

ONTARIO WINE
APPELLATION AUTHORITY



Ontario's wine
APPELLATIONS



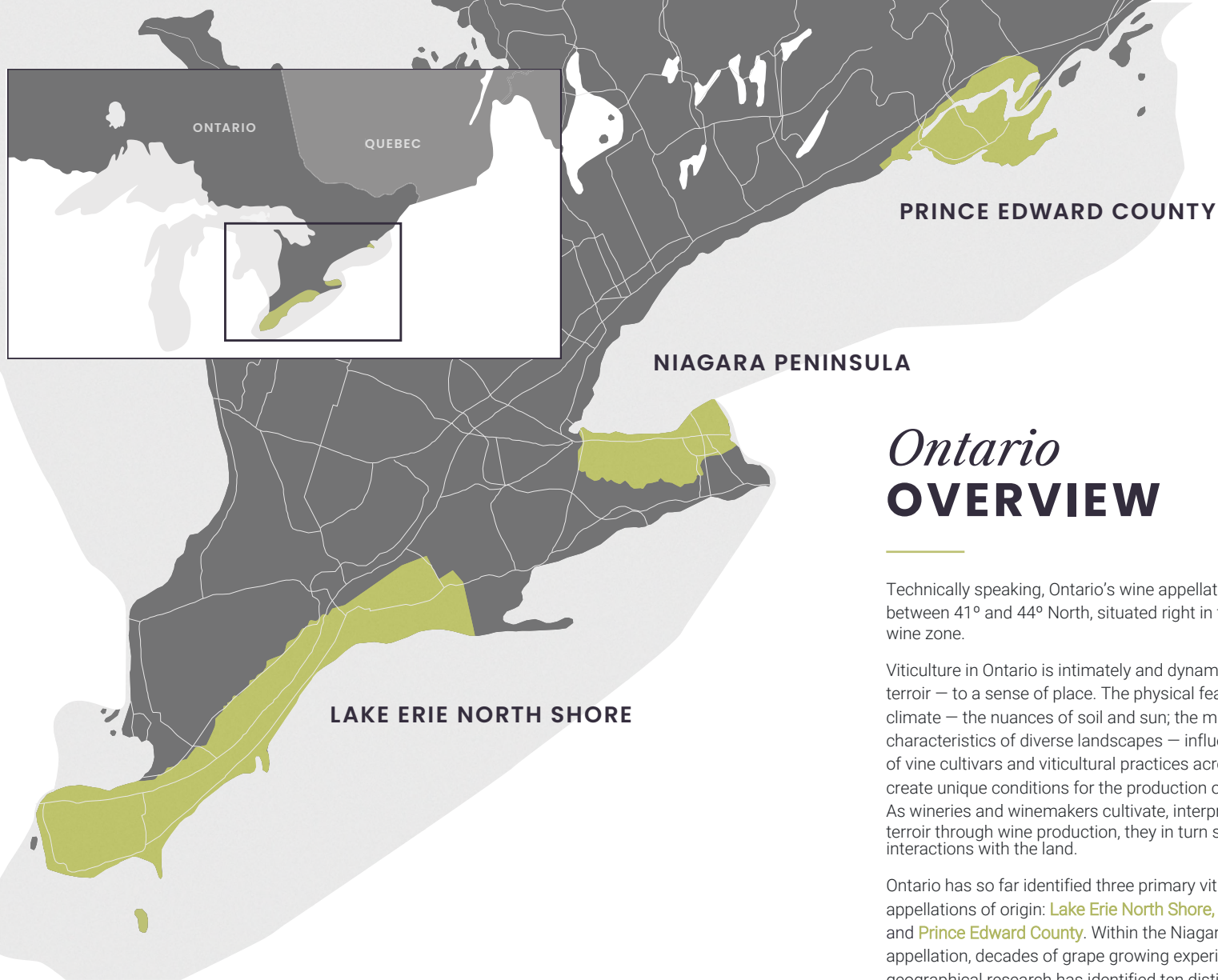
NOTE

Production statistics are based on the year April 1 2024 to March 31 2025. Statistics are updated annually on our website at www.vqaontario.ca.

Annual Production by geographical area includes VQA-certified wines that carry an appellation included in that geographical area. For example, Niagara Escarpment includes all wines that carry the following appellations: Niagara Escarpment, Beamsville Bench, Twenty Mile Bench, Short Hills Bench, St. David's Bench.

Common Varietals listed are the top varieties across all production (single varietals and blends) for each appellation.

For more information please email us at info@vqaontario.ca



NOTABLE FEATURES

Stretching along the centre of the world's cool-climate wine belt, Ontario appellations share similar growing season characteristics with some of the most recognized and respected wine-growing regions of the world.

Ontario OVERVIEW

Technically speaking, Ontario's wine appellations are located between 41° and 44° North, situated right in the world's fine wine zone.

Viticulture in Ontario is intimately and dynamically related to terroir — to a sense of place. The physical features of land and climate — the nuances of soil and sun; the minerality and taste characteristics of diverse landscapes — influence the choice of vine cultivars and viticultural practices across Ontario and create unique conditions for the production of grapes and wine. As wineries and winemakers cultivate, interpret and elaborate terroir through wine production, they in turn shape our tastes and interactions with the land.

Ontario has so far identified three primary viticultural areas or appellations of origin: **Lake Erie North Shore**, **Niagara Peninsula**, and **Prince Edward County**. Within the Niagara Peninsula appellation, decades of grape growing experience and extensive geographical research has identified ten distinct growing areas. These sub- appellations include areas on the plains close to Lake Ontario and the benchlands of the Niagara Escarpment.

