

Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, 2005-2014



The Napa Valley is one of the world's most famous wine regions. Just 30 miles long and five miles wide, this may be a celebrated wine region but it only accounts for around 4% of California's wine production. As part of the [Vancouver International Wine Festival](#), I attended a tasting that took us through 10 Napa Valley wines, spanning 2005 through to 2014, with one vintage of each year.

The wines were all Cabernet Sauvignon, which is the dominant variety in the region. It represents 47% of all plantings in Napa and 67% by value of grape production. 'The economics are there will be a lot of Cabernet Sauvignon planted even if it isn't optimal for all sites,' says Kirk Grace of Stag's Leap. If you can grow Cabernet here, you do, which doesn't always work for the wines.

There are currently 16 AVAs in Napa, but Jean-Charles Boisset of Raymond thinks there could be more, referencing Burgundy. 'The monks began a long time ago and they've kept adding AVAs.' He thinks that this is the way forward for Napa. 'The reason to exist is the differentiation of those small towns the soil composition of Napa is the most complex in the planet. We have 16 AVAs but I think we will have 160. It's only the beginning. It is our role to continue to define the map of the future.'

Raymond Vineyard Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 Napa Valley, California

This is quite vital and vivid with bright blackcurrant and cherry fruit, showing nice freshness. Supple and very drinkable, but it has some structure, too. The fruit profile is certainly quite ripe, but there's some balance and restraint. Juicy finish. It's quite a joyful, playful wine. 92/100