

OTHER WINEMAKING COUNTRIES OF NORTHWESTERN EUROPE

In the northern hemisphere, the farther north a vine grows, the fewer hours of daylight it receives and the greater the angle at which the sunlight is spread out, thus the longer it takes to ripen grapes. Factor in the wet, windy, and uncertain climates of the Atlantic, and it may seem surprising that these countries produce any wine.

BELGIUM

In Belgium, winegrowing dates back to Roman times. Today, more than 100 hectares (250 acres) of vineyards are cultivated by over 100 growers. Most of these growers are part-time or hobbyists, although there are around 20 who could be described as commercial to one extent or another.

✓ *Genoels-Elderen* (Chardonnay Goud, Zwarte Parel, Maastricht Riesling)
• *Peter Colemont* (Chardonnay Clos d'Opleeuw)

DENMARK

There are 25 hectares (62 acres) of vines in this country. Even more amazingly, the EU has limited growth to no more than 99 hectares (245 acres). There are nine commercial producers, the oldest of which is Domain Aalgaard, which was established in 1975. Chateau Lille Gadegard produced its first vintage in 2003 on Bornholm, a Danish island in Eastsee, to the north of Poland.

IRELAND

Better suited to stout and whiskey, Ireland had absolutely no winemaking history when, in 1972, Michael O'Callaghan planted Müller-Thurgau vines at Mallow in County Cork. O'Callaghan has just over 1 hectare (2.5 acres) of exclusively Reichensteiner vines nowadays, and his wine is sold exclusively in the restaurant of his country house hotel, Longueville House. Just 5 kilometres (3 miles) away from Mallow is another Irish vineyard, called Blackwater Valley, where owner Dr Christopher has 5 hectares (12 acres), growing Reichensteiner, Madeleine Angevine, and Seyval Blanc. Another venture, West Waterford Vineyards at Cappoquin, has 2,000 vines growing in the Blackwater River Valley.

LATVIA

Jukka Huttunen tends 160 wine-producing vines planted in 2001 on ground warmed by buried coolant pipes from Olkiluoto nuclear power station. At 61° 13' latitude, this is the most northerly vineyard in the world.

LIECHTENSTEIN

Situated between Germany and Switzerland, this tiny principality grows just 15 hectares (37 acres) of planted vines. They are primarily Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and are mostly owned by the Crown Prince through his private winery, the Hofkellerei Fürsten von Liechtenstein.

NETHERLANDS

Although the Netherlands is north of Belgium, and therefore would seem an even more unlikely location for growing vines, almost all its vines grow east of Maastricht, so they are actually situated farther south than the vineyards in the Belgian part of Brabant. There are over 100 growers farming 50 hectares (124 acres) of



CLOS D'OPLEEUW, BELGIUM

A true clos in the Haspengouw AOC, the Clos d'Opleeuw is owned by Peter Colemont, who learned viticulture from Burgundy's Bernard Dugat-Py.

vines, primarily consisting of Riesling, Müller-Thurgau, Auxerrois, and the inevitable German crosses.

✓ *Apostelhoeve* (Auxerrois, Riesling)

NORWAY

The wine-producing Hallingstad vineyard was planted close to Harten (59° 24') in 1992 by Sveier Hansen, who exports to the United States.

POLAND

Vines have been grown in Poland since at least the 14th century but ceased production during the Communist era. However, a few isolated areas were replanted a few years before Solidarity changed the face of Europe forever in 1989. These vineyards were confined to the Carpathian Mountains in the very south of the country, but when Poland became a member of the EU in 2003, the Polish Wine Institute was established, and hundreds of vineyards were created in six Polish wine regions (Zielona Góra-Wielkopolskie, Central and Northern Poland, Lower Silesia, Malopolska-Vistula-Lubelskie, Malopolska-Vistula-Świętokrzyskie, and Carpathia), where no fewer than 87 wineries officially exist, although most of these are not commercial enterprises by international standards. Four of the more important wineries are Winnica Golesz, Winnica Jasiel, Winnice Jaworek, and Winnica Pałac Mierzęcin.

SWEDEN

Although Akessons have produced sparkling wine since 1985, the grapes were not grown in Sweden. The first three vineyards to be established in this country are Blaxta Vingård (planted in 2000, first wines in 2002) southwest of Stockholm near Flen (59° 03'), and two in the Skåne region farther south: Kullabygden Vingård (planted in 2000, first wines in 2002) near Helsingborg, and the Nangijala Vingård (planted in 2001, first wines in 2003) near Malmö.