



Sub-Appellation Overview

Early warming in spring, generous precipitation, rich ripe wines

St. David's Bench lies 10 km south of the shore of Lake Ontario and several metres above the Lake Iroquois Plain.

This bench, formed when glaciers carved out the Niagara Escarpment, rises from the historic shoreline of Lake Iroquois towards the base of the escarpment where a steep ridge collects the lake breezes to circulate and then eddy them back over the plains. The appellation follows the contour lines that define the escarpment from the Niagara River to Beechwood Road, with a complex topography.

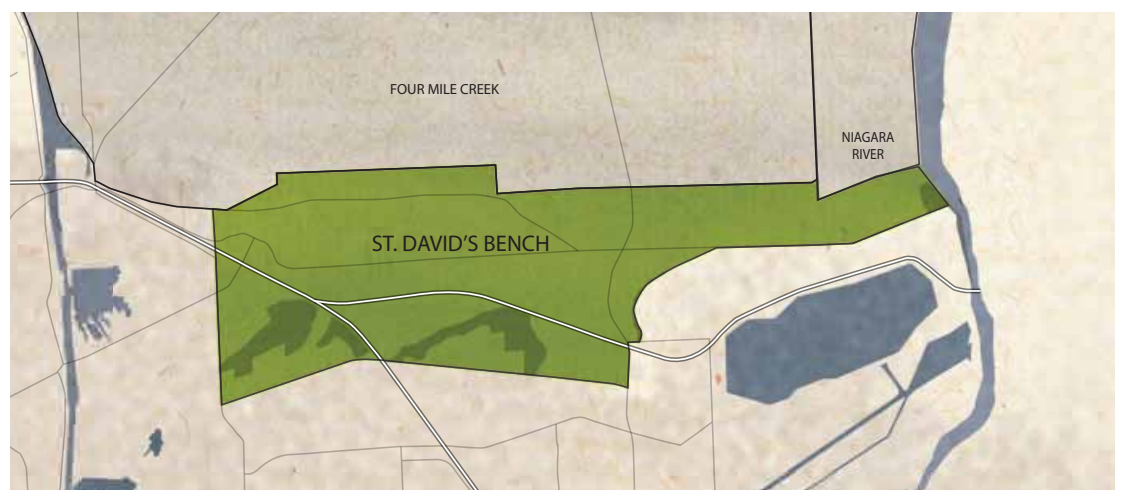
Vineyards in St. David's Bench are mostly located on north-facing slopes on the upper portion of the bench and along its southern boundary at the Lake Iroquois Shore Bluff.

NOTABLE FEATURES

Sheltered by the Niagara Escarpment, and farther inland from the warm lake waters, vineyards on the Bench tend to be slightly cooler during the late season when grapes are ripening. Combined with the early spring warming, this creates a unique growing season and promises mature, refined wines.

STATISTICS

GROWING DEGREE DAYS (AVG.): **1637**
 FROST FREE DAYS: **210 (-2°C)**
 JULY MEAN TEMPERATURE: **22.5°**
 GROWING SEASON: **April to October**
 PRECIPITATION: **543mm (grow season)**
 COMMON VARIETALS: **Pinot Noir, Syrah**
 PRODUCTION (2019 REPORTING YEAR):
13,205 (9L cases)
 NUMBER OF APPROVED WINES: **57**
 NUMBER OF WINERIES: **8**



Terroir Overview

Climate

With shelter from the Escarpment and good cold air drainage down its slopes, this area experiences early warming in the spring, and enjoys a relatively long growing season. Frequent high pressure systems and clear and sunny weather, aided by steady air circulation during the growing season maintain moderate temperatures well into September and the start of the grape harvest. Combined with a generous amount of precipitation, this appellation produces healthy vine growth and fruit with well developed character.

Topography

With an elevation ranging from 145 to 105 metres above sea level, this appellation has a relatively high elevation and its bluffs shelter the area from the strong, cool south-westerly winds that prevail in the spring. Vineyards are situated on the long north-facing slopes, which are crossed by several shallow streams.

These streams - many seasonal with flooding in early spring and dry beds by late summer - offer good drainage of the ground water issuing from the base of the escarpment, promoting healthy vine growth throughout the growing season.

Soil Characteristics

The soils of this appellation, spread over a red sandstone bedrock, are deep, rich clays. The mostly silty clays and clay loam tend to hold moisture and drain slowly.

Snow melt and spring rain saturates the soil early in the season and provides a reliable source of water that is held in the sub-soils and nourishes the vines throughout the season.

