



LoCA: The Wines of Lodi, California Press Kit 2016



LODI WINE COUNTRY

- **Lodi—the Place:** “Lodi Wine Country” is one of California’s major winegrowing regions, located 100 miles east of San Francisco near the San Joaquin/Sacramento River Delta, south of Sacramento and west of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. It is named after the most populous city within the region. Lodi is characterized by a rural atmosphere where wineries and farms run by 4th - and 5th generation families operate in tandem with a new group of vintners who have brought creative winemaking and cutting-edge technology to the region. In Lodi, grape-growing is inextricably woven into the culture: the city of Lodi’s police department prominently features a grape cluster in its logo, and high school teams are named after grape varieties.

- **A Track Record of Continuous Success:** Lodi has been a major winegrape growing region for over 150 years. Unlike many U.S. wine regions, Lodi actually prospered during Prohibition and as such has been a continuous source of wine grapes since the 1850s. In fact, when early trappers wandered into what is now Lodi, they called one stream they discovered “Wine Creek” because of the proliferation of wild vines found there. As more and more Italian and German immigrants made their homes in Lodi, vinifera varieties such as Zinfandel, Tokay, and Alicante appeared by the 1880s.

- **Key Milestones In Lodi’s History:**
 - Fruit supply routes to the East Coast had been well established and so home winemakers took advantage of the provisions of the Volstead Act during Prohibition by purchasing wine grapes from Lodi to make their legal allotment of wine. Many of the fruit boxes that headed east on railcars bore the names of the vineyards or companies such as *La Famiglia*, *Black Bear*, and *Angelina* and the wines made from these fruit sources are considered by some to be the first “vineyard-designated” wines coming out of California.
 - The repeal of Prohibition in 1933 signaled the rebirth of the Lodi wine industry. Subsequently, the region expanded its acreage, first as a source of fruit for the blends of “Reds” and “Chablis,” among others that were popular.
 - From the 1940s through the 1960s, Lodi produced sought-after dessert wines alongside Zinfandels.
 - Between the 1960s and the 1990s, as consumer tastes gravitated from sweet wines to dry table wines to premium varietal wines, Lodi progressively transitioned into a source of premium wine grape varieties.
 - The Lodi American Viticultural Area (AVA) was recognized by the federal government in 1986, and seven smaller AVAs within the Lodi area were added in 2005
 - Lodi leads the state in its commitment to sustainable agriculture and has demonstrated this by establishing Lodi Rules™ in 2005, California’s first third-party-certified sustainable winegrowing program. As the first in CA, Lodi Rules™ serves as a model for wine many regions that are now adopting sustainable winegrowing programs. In 2013, Lodi Rules received an accreditation from Protected Harvest, introducing 22 new certification standards addressing energy management, employee incentives, soil conservation, water quality and disease management among many others.
 - In 2005, Protected Harvest certified six farming families and 1,455 acres in the Lodi Appellation. Since then, the program has grown to over 85 farming operations, and 22,965 acres of Lodi vineyards have been certified. There are an

additional 8,994.20 acres certified from Sonoma to Soledad. Over twenty wineries now produce wines that bear the Lodi Rules™ seal on the label.

