

## Three Things You Didn't Know About Lodi Wine Country

Chances are good that, if you're a wine lover, you've had a glass of Zinfandel made from fruit hailing from one of California's most productive wine regions: Lodi. This spot at the base of the Sierra Nevada mountain range achieved official American Viticultural Area (AVA) status in 1986, but its grape growing roots go back one hundred and thirty years before that. With such a long farming history, some of the region's 750 winegrowers can claim to have been plying their trade in Lodi for well over one hundred years. Here are some other interesting facts that you probably didn't know about Lodi wine country.



### It's not just the king of Zinfandel

Lodi is the self-proclaimed Zinfandel capital of the world, and it leads California in winemaking when it comes to that grape, accounting for over thirty percent of the state's production of fine wine Zin. But did you know that Lodi can also claim top honors in the production of at least seven other grape varieties in California? Apart from Zinfandel, Lodi also leads all of California's winegrowing districts in the production of red the wine grapes Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Petite Sirah, as well as the white wine grapes Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, and Sauvignon Blanc. In all, over seventy-five wine grape varieties are grown across 100,000 acres in Lodi, including the less well known Graciano, Cinsault, Roussanne, Tannat, Kerner, and Verdehlo.

### It has almost the same climate as Napa Valley

Lodi is often thought of as a hot and dry farming area, but that isn't an entirely accurate depiction of the region's climate. Lodi is located about one hundred miles east of San Francisco, and thirty-five miles south of Sacramento, and experiences a Mediterranean climate that has more in common to Napa Valley than it does to a dessert. The Summers in Lodi are warm and dry, and the Winters are moist and cool, with an average rainfall of about seventeen inches per year.

### It has one of the oldest vineyards on the planet

Lodi's has over one hundred years of grape growing history, much of it on pest-resistant sandy clay soils. This farming longevity has resulted Lodi now being a home to many vine plantings that are still going strong - and producing grapes - despite being several decades old. One such vineyard, however, might just be the world's oldest planting of the now somewhat rare red wine grape Cinsault. The tiny, rectangular, and flat Bechthold vineyard contains Cinsault vines that were planted in the late 1800s, with some of those vines now being well over one hundred years old. Once relegated to blending grape status, the fruit from this historic vineyard is now well regarded, and is in high demand with a long waiting list of winemaking clients. Of particular note to wine buffs is the fact that this vineyard is planted on its original roots (rather than being grafted onto American rootstock to help prevent disease caused by native louses). As such, it is even older than Cinsault plantings that can be found in the grape's native regions in Europe.