



STEEP HILLSIDES... RIPPING WINDS... OUTLAWS AND GHOSTS...

Climbing up from the northern border of Dry Creek Valley, Rockpile Appellation's dramatic nature unfolds. Pritchett Peaks loom in the distance, hinting at their role in Rockpile's geologic evolution. A colorful history of hermits, homesteaders and rugged ranch life set the stage for a new generation of winegrape growers looking to push the paradigm of ultra-premium hillside fruit.



Tennessee Bishop's daughters on Rockpile Road

Rockpile wines have a depth and complexity unlike anywhere in the world.

Rockpile

web rev. 6/15



WINERIES FEATURING ROCKPILE APPELLATION

Although there are no wineries to visit in our AVA, we welcome your inquiries and can point you in the direction of many outstanding and award-winning Rockpile wines, including from

BEEKEEPER
BELLA
BLACK STALLION WINERY
BRANHAM WINES
BRULIAM WINES
CAROL SHELTON
DAVENPORT WINES
JC CELLARS

MAURITSON WINES
MERRIAM
PARADISE RIDGE WINERY
ROBERT BIALE VINEYARDS
ROCK WALL WINES
SEGHESSIO FAMILY VINEYARDS
ST. FRANCIS
STRYKER SONOMA WINERY



THE PAVED ROAD DROPS AWAY TO GRAVEL,
REVEALING THE STORIES OF OUTLAW
HIDE-OUTS, WILD BOAR AND
HIGH ELEVATION ROCKPILE WINES.

Rockpile

SONOMA COUNTY'S MOST RUGGED
AND SPECTACULAR APPELLATION



WWW.ROCKPILEAPPELLATION.COM
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THE ROCKPILE GRAPE GROWERS ASSOCIATION
WWW.ROCKPILEAPPELLATION.COM



"...one of the finest Zinfandel sites in Northern California..."

Robert Parker

A UNIQUE combination of geologic and climatic forces in the Rockpile region has created an unparalleled environment for wine grapes — notable for keeping vines in a constant state of tension. Factors include high elevation, full sun exposure yet moderate daytime temperatures, very little water retention in the soil, and virtually no air moisture. Rockpile harvests are characterized by clusters of smaller-berried, more intense fruit.

The Rockpile ridgeline runs northwest toward the Pacific Ocean, giving the vineyards a variety of exposures, predominantly northeast and southwest. The southwestern slopes have the benefit of full sun, whereas the northeastern exposures result in a more indirect angle in the afternoon. Rockpile vineyards must be at a minimum elevation of 800 feet — more than 95 percent are over 1,000 feet. Low topsoil depths vary from 12"–24" and include areas of small rock and gravel with many outcroppings of larger rock.

Rockpile is anchored by Lake Sonoma. This large body of water creates an inversion layer, sucking the fog down to the surface, limiting the fog exposure to the appellation and decreasing moisture on the vines.

Because of its ridgetop elevation, Rockpile AVA receives the full force of coastal breezes — with daily average gusts of 10-15 mph — further drying out the soil. The lack of moisture is a benefit though, creating small berries, loose bunches, little or no bunch rot and high quality fruit.



SONOMA COUNTY'S MOST RUGGED AND SPECTACULAR APPELLATION

ROCKPILE AVA FACTS

Total Acreage: 15,000; 160 planted to vineyards

Elevation: 800' minimum to nearly 2100'

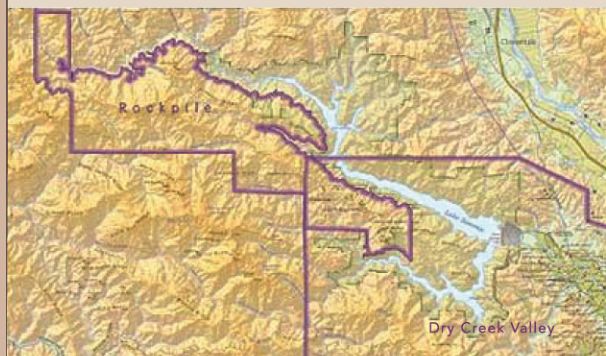
Average Temperature: 10-15° cooler than Dry Creek Valley

Average rainfall: 50-73"

Wind Influence: Constant breezes of 3-5 mph; more commonly, the onshore flow feeds the area with sustained gusts of 10-15 mph.

Soil composition: Generally loam to clay loam with a red brown color due to the higher oxidation. It is only 12 to 24 inches deep in the best of viticultural locations.

Varietals grown: Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Petite Verdot, and several heritage porto varieties.



TIMELINE AT-A-GLANCE

2002: Rockpile AVA is established.

1992: Rod and Cathy Park plant the first modern-era vineyard.

1986: Actors from TV's Bonanza purchase defunct Ornbaum sheep ranch and lose it to bankruptcy within the year.

1960's: Lake Sonoma Reservoir fills the lower Rockpile valleys, leaving only the soil-poor ridgetops and, serendipitously, providing a perfect climate modulator.

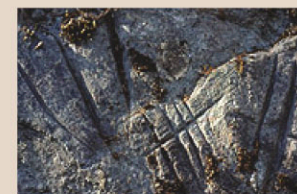
Early 1900's: SF lawyer Cap Ornbaum acquires much of the region and develops one of Sonoma County's largest sheep ranches.

1884: S.P. Hallengren, Mauritsen ancestor, plants vines in Rockpile and ships the wine to his Swedish homeland.

1880: Outlaw Jackson Bishop, connected to Jesse James and Quantrill's Raiders, hides out on his brother's Rockpile Ranch until Tennessee Bishop decides to run for Sheriff.

1865: Rockpile Ranch est. by Tennessee Carter Bishop.

pre-1850: Pomo tribe calls the region 'kabe-chana,' meaning place with many rocks.



LEARN MORE AT WWW.ROCKPILEAPPELLATION.COM