- Lodi is named “2015 Wine Region of the Year” by the Wine Enthusiast.
 - Lodi will host the Wine Bloggers Conference for the first time in 2016.
- **Mediterranean Climate:** During the growing season, the Lodi area is typically sunny, with warm daytime temperatures that are moderated in the afternoon by the “delta breezes.” The temperatures drop significantly at night, and this diurnal range offers the opportunity for growers to produce a diverse set of varietal wines.
- Temperatures between June and September average a high of 90°F (32°C) and an overnight low of 56°F (13°C).
 - Rain is rare in the summer, with an average of less than 2 ½ inches (60 mm) of rain in the six months from May through October. Annual precipitation averages 19 inches (480 mm)
 - Humidity is normally very low, and frost is rarely a problem in spring or fall.
- **Geography:** Lodi lies east of the largest gap in California’s Coast Range—the Golden Gate entrance to San Francisco Bay—which provides access for cool winds off the Pacific Ocean, following the natural inlet of the San Joaquin/Sacramento River Delta, to reach its vineyards at the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains.
- **Diverse Soils:** Lodi’s diverse soils were formed thousands of years ago through geological events and alluvial waters. Two major rivers originating in the Sierra Nevada—the Mokelumne and Cosumnes—have brought soils rich in granitic-based minerals that complement the fine sandy loam soils surrounding the community of Lodi. Recent expansion has driven vineyards into previously undeveloped areas along the eastern edge of the appellation where a range of older lower fertility soils are found; these ideal winegrowing soils range from heavier clay-based soils in the south to well-drained stony soils in the north.
- **Viticulture: A Blend of Technology and Tradition:** The Lodi AVA has about 110,000 acres of winegrapes, farmed by almost 800 growers, many of whose families have grown grapes for a century or more. The region’s annual yield of nearly 675, 000 tons of grapes in 2014 was valued at \$409 million and comprised 17% of California’s total wine grape production.
- **Grape varieties:** Lodi is predominately a red wine-producing region, with approximately two-thirds of the acreage dedicated to red varieties. However, with over 75 varieties in commercial production, Lodi offers a vast portfolio of interesting wines. Lodi is the self-proclaimed **Zinfandel** Capital of the World, producing over 32% of California’s premium Zinfandel. Many of the region’s most distinctive wines come from the thousands of acres of “old vines”—some dating back to the 1880s. An estimated 2,000 acres are unique pre-Prohibition own-rooted vines. **Cabernet Sauvignon** is prevalent along the eastern edge of the Lodi appellation, while **Chardonnay** is extensively planted along the western, cooler side. Although a part of the local landscape for over a hundred years, **Petite Sirah** has seen a recent rise in popularity. A relative newcomer, Lodi **Syrah** has quickly become more prominent. Winemakers have also begun to explore the broad range of **emerging varieties** originating in similar climatic regions of the Europe, including Spain, Italy, Southern France, and Portugal such as Albariño, Tempranillo, Verdelho, Sangiovese, Viognier, Carignan, and Touriga Nacional.

➤ **Lodi—One of California’s Leading Growing Areas for Premium Wine Grape Varieties**

➤ Variety	➤ Tons	➤ % CA Total
➤ Zinfandel	➤ 125,126	➤ 35%
➤ Cabernet Sauvignon	➤ 138,675	➤ 27%
➤ Merlot	➤ 77,428	➤ 27%
➤ Petite Sirah	➤ 26,752	➤ 39%
➤ Syrah	➤ 23,505	➤ 20%
➤ Chardonnay	➤ 128,081	➤ 18%
➤ Pinot Grigio/Gris	➤ 44,624	➤ 25%
➤ Sauvignon Blanc	➤ 16,506	➤ 15%

○ *Source:* California Department of Agriculture 2014 Grape Crush Report

- **Lodi Rules™:** in 2004–2005, the Lodi Winegrape Commission created the standards for the state’s first third-party-certified sustainable winegrowing program, known as Lodi Rules™. This program promotes practices that enhance biodiversity, soil health and water cleanliness purity and further encourages responsible farming by focusing on the community through land stewardship, employee training, and safety initiatives. About 20–25% of the acreage in Lodi totaling 22,965 acres, and 8,994.20 acres outside the AVA, is now certified. In 2015 on its 10th anniversary, 22 new certification standards were added to Lodi Rules following its best practices mandate. For more coverage of Lodi Rules™, see separate fact sheet.
- **Wineries:** There are five major wineries in the area—Woodbridge by Robert Mondavi, Turner Road Vintners, Trinchero Family Estates, Bear Creek Winery, and Oak Ridge Winery—along with more than 85 boutique wineries specializing in small-lot, handmade wines that are garnering major awards at domestic and international wine competitions. In addition, the majority of California’s leading wineries buy Lodi grapes for their California wines. Increasingly, a number of winemakers from throughout California and the US more broadly, including the likes of Tegan Passalacqua, Matthew Rorick, Morgan Twain-Peterson and others, are seeking winegrapes grown in Lodi for their high quality additions to their wine portfolios.
- **Lodi Winegrape Commission:** In 1991, local growers voted to fund the Lodi Winegrape Commission. In 2015 The California Department of Food & Agriculture announced that the Lodi Winegrape Commission referendum passed with 90.2% of the region’s growers voting in favor of continuation. With its \$2,000,000 annual budget, the Commission conducts programs in marketing, grower education, and viticultural research and operates the Lodi Wine and Visitor Center. A fascinating experience for anyone interested in grapes or wine, the Center features an expansive tasting bar offering a wide selection of regional wines, an educational demonstration vineyard, and a gift shop stocked with handcrafted products and Lodi giftware. Well-trained staff lead guests through a guided tasting of the region’s wines, from the local vintners. Conveniently located 35 minutes south of Sacramento and 90 minutes east of San Francisco, the Center is the best introduction to Lodi Wine Country.
- **To learn more** about Lodi Wine Country, please visit www.lodiwine.com or contact Kimberly Charles or Alexandra Fondren at Charles Communications Associates at press@charlescomm.com or 415-701-9463.



