



Geography of Israeli Vineyards

Climate and soil

For a small country, Israel has a unique and complex variety of climatic and geomorphological zones. Latitudinal, longitudinal, and in mountainous regions, altitudinal differentiation of the climate, along with different hypsometric levels, and a variety of parent rock types, lead to the identification of several distinct areas. Most of the country lies within the subtropical zone. In the northern and central parts of Israel, the subtropical climate is characterized by a classic Mediterranean type of precipitation with their predominance in winter. At the same time, the southern part is arid with a narrow semi-arid strip between them. Completely different soils have formed here, from Terra Rossa, Rendzina, and basaltic soils in the subhumid mountains of the north to desert soils in the south arid lands. Most of them are unsuitable for agriculture.

Most popular grape variations

The country produces unique and high-quality wines from almost all known and world- recognized varieties, growing in different regions of the country, as well as blends from them. Among the red varieties, the most common are Bordeaux (Cab Sauv, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Cab Franc), and Mediterranean (Shiraz/Syrah, Carignan, Mourvedre, Grenashe, also Carignan, Petit Syrah). Less common varieties are Barbera, Nebiolo, Pinotage, Turiga National, Tempranilo. The local red varieties are Argamon, and ancient revived autochthonous varieties, including Bitunni, which is already used to produce wines. Among the white varieties, Chardonnay, Colombard, Sauv Blanc, Gewurztraminer are the most common. To a lesser extent Viognier, Chenin Blanc, Muscat, Riesling, Roussane, Semillion. The revived autochthonous varieties are Maravi, Jundali, and Dabuki.

Golan Heights

Upper Golan

Vineyard altitudes of 800-1100m on the foothills of a Quaternary basaltic plateau with extinct volcanic cones. Humid and subhumid. Predominantly basaltic Mediteranian soils with a high tuff content. The highest altitude vineyards. Acclaimed for its reds Cab Sauv, Merlot, Syrah; and whites Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Noir, Riesling Jochanesburg, Sauv Blanc.

- 1 - Volcanic plateaus

Lower Golan

Vineyard altitudes about 400 -700m on Plio - Pleistocene basaltic cover. Semi-arid. Deep clay soils of volcanic origin. Known for reds Merlot, Malbec, Pinotage; whites Gewurztraminer, Muscat Canelli, Muscat of Alexandria.

- 2 - Flat basaltic plateau

Mountains region

Subhumid with altitude correction

Upper Galilee West

Karstic hilly upland. Vineyard altitudes about 500-720m with a mosaic of rocky Terra Rossa and rendzina, and local alluvial soils. Known for reds Cab Sauv, Petit Verdot, Syrah, Cab Franc; whites Sauv Blanc, Riesling Jochanesburg.

- 3 - Shomera Plateau
- 4 - Tefen Plateau
- 5 - Kaziv basin

Upper Galilee East

Vineyard altitudes of 600 - 850m on elevated carbonate plateaus with a locally basaltic cover (Dalton, Admon, Alma, Yaron). Combinations of Terra Rossa, rendzina, and basaltic soils. Best known for reds Cab Sauv, Malbec, Syrah/Shiraz, Petit Verdot, Barbera, indogenous Argamon; whites Chardonnay, Sauv Blanc, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris.

- 6 - Mount Godrim
- 7 - Mount Meron foothills
- 8 - Upper Amud
- 9 - Upper Galilee Carbonate plateaus
- 10 - Middle Dishon
- 11 - Karstic valleys
- 12 - Naftali Ridge

Lower Galilee

Basaltic plateaus and carbonate hills. Subhumid and Semi-arid. Vineyard altitudes about 200 - 300m, with combinations of Terra Rossa, rendzina and basaltic soils. Acclaimed for its whites Sauv Blanc, Chenin Blanc, Barbera; reds Cab Sauv, Argamon, Marsellane, Syrah.

- 13 - Zippori valley
- 14 - Mount Tavor
- 15 - Sirin Plateau

Central highlands

Northern spurs of the Samarian Hills.

Vineyard altitudes of 30-150m in the valleys of Alona, Shfeya, and Dallya. Combinations of Terra Rossa and rendzina, and alluvial soils with basaltic fragments. Best known for reds Carignan, Shiraz, Merlot, Argamon; whites Chardonnay, Colombard, Sauv Blanc, autochthonous Dabuki. Gilboa plateau vineyards at altitudes about 300-500m with rocky Terra Rossa soils. Known for reds Petit Syrah, Marsellane, Shiraz; whites Chardonnay, Muscat Canelli, Sauv Blanc.

- 16 - Lower Carmel valley
- 17 - Gilboa Plateau

Samarian Hills

Vineyard altitudes about 400 - 800m on elevated plateaus and slopes. Combinations of Terra Rossa and rendzina soils. Best known for reds Merlot, Cab Sauv, Shiraz, Barbera; whites Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Pinot Noir.

