

## About the Ningxia Wine Region

Ningxia is one of eight major wine regions in China, and is probably more suited to winegrowing than some of the other regions primarily due to its terroir. It is located in the centre of China, and the vineyards are situated at the foot of the Helan Mountains at an elevation of 1200 meters (3600 feet). The highest peak is 3556 meters. The vineyard soil is alluvial, washed down from the mountains to the foothills and plains. It consists of sand, schist, and small pebbles.

### Major Wine Producing Regions in China



The climate is Continental, but dry with very little humidity compared to other Chinese wine growing regions. It is hot in the summer with average temperatures of 29 C during the day, but cooling down at night to 17 C, which helps to preserve grape flavours. Winters are cold (2 C daily average and -10C at night) with some snow, so the vines must be buried, which is a very labour intensive process. Water is abundant with the Yellow (Yangtze) River running through the area and many lakes, so irrigation is not an issue.

The first vineyards were planted in the 1970's, so it is a relatively new area. In 2014 there were 39,300 hectares planted, with cabernet sauvignon being the most widely planted red grape, followed by merlot and cabernet franc. In terms of white varieties, Muscat is most predominant followed by Riesling.

In late 2016 Ningxia was reported as having 100 operational wineries with 80 under construction and a further 50 at planning stage.

#### References

Dr Liz Thach MW, Wine Business.com, 2012

Wikipedia