WINEMAKING and VINEYARD PRACTICES

- **Innovative Winegrowers:** Many of Lodi's winegrowing families have been in the area for over 100 years and many of the original vines planted at the turn of the century still exist. These families are genuinely rooted in the soil, and provide Lodi with an engaging authenticity. Since its inception as a farming community in the 19th century and through its evolution as a quality wine producing region, Lodi has always had what it takes to make a fine wine region: down to earth people making wines with a great sense of place. Their values are expressed in the widespread adoption of sustainable viticulture practices, ensuring that these vineyards will be farmed for generations to come.
- **A Track Record of Success:** Historically, many of California's most well-known wine houses, such as Sutter Home, Gallo, Louis Martini, Robert Mondavi, and Constellation have relied on Lodi for signature grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Chardonnay. With its Mediterranean climate, these producers have always been able to trust that Lodi would provide a consistent source of high quality grapes. Just as important as this trust, is the fact that Lodi can successfully grow over 75 different grape varieties—*more than any other single region in California*.
- **The Evolution of a Fine Wine Region:** By the 1990's, the acreage in Lodi had doubled and most of the existing acreage had been redeveloped. Concerted efforts in the area of rootstock & clonal selection—especially matched to the site, canopy management, new trellising, and irrigation management all led to dramatic improvements in quality. The market's feedback that Lodi was a region on the rise has piqued the curiosity of wine lovers looking to discover less explored regions and emerging varieties. There are now over 75 varieties in commercial production that include among others Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Rhône varieties. Experimental plantings account for an additional 25-30 varieties.
- **Responding to Consumer Needs for Diversity:** Although many wineries rely on Lodi for its signature Cabernet, Merlot and Chardonnay bottlings, Lodi leads the state in its production of alternative or experimental plantings.
 - There are interesting bottlings of French varieties such as Alicante Bouschet, Petit Verdot and Tannat that are gaining recognition for their distinctive character. In addition, these grapes are favored by wineries outside the AVA when looking for blending grapes that can enhance aromas or structure in red wines made from grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot
 - While Spanish grape varieties have been planted all along the west coast in recent years, from Santa Ynez to Southern Oregon's Umpqua Valley, Lodi has lead the way with an ever-expanding array of Spanish varieties including Albariño, Graciano, Garnacha and Tempranillo.
 - Not surprisingly, with so many of Lodi's winegrowers having roots in Italy, grapes such as Barbera, Sangiovese, Primitivo and Vermentino have all made their way into Lodi bottlings.

