

South Moravian Wine Culture Goes Back to Celtic Times

South Moravia in the Czech Republic, popularly known as the heart of Europe due to its strategic position, lies in between the boundaries of the Western Carpathians and the Bohemian Massif. The climatic conditions of the area, which is part of the Visegrad Wine Route, as well as its geographic location make it suitable environment for the cultivation of vines.

August and September are usually the months with the lowest rainfall making this period the most ideal for grape ripening in South Moravia. The richness associated with Moravian wine can be attributed to two secret ingredients – the warm continental climate and the warm air originating from the southern tributaries of the Danube River.



The South Moravia viticulture dates back to the Celtic times even though vine growing and wine-making caught up with the rest of Europe when the Roman Empire expanded. Historically, wine was served with meals and was considered a very important part of the diet especially since people found drinking water an unreliable practice. It was also common for nobles and merchants to maintain wine cellars during the Dark Ages. The spread of quality wines to the rest of Europe can be attributed to the classification of Moravian wine by the renowned Benedictine Monk, Gregor Wolny, during the 19th century at the request of Maria Teresa.



Between Brno and Znojmo, in the western part of Moravia and on the edge of the Bohemian Massif is an area whose soil is excellent for cultivating Ryzlink Rynsky and Veltinske Zelene also known as Riesling and Gruner Veltliner respectively. South of Brno town, located at the central part, is the wine cultivating sub-region of Mikulov. The sub region is home to the Palava hills which are an elevated mass of

limestone. The soil here is suitable for the cultivation of Ryzlink Vlasky, otherwise known as Welschriesling. The sub-region is also suitable for the cultivation and growth of varieties like Sauvignon, Pinot gris, Chardonnay and Pinot blanc.

The other wine sub-region is Velke Pavlovice which is located at the central part of Moravia. The region is reputed for Frankovka, a type of high-quality red wine. The eastern part of the Moravian region is also home to Slovacko, another wine sub-region whose natural conditions are appropriate for the growth of grape varieties such as Ryzlink Rynsky, Pinot noir and even the newest local grape variety called the Cabernet Moravia.



There are more than 17,000 hectares of registered vineyards in South Moravia, a figure which accounts for 96% of the overall number of vineyards in the entire Czech Republic. Usually, the local grape growers (approximately 20,220 of people) offer visitors wine tasting experience like no other. This is usually accompanied by local delicacies as the growers share their wine-making tips and secrets. For this direct encounter with the growers, visiting the many cellars in the region is recommended.

If you are lucky, you can catch the grape harvest which usually takes place in September or November. Attending a wine festival and sampling some of the world's high quality wines while watching the natives dance to folk songs can be a memorable wine tasting tour.

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