ANNUAL PRODUCTION (2024-2025):
3,123,379 (9L cases)

NUMBER OF WINERIES: 194

NUMBER OF VQA WINES: 2,290

USA

LAKE ERIE NORTH SHORE

LAKE ERIE

USA

NOTABLE FEATURES

Plantings in Lake Erie North Shore are well developed close to the Lake Erie shoreline, where topographic and climatic conditions are particularly favourable and support full and balanced ripening of grapes.

STATISTICS

Growing degree days (avg.): 1515

Frost free days: 200 (-2°)

July mean temperature: 22°

Grow season: April to October

Precipitation: 544mm (grow season)

Common varietals: Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc

Production (2025-26): 11,636 (9L cases)

Number of approved wines: 49

Number of wineries: 16



USA

LAKE ERIE
NORTH SHORE

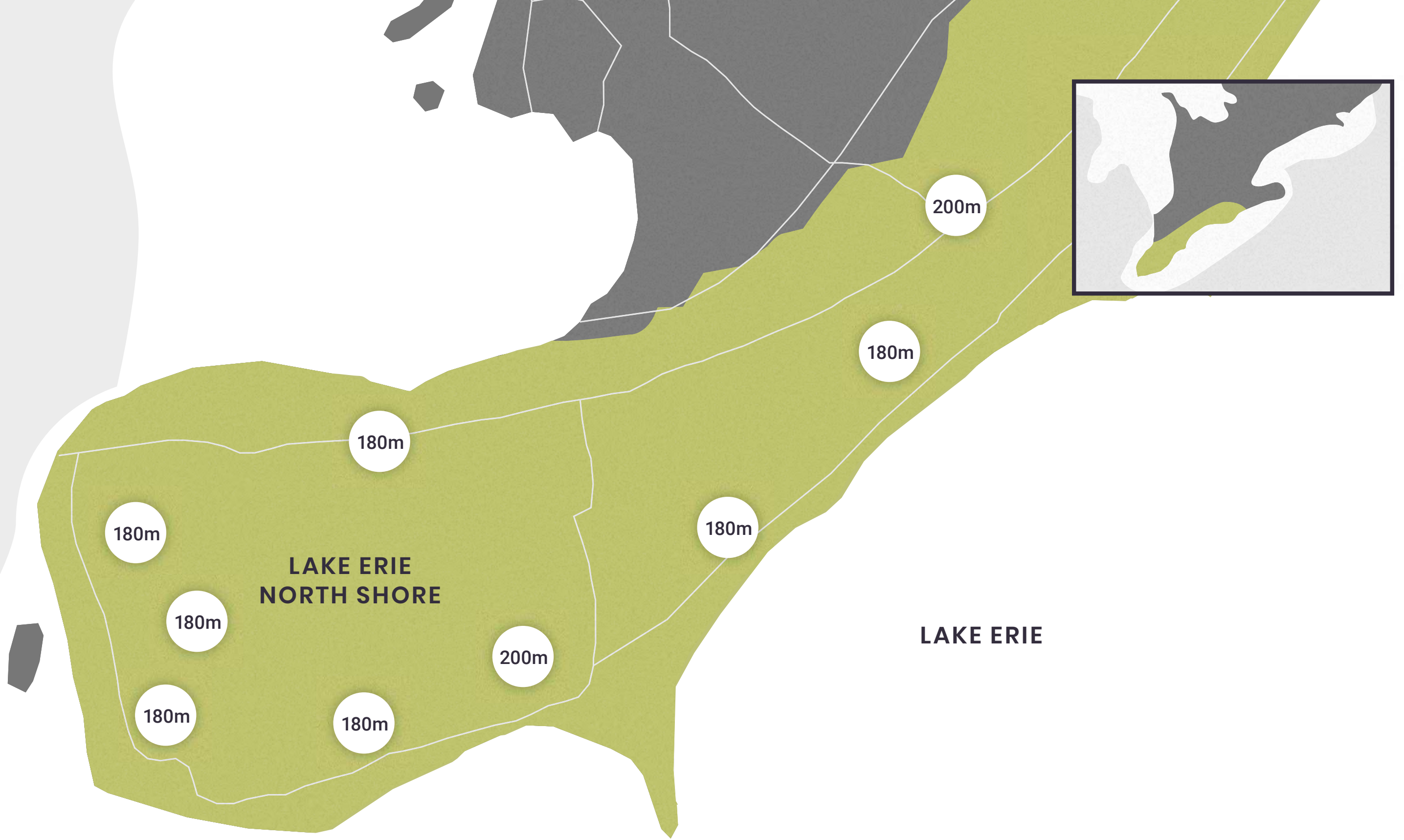
LAKE ERIE

COMMON PROPERTIES OF SOIL MAP GROUPS

 Lacustrine silty clay	 Reddish-hued lacustrine Heavy clay	 Lacustrine silt loam	 Sandy or loamy sediments over lacustrine clays or loams	 Eolian sands, sometimes duned	 Variable alluvial deposit on floodplains	 Organic soils	 Misc. Natural land units
 Lacustrine heavy clay	 Clay loam till	 Lacustrine silty clay over clay loam till	 Lacustrine very fine sandy loam, loamy sand & sand	 Reddish-hued coarse sandy loam, loamy & gravelly sand	 Shallow soils over dolostone bedrock	 Reddish-hued silty clay over queenston shale bedrock	 Misc. Man-modified land units



USA



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APPELLATION AUTHORITY



VQA is the starting point for every authentic wine of origin and quality in Ontario. The Ontario Wine Appellation Authority is the regulatory agency responsible for the integrity of local wine appellations, enforcing wine composition and labelling standards, and ensuring consumers have the information they need to make an informed choice when buying VQA certified wines.

Ontario Wine Appellation Authority

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VQAONTARIO.CA