- Several Portuguese varieties including Souzão, Touriga Nacional, Touriga Francesa and Verdelho are also in production and capturing the imagination of Iberian wine fans.
 - Lodi is gaining recognition for great white wine varieties, mainstream and esoteric alike, including Sauvignon Blanc, Albariño, Torrontes, Kerner, Grenache Blanc, and other.
- **Creative and Skilled Winemaking:** Armed with ambition, pride, and a sense of tradition, Lodi vintners are skillfully striking a balance between modern science and established traditional methods to handcraft world-class wines. They are utilizing the latest innovations from vineyard to glass to create wines of place, wines that honestly represent Lodi's distinctive terroir.
 - **Cutting Edge Viticulture:** Over the past decade advances in modern viticulture have led to dramatic improvements in wine quality. With the redevelopment in the past 20 years, Lodi growers have had the opportunity to carefully match the latest varieties, clones, rootstocks, and trellising to their specific vineyard sites. Technological advances have also had a profound impact. Whether it's satellite imagery that detects vine deficiencies, weather stations in vineyards, or the extensive adoption of drip irrigation Lodi growers now have the most sophisticated tools and information at their disposal.
 - **California's Heritage—Old Vine Zinfandel:** Journalists and wine aficionados alike have long recognized Lodi as the home of highly acclaimed old vine Zinfandels, with some plantings dating back to 1888. These vines—some of which are still planted on their own rootstock—are naturally low-yielding due to their age and consistently produce high quality fruit. Although expensive to maintain given their lower yields, Lodi is committed to continuing this California heritage. Further evidence of the evolution of the importance of these Zinfandel vineyards is the growth of single-vineyard designated Zinfandel bottlings from Lodi. In addition to these old vine treasures, on average Lodi crushes around 40% of California's total Zinfandel.
 - In the spirit of collaboration and recognition for Lodi's terroir and heritage Zinfandel vineyards, a collaborative group of winegrape growers and vintners have worked together on the Lodi Native project. **Lodi Native™** is a collaborative project by six winegrowers of like mind, living and working in the [Lodi American Viticultural Area](#) — particularly Lodi's historic [Mokelumne River](#) sub-AVA. Their mission: to turn the spotlight on the region's heritage plantings – many of them dating back to the late 1800s – through sensible viticulture and minimalist winemaking practices, beginning with native yeast fermentation and use of no new oak. The focus is on Zinfandel, but on the taste of vineyards rather than varietal character or brand.
 - **Pioneering Spirit:** A new generation of ambitious young winegrowers has taken the region by storm, reinventing this traditional farming community with an unabashed goal of producing world-class wines. Dedicated 4th and 5th generation winegrowers have quickly propelled the region from eight wineries in the early 1990's to over 85 today. Their uncompromising commitment to quality is driving the region to new heights, and bringing international attention to the wines of Lodi.

To learn more about Lodi Wine Country, please visit www.lodiwine.com or contact Kimberly Charles or Alexandra Fondren at Charles Communications Associates at press@charlescomm.com or 415-701-9463.



LODI RULES AND SUSTAINABLE VITICULTURE

- Sustainability in winemaking and grape growing refers to the use of practices that are scientifically reviewed to be environmentally, socially, and economically sound. It is a more holistic approach to farming that strives for continual improvement and addresses the following goals:
 - “*Environmentally Sound*” means farming practices that are sensitive to the environment.
 - “*Socially Equitable*” means responsible to the needs of society-at-large.
 - “*Economically Feasible*” means that the practices are economically feasible to implement and maintain.
- Lodi Rules™ is California’s first third-party-certified sustainable winegrowing program. It was created under the auspices of the Lodi Winegrape Commission by a committee of growers, vintners, academics, and scientists in 2004–2005 and is regularly reviewed and evaluated to be current and relevant. As the first in California, Lodi Rules™ serves as a model for many wine regions throughout the world that are now adopting sustainable winegrowing programs.
- The Lodi Rules™ Certification is accredited by Protected Harvest™, a leading nonprofit organization comprised of scientists, academics, and environmental advocates that certify farmers’ use of stringent sustainable farming standards.
- Approximately 22,965 acres in the Lodi AVA are now certified sustainable under Lodi Rules™. Many other growers and vineyards follow Lodi Rules practices without being certified. In addition, about 8,994.20 acres outside the Lodi AVA are certified by Protected Harvest under the Lodi Rules™ program.
- A vineyard qualifies for Lodi Rules™ certification if it meets two criteria. First, a vineyard must meet minimum standards for its sustainable practices, while avoiding any practices that are considered especially harmful. Second, the environmental impact units for all pesticides (organic and synthetic) calculated by the Lodi Rules™ PEAS model, must fall below an established threshold. Below are some of the practices that growers address:
 - **Integrated Pest Management:** Growers limit crop protection to a bare minimum in their vineyards by keeping track of pest numbers and their natural enemies so action is only taken when it is absolutely necessary. They create and maintain owl habitat to naturally control gophers and meadow voles, which can damage roots and kill new plantings.
 - **Land Stewardship:** Growers integrate the management of their vineyards with the ecosystem by introducing and preserving native plants, maintaining vernal pools, and protecting endangered species.