- 18 - Levelled uplands
- 19 - Shillo valley

Judean mountains

Beit-El Highlands

Vineyard altitudes of 800-910m on terraced slopes and in small valleys. Rocky Terra Rossa soils. Known for reds Cab Sauv, Merlot, Malbec, Marsellan, whites Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer.

- 20 - Beit El Plateau
- 21 - South Atic terrace

Jerusalem mountans

Vineyard altitudes about 500-950m on terraced slopes and karstic plateaus, with a mosaic of Terra Rossa and rendzina soils. Acclaimed for reds Bordeaux, Syrah, Petit Syrah; whites Chardonnay, Sauv Blanc, Colombard, autochthonous Maravi.

Upper basins:

- 22 - Ayalon
- 23 - Soreq
- 24 - Ella

Hebron Highlands

Vineyard altitudes about 650- 900m, with a mosaic of Terra Rossa and rendzina soils. Best known for reds Bordeaux, Mourvedre, whites Chardonnay, Sauv Blanc, Muscat of Alexandria, Colombard. In the very south of the region (Anim valley) vineyards are scattered in the center of the largest forested area.

- 25 - Hebron plateau
- 26 - Yata valley
- 27 - Anim valley

Shfela

Broad topographic step between the slopes of the Jerusalem mountains and the Coastal plain. Vineyard altitudes of 150- 400m on slopes and terraced floodplains. Predominantly semi - arid. Soils are a combinations of Terra Rossa, rendzina, and alluvial. Acclaimed for its reds Merlot, Cab Sauv, Petit Syrah; whites Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc, Riesling, Colombard. Low limestone hills of the Guvrin valley (30- 60m) are known for its reds Bordeaux and Pinotage.

Creek Valleys

- 28 - Ayalon
- 29 - Soreq
- 30 - Ella
- 31 - Guvrin
- 32 - Yuval

Coastal plain

Kurkar ridges (cemented carbonate sandstone of eolian origin) and slopes, floodpain terraces. Generally hot and humid.

Sharon

Vineyard altitudes between 20- 130m with mosaic of Sandy soils, Rendzina and well drained alluvial. Best Known for reds Carignan, Petit syrah, Syrah; whites Colombard, Sauv Blanc, Chardonnay, Muscat Alexander

- 33 - Northern Hills
- 34 - Yarkon valley

Judean coastal Plain

Vineyard altitudes of 40 - 90m on flat surfaces and gentle slopes, with a mosaic of loessial dark brown and alluvial soils. Best known for reds Pinotage, Cab Sauv, Syrah; whites Muscat Alexander, Chardonnay, Sauv Blanc.

Lower Basins:

- 35 - Ayalon
- 36 - Soreq
- 37 - Lachish

Negev coastal Plain

Vineyards altitudes of 90-200m in small valleys and on footslopes, with loessial dark brown and alluvial soils. Known for reds Cab Sauv, Shiraz, Petit Syrah, Merlot, Malbek; whites Semillion, Pinot Gris.

- 38 - Northern Gerar
- 39 - Besor plain

Northern Negev plateau

Semi- arid, vineyard altitudes of 200- 350m on plateaus and small creek floodplains, with loessial sierozems and alluvial soils. Known for reds Merlot, Barbera, Marsellan; whites Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Muscat of Alexandria. Terraced vineyards at altitudes of 200 – 300m on the ancient Agur – Nitzana dunes, arid steppe climate, with loessial gravel and sandy soils; irrigation with desalinated seawater.

- 40 - Be'er Sheva Valley
- 41 - Agur- Nitzana dunes

Northern Negev mountains

Vineyard altitudes around 500m on gentle and moderate slopes, with shallow loessial sierozems. Best known for whites Chenin Blanc, Muscat Alexander, Chardonnay; reds Malbec, Petit Syrah, Shiraz.

- 42 - ShuaLEM Valley
- 43 - Boker Valley

Negev highlands

Arid desert climate. Vineyard altitudes of 500- 800m on small plains between mountain ranges (alluvial fans), with loessial sierozems. Best known for whites Chenin Blanc, Semillion, Chardonnay, Colombard; reds Cab Sauv, Merlot, Syrah.

- 44 - Avdat Plateau
- 45 - Upper Zin

Southern Negev

Extremely arid. Vineyard altitudes around 400m- 420m, with loessial sierozems on alluvial fans. Known for reds Shiraz, Cab Franc; whites Muscat Canelli, Sauv Blanc. The southernmost vineyard in the country and in the entire Northern Hemisphere. The soil and desert climate make it possible to produce unique wines that differ from those of other country regions.

- 46 - Ktura Valley