



HISTORY

Napa Valley's winemaking history began in 1838-39 when George Calvert Yount planted the first commercial vineyards.

Following California's Gold Rush of 1849, west coast population exploded and European immigrants arrived in Napa Valley eager to try making American wine. Charles Krug established Napa Valley's first commercial winery in 1861. By 1889, there were more than 140 wineries and nearly 16,000 vineyard acres in Napa Valley.

But hard times were ahead. Phylloxera reduced vineyard plantings to 2,000 acres by 1900. The 1906 San Francisco earthquake, deep recession, World War I, Prohibition, the Great Depression and World War II left their marks on this once-thriving wine region. Still, a few vintners persevered and Napa Valley's wine industry slowly returned: Louis M. Martini Winery opened in 1933; Beringer and Beaulieu Vineyards resurged after Prohibition and legendary winemaker André Tchelistcheff arrived in 1938; John Daniel Jr. inherited Inglenook in 1939; Stony Hill's first harvest was 1952; Joe Heitz purchased his vineyard in 1961; and Robert Mondavi winery opened in 1966.

The 1976 Paris Tasting was a pivotal endorsement and Napa Valley gained American Viticultural Area status in 1981. In the following years, Napa Valley grew steadily, firmly establishing itself as one of the world's leading wine regions.