- **Air Quality Control:** Growers plant cover crops of native grasses in and around vineyards and limit tractor use to reduce soil compaction, dust, and production of greenhouse gases.
 - **Water Management:** Growers constantly monitor the amount of moisture in the soil and measure the vines' water needs so that irrigation is applied only when absolutely necessary. They regulate water usage through low-volume drip irrigation.
 - **Soil Health:** Healthy, living soils grow great wines. Growers add organic matter to the soil by growing cover crops and adding compost.
 - **Human Resources:** People are the foundation of great sustainably grown wines. Lodi vineyard workers receive comprehensive training that enables them to perform their jobs safely and efficiently. Growers receive points for holding training sessions for workers. Many conduct community & health programs voluntarily as well.
 - **Renewable Energy Sources:** Solar energy systems are used throughout the region to provide power for vineyard and winery operations.
- As of 2016, in the ecosystem management chapter, 92% of growers have installed nest boxes for raptors and birds to increase habitat biodiversity. In the human resources chapter, 62% have implemented a safety rewards program to incentivize their workforce to take extra precaution against on-the-job injury. In the soil management chapter, 93% of growers have used cover crops to prevent soil erosion. Overall, adoption rates averaged across each of the six chapters ranged from an impressive 77% to 90%.
- The standards are laid out in *The Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing*. The standards are organized in six chapters, and a grower must meet the minimum score of 50% of all possible points for each chapter and 70% of all possible points for the six chapters combined. It is up to each grower, based on the practicalities of his or her particular vineyard and capabilities, to decide which standards to follow in order to achieve the necessary number of points. The six chapters are:
- Ecosystem Management: Managing the surrounding lands and biodiversity
 - Education, Training, and Team Building: Providing for the training and safety of employees
 - Soil Management: Exercising care when amending the soil, and preventing erosion
 - Water Management: Minimizing waste of water resources
 - Vineyard Establishment: Choosing appropriate vines and vineyard conditions
 - Pest Management: Using the least harmful methods for controlling pests and weeds, and only when there is need for intervention
- Wines made from at least 85% Lodi Rules™-certified grapes can put the “Lodi Rules™” seal on the wine label or elsewhere on the bottle or packaging, allowing consumers to easily identify these sustainably grown wines. Most vintners use 100% certified grapes when using the credential.

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Lodi Rules™ Timeline

- **1992** – The Lodi Winegrape Commission launched a grassroots Integrated Pest Management program that introduced sustainable farming practices through neighborhood grower meetings.
- **1996** – Seventy demonstration vineyards were utilized throughout the appellation for over a decade to introduce sustainable farming practices.
- **2000** – The first edition of “The Lodi Winegrower’s Workbook” was published. This groundbreaking document became the basis of the California Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices and became an invaluable tool for Lodi growers.
- **2004** – The Lodi Winegrape Commission assembles a grassroots committee of growers, vintners, academics, and scientists to develop California’s first 3rd party certified viticultural standards.
- **2005** – The Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing is endorsed by Protected Harvest™ a leading non-profit organization that certifies farmer’s use of stringent sustainable farming standards. The first six farming families certify 1,455 acres.
- **2006** – The Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing is awarded the Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership award. Over 5,000 acres are certified sustainable in the Lodi Appellation.
- **2007** – 7,000 acres are certified sustainable in the Lodi Appellation, and the first wines are released bearing the “Lodi Rules™” seal.
- **2008** – 10,000 acres are certified sustainable in the Lodi Appellation.
- **2009** – 15,000 acres certified in the Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing program.
- **2010** – Over 20,000 acres enrolled in the Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing program.
- **2013** – 26,715 acres certified sustainable.
- **2014** – The Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing program wins the Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA) at the California Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in Sacramento. The award represents the highest environmental award in the state of California.



Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing

- The Lodi Rules™ for Sustainable Winegrowing is California’s first 3rd party-certified sustainable winegrowing program. The original standards were launched in 2005, and a thorough revision was accredited in 2013.
- The Lodi Rules™ takes a comprehensive approach to farming that goes beyond just pest management to promote practices that enhance biodiversity, water and air quality, soil health, and employee and community well being.
- There are 101 farming practice standards in six chapters: Business Management, Human Resources, Ecosystem Management, Soil Management, Water Management, and Pest Management.
- The Lodi Rules™ are designed to lead to measurable improvements in the environmental health of the surrounding ecosystem, society-at-large, and wine quality.
- All standards have been peer-reviewed by scientists, members of the academic community, and environmental organizations before accreditation by Protected Harvest
- Protected Harvest has received Consumers Union’s highest rating as an eco-label certifier.
- Certification has two components: The Lodi Rules™ practice standards, and a Pesticide Environmental Assessment System (PEAS) that measure the total impact of all organic and synthetic pesticides used during the year. Growers are audited annually by a third party to verify their farming practices, and may not exceed a maximum number of points calculated using PEAS. Certification is awarded to an individual vineyard annually.
- 20,000 acres were “Certified Green” in the Lodi Appellation in 2012, and an additional 6,000 acres were certified in other regions throughout California. Approximately 20 wineries produce wines bearing the Lodi Rules™ seal.
- A bottle of wine that is at least 85% from certified sustainable vineyards can print the logo on their label.



