located southeast of Tours, on the hills overlooking the Cher. In red wines, the main varieties used are Gamay (60%), Cabernet Franc, Côt (Malbec), Cabernet Sauvignon, Pineau d'Aunis and Pineau Noir. Rosés are pressed from Pineau d'Aunis. As for white wines, Sauvignon Blanc accounts for 80% of total production, complemented by Chenin Blanc and Chardonnay. Lastly, sparkling wines are derived from the Chenin Blanc varietal.

Vouvray

On the Loire River's right bank, at the border of the Tours Agglomeration, the Vouvray appellation features 2,200 hectares of Chenin Blanc. Its mineral characteristics are brought on by "Perruches" soil (flint clay), while the sweet wines' boldness stems from "Aubuis" soil (argillo-calcareous). Climate fluctuations enable the production of dry, semi-dry, sweet and/or sparkling Vouvray wines.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Jasnières and Coteaux du Loir

Half of the total Coteaux du Loir production is comprised of red wines (Pineau d'Aunis) while the other is made up of white and rosé wines.

Jasnières appellation vineyards, which cover 65 hectares north of the Loire River, produce white wines exclusively. These hills enjoy full southern exposure across an area 4km long and barely a few hundred meters wide. The Jasnières appellation is considered to be Coteaux du Loir's grand cru. Its white wine, generally rather dry, is derived from Chenin Blanc and features considerable longevity. Obtaining a sweeter wine requires warm seasons.

Other AOC production areas : Touraine Amboise, Touraine Azay le Rideau, Touraine Mesland, Touraine Mousseux, Touraine Noble-Joué, Crémant de Loire and Rosé de Loire.

Main Appellations of Centre-Loire

Sancerre

Overlooking the Loire River from atop its peak, the Sancerre vineyard was made for grape growing, spreading across 14 municipalities and covering 2,900 hectares.

The varietals used are Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Sancerre Blancs wines are fresh, fine and fruity, and entice tasters to discover aromas blending mineral and citrus notes. The initial burst melts into a rich, full aftertaste.

Red wines highlight Pinot Noir virtues through a subtle bouquet of wild and Morello cherries, and feature firm, full and durable flavours.

Rosés are both supple and subtle.

Pouilly-Fumé and Pouilly sur Loire

The Pouilly vineyard covers 1,300 hectares on the Loire River's right bank, in the Nièvre région. It is comprised of seven municipalities.

Both AOCs are derived from the Sauvignon Blanc and Chasselas varietals.

Pouilly-Fumé wines feature broom and grapefruit aromas. Flintstone notes characterize wines from flint soil. While these wines are savoured young, certain cuvees show excellent potential as vins de garde.

Pouilly sur Loire wines are both smooth and fresh. These are drinking wines in the noblest sense of the term : pleasant and approachable.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Menetou-Salon

The Menetou-Salon hills cover 500 hectares near Bourges.

This vineyard encompasses 10 municipalities. Its soil is particularly well suited to Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir production.

Menetou-Salon Blanc wines are fresh and fruity, spicy and musky, while blending citrus and flower aromas. A full round and durable flavor brings out notes of pepper and menthol.

Red wines showcase their ruby red colour, suppleness and bouquet. Ripe cherry and plum notes are prevalent. They feature full-bodied flavor with an aftertaste of candied fruit.

Quincy

Located east of Bourges, the Quincy vineyard dominates the Cher Valley. It covers 260 hectares across 2 municipalities.

Quincy wines are fresh and feature ripe citrus notes. It reveals grapefruit, yellow locust and white flower aromas, with notes of pepper and menthol.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Reuilly

Located at the heart of the Berry region, the Reuilly vineyard covers 220 hectares across 6 municipalities in Indre and the Cher Valley. It boasts pronounced, sunbathed hills, and mainly yields white wines from the Sauvignon varietal. Red and Rosés are derived from Pinot Noir. A “gris” rosé wine is made from Pinot Gris.

White wines reveal flower and vegetable notes melding into a round flavor.

Reds are full-bodied, structured and light, with prevalent fruity notes.

Pinot Gris rosés are very pale, as well as particularly mellow and delicate.

Coteaux du Giennois

Nestled between Gien and Cosne-sur-Loire, the Giennois hills produce authentic wines showcasing their terroir’s originality.

This 200 hectares vineyard covers 14 municipalities in the Departments of Nièvre and Loiret.

Its white wines express mineral, quince and white flower notes.

Its reds, derived from Pinot Noir and Gamay, are balanced, smooth and fruity, featuring red and black fruit aromas that emanate notes of pepper.



APPELLATIONS

AOCs Reflecting High Quality Standards

Châteaumeillant

Located south of Bourges, this vineyard produces red and rosé wines from very unique terroirs (blend of 60% Gamay Noir à jus Blanc and 40% maximum Pinot Noir).

This appellation covers 90 hectares across seven municipalities spread out within the departments of Cher and Indre.

Its red wines combine ripe fruit aromas upon tasting, which taper into delicate pepper notes.

“Gris” rosés feature unique grain, freshness and fruitiness. White fruit and pêche de vigne (red peaches) aromas meld into sweeter notes. Their freshness and sharp taste make them excellent summer wines.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

A Symbiosis of Culture, Scenery, Wine and the Art of Living

A Heritage Recognized by the UNESCO

The Loire valley is an outstanding cultural landscape featuring historic towns and villages, great architectural monuments, as well as cultivated lands shaped by centuries of interaction between their population and the physical environment, including the Loire River itself.

These criteria prevailed to elevate this beautiful region, France's most significant cultural heritage, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

This heritage, handed down by the French nobility established Loire since the Renaissance, is an invaluable as it is precious. Its sumptuous castles, majestic cathedral and abbeys mark an historic and cultural heritage that contributed to France's reputation across the world.

Prestigious Castles Celebrated Throughout the World

Most of the region's castles are now open to the public.

Among the most famous are Château d'Amboise, the cradle of French Renaissance, where Leonardo da Vinci spent his final days; Château de Blois, the official residence of the Kings of France between 1498 and 1589; and Château de Chambord, a must-see on the road to Blois, the biggest and most prestigious castle on the Loire River.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

A Symbiosis of Culture, Scenery, Wine and the Art of Living

On the Wine Trail

The Loire valley features a “scenic Vineyard Trail”, which stretches over 800 km and offers travelers a unique initiation in grape growing, gastronomy and culture.

This travel opportunity will be sure delight epicureans and history buffs hungry for adventure!

Several estates have preserved their family traditions, thereby remaining the embodiment of their authenticity and origins.

From vineyards to wineries, from wild, rolling landscapes to picturesque villages steeped in history, the wine trail offers another way to discover the features of one of France’s most breathtaking regions, a veritable symbol of the art of living.



BY THE NUMBERS

Loire Valley Key Figures

The Vineyard

- 1st producer of French AOC white wines
- 1st AOC region for sparkling wines (excluding Champagne)
- 2nd producer of AOC rosé wines
- 3rd French vineyard of France regarding the production - 2.4 million hectoliters
- 4th French vineyard regarding the wine-growing area
- 61 Appellations and Denominations
- 420 million bottles per year.

A network of companies

- 4,000 wineries
- 160 trading companies
- 15 coop



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