

# SLOVENIJA AND IT'S WINE



DISCOVER THE DIVERSE WINE  
REGIONS AND TERROIRS OF  
SLOVENIA AND LEARN ABOUT  
OUR GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND  
CULTURE ON THE WAY!

**Geography:** from the Alps (North) to Mediterranean (South) and from Pannonia (East) to North Italian plains (West), our country is geographically extremely diverse and so are its wine regions, areas and terroirs. They are defined based on climatic, geological and other geographic features as well as cultural and historical reasons.

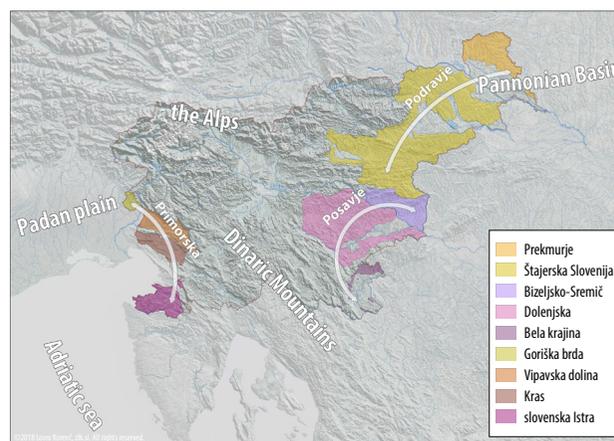
*Slovenija has around 22 000 Ha of vineyards and about 28 000 registered wineries, leaving each with less than 1 Ha of vineyard on average.*

**The 3 Wine Regions or countries** (*Vinorodne dežele*) are named after hydrological features:

**Podravje** (wider area around *Drava river*) the largest of the regions, 2 distinct areas, where Pannonian plains end and hills start to grow into mountains, continental climate with hot summers and cool winters, many smaller subareas and excellent terroirs, traditionally producing white wines.

**Posavje** (Lower *Sava river* valley) valleys around Sava river contain 3 distinct areas that cover steep slopes around rivers and streams, continental climate influenced by warm and wet south winds, when they manage to pass the high Dinaric mountain range, many traditional varieties of wines and endemic varieties of vines.

**Primorska** (*Littoral*) region - 4 distinct areas stretching from Adriatic coastline to the alpine Soča river valley, Mediterranean climate, influenced by cool winds from the Alps and Dinaric mountain range, this region has the most established labels and wine varieties, most known wine makers including pioneers of bio-dynamics.



The first archaeological evidence of using *vitis vinifera* fruit comes from Neolithic settlements in Ljubljana marshes, on a site of prehistoric pile dwelling, 5000 years old grape seeds were discovered. Ancient literary sources tell us that while most of Europe was introduced to wine by the Romans, people here mastered the craft when Rome was still just a couple of hilltop villages.

Traditionally, small, family owned wineries were cultivating small vineyards and making wine for personal consumption or extra income. Through history there were bigger centers of production, owned or run by monasteries, feudal lords and in 20th century, state run co-operatives. Today the family owned wineries are again in focus, their authenticity, connection with environment and innovation mixed with tradition is a base for unique wine experience. For people who want to learn more about not only our wine, but our land and culture as well.

The regions are further divided into **9 distinct Wine Areas** (*Vinorodni okoliši*):

**Prekmurje**, the easternmost slovenian wine area, where vineyards lay on the slopes of small hill ranges (*Prekmurske gorice, Goričko*) rising from Pannonian plains. Its climate allows for late harvesting and with that some, excellent products. Statistically, this area has the most sunny days in Slovenia.

**Štajerska Slovenija**, the largest of the areas has 6 more sub-areas. Many centers of production, the anthropogenic landscape around them is evidence of long traditions of vine cultivation. Here you can find a wide variety of varietal white wines (Riesling, Sauvignon, Chardonnay, *Šipon*) and traditional cuvees. Today international white varieties are prevailing, while in the past there were wider varieties of local vines planted. Recent DNA analysis showed that two international varieties of red grape, *Modra Frankinja* (Blafränkisch) and *Portugalka* (Blauer Portugieser), with a high likelihood, originate from the territory of nowadays *Stajerska Slovenija*.

**Bizeljsko-Sremič**, just north of Sava river, steep hills of Bizeljsko are not suited for large scale agriculture, luckily vines here produce grapes with great balance of sugars and acids, the skillful winemakers later shape them into masterpieces. They are also known for producing excellent sparkling wines.

**Dolenjska**, the main area of Posavje region, with its specialty *Čviček*, has also one of more pristine wine cultures in *Zidanice's*, a typical architectural feature - modest building on the outskirts of the vineyard, usually with a wine cellar, a place for tools and equipment (wine press), and a room used for living during seasonal works in the vineyard or the cellar.

**Bela krajina**, from Gorjanci hill range westwards into Kolpa river valley, the terroirs here have many different micro climates due to its topography, leading to very diverse wines produced. As in whole Posavje region, here, there are still traditional and endemic varieties of vines planted in most vineyards. Today wine makers try to lift the long degraded varieties of grapes, improving their refining techniques with a combination of traditional and modern knowledge.

**Goriška Brda**, with Friuli plains and Adriatic sea in the S and Alps in the N, its landscape cut by rivers and streams is a perfect environment for vine growing. Home of our most established labels internationally, the ones that paved the way for slovenian wines on the world stage in modern times. With endemic *Rebula* as the champion today, the preferred varieties in previous decades were Chardonnay, Cabernet sauvignon and Merlot.