Certified Sustainable Practices

Integrated Pest Management

We limit crop protection to only essential measures in our vineyards. We create and maintain habitat for natural enemies of pests.

Air Quality Control

We plant cover crops of native grasses in and around our vineyards to minimize dust. We limit tractor usage to a minimum to reduce air pollution and conserve energy.

Land Stewardship

We integrate the management of our vineyards with the ecosystem by providing riparian zones, introducing and preserving native grasses and trees, maintaining vernal pools, protecting wildlife habitat, and installing nesting boxes for owls, birds, and bats.

Water Management

We constantly monitor soil moisture and measure the vines water needs. We regulate water usage through careful irrigation scheduling, and constantly maintain and service our irrigation systems for maximum efficiency.

Soil Health

Healthy living soils grow great wines. We add organic matter by planting cover crops and utilizing compost. We control fertilizer and irrigation to maximize nutrition in our soils, which results in higher, more concentrated fruit quality.

Human Resources

People are the foundation of great sustainably grown wines. Our workers receive comprehensive training and development that enables them to perform their jobs safely and maximize their ability for year round employment.

Sustainable Vision

We create a sustainable vision for the farm that provides the foundation for sustainable winegrowing, helping ensure the long-term health, biodiversity, and productivity of the farm and surrounding ecosystem. All our farming practices can be evaluated as to whether it moves us toward or away from this vision.

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LODI WINE COUNTRY: The Climate

Because of Lodi's relative newness as a wine tourism destination, there are still some mistaken assumptions about the region's terroir and growing conditions (which include human input and circumstances), both of which have a direct effect on the quality of resulting wines. These misconceptions remain widespread among consumers, and surprisingly still pervade, even throughout the wine industry.

One of the most common misperceptions is that Lodi is a "hot climate" wine region. When one looks at a map, and sees that the Lodi AVA occupies the northern section of California's Central Valley, it stands to reason to think that Lodi is a much hotter growing region than, say, coastal regions between Mendocino and Santa Barbara. In fact, Lodi has a Mediterranean climate. The region that Lodi most closely resembles in terms of climate is Napa Valley; particularly vineyards in the vicinity of this region's famous sub-appellations of St. Helena, Rutherford and Oakville. Longtime connoisseurs of Napa Valley wine might consider this a suspension of belief; yet the facts bear this out.

The Lodi Appellation has a classic Mediterranean climate featuring warm days and cool evenings. Situated 100 miles directly east of the San Francisco Bay at the edge of the San Joaquin/Sacramento River Delta, cool "delta breezes" provide the region with a reliable, natural air conditioning throughout the growing season. This perfect climate allows Lodi winegrowers to consistently craft a diverse set of delicious full-flavored varietal wines that display a refreshing natural acidity.

All one needs do is compare the temperatures in the climate table below, showing the average highs (day-time) and lows (night-time) of Lodi and comparable regions in degrees Fahrenheit; during the months of March through October, which is the period of time when grape vines are active (from bud break to harvest).

These figures reflect the average high and low temperatures recorded by the Western Regional Climate Center¹ over the past 122 years:

¹ The Regional Climate Centers (RCC) deliver climate services at national, regional and state levels working with NOAA partners in the National Climatic Data Center, National Weather Service, the American Association of State Climatologists, the Regional Sciences and Assessment Program, and other NOAA Research Institutes. RCC also partners with the Department of Interior Climate Science Centers and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

WRCC Average High/Low Temperatures (1893-2014)

	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Yearly
Lodi	65.7 41.8	72.5 44.5	79.4 49.0	86.6 53.2	91.5 55.6	90.0 54.4	86.5 52.2	77.4 46.6	73.6 46.0
St. Helena (Napa Valley)	65.4 40.5	71.5 42.7	78.1 47.2	84.4 51.0	89.7 52.6	89.1 52.1	86.3 49.7	77.5 45.8	73.6 44.5
Healdsburg (Sonoma)	66.5 42.3	72.0 44.4	78.4 48.5	84.4 52.1	88.8 52.7	88.4 51.5	86.0 51.5	77.9 47.7	73.9 45.9
Paso Robles	67.8 38.5	73.7 40.2	80.0 44.1	86.6 47.7	92.7 50.8	92.9 50.0	89.3 47.4	81.1 41.9	76.7 41.5
Santa Maria (Sta.Barbara)	66.4 42.5	68.8 44.6	70.2 47.1	72.6 49.4	74.1 52.2	74.1 52.6	75.4 50.9	74.1 47.6	70.0 45.7
Fresno	67.0 43.8	74.4 48.0	83.5 54.3	91.7 60.5	98.3 65.7	96.4 64.0	90.8 59.7	79.7 51.2	76.5 50.4

The figures above reveal a number of things:

- Lodi's average yearly high temperatures are in the same ballpark as mid-Napa Valley (viticulural areas near St. Helena) and Sonoma's Dry Creek Valley and Alexander Valley AVAs (near Healdsburg).
- On average, Lodi is slightly (a variance of 1-3 degrees) warmer than mid-Napa Valley and mid-Sonoma County between May and August, but usually finishes about even during the harvest months of September and October (although today, white wine grapes are commonly picked in August in Napa Valley and Lodi, and in many parts of Sonoma County).
- Lodi has slightly more moderate diurnal swings (i.e. day vs. night temperatures) than Sonoma County and Napa Valley – one of the factors (among others) that contributes to soft, fragrant, fruit focused qualities of Lodi grown wines.
- Fresno is more representative of Central Valley temperatures, which are markedly higher during the day and night than Lodi and the other coastal regions cited.

Wine grape terroir, however, is defined by far more than temperature. Topography (soil morphology, elevation, slope, exposure, etc.) is huge, and climate is also strongly influenced by latitude, fog, wind, aspect, not to mention the endless viticultural decisions (vine training, spacing, irrigation, pruning, thinning, etc.), which, in turn, are strongly determined by all the factors related to soil, climate, and seasonal events (including frost, rain, drought, etc.).

In fact, the softer, fragrant qualities of Lodi reds are often ascribed to the combination of the region's relatively dry, moderate Mediterranean climate, its relatively modest diurnal swings, and a plethora of sandy loam soils on fairly low (0 to 300-ft.) topography, with minimal sloping. By comparison, the topographies and climatic pockets of Napa Valley, Sonoma County, as well as Santa Barbara and Paso Robles are considerably more complex and varied to dramatic degrees; although Lodi's seven sub-AVAs are indeed based upon soil driven differentiations.

Sunset Magazine's Practical Delineations

Another lens through which to grasp Lodi's climate is through the lens of Sunset Magazine – the self-described "Guide to Living in the West." This publication has always furnished highly detailed, time honored advice on how to garden in the Western U.S., based upon all the known variables pertaining to length of growing season, timing and amount of rainfall, winter lows, summer highs, wind, humidity, latitude, altitude, and so forth.

Therefore we also find it interesting that out of the 20-plus specific climatic zones into which California is divided by Sunset's professional gardeners (please visit [Sunset Climate Zones](#) online), Lodi is fixed squarely in Zone 14. According to Sunset, Zone 14 encompasses "inland" areas moderated by "marine air" – especially those influenced by the "opening in Northern California's Coast Ranges created by San Francisco and San Pablo bays."

Other regions classified as Zone 14? Most of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta between Pittsburg, Sacramento and Stockton; most of Napa Valley between the cities of Napa and Calistoga; the valley areas running through Sonoma, Santa Rosa and Healdsburg; in Mendocino, most of the areas near Ukiah and east of Boonville; and in the Central Coast of California, the hills around Paso Robles, the Salinas Valley south of Soledad, and most of the areas near Santa Barbara County's Santa Ynez and Solvang.

The decidedly warmer thermal belts in the Central Valley area south of Modesto, on the other hand, are classified in Sunset's Zones 8 and 9.

For a gardening authority like Sunset, these zones are matter of practicality: If you wish to know what best to grow and how, then you need to understand where your region stands climatically in comparison to other regions. Anyone who has been "stuck" in Lodi's mild Mediterranean climate knows this. Soon the rest of the world of fine wine will, too.

To learn more about Lodi Wine Country, please visit www.lodiwine.com or contact Kimberly Charles or Alexandra Fondren at Charles Communications Associates at press@charlescomm.com or 415-701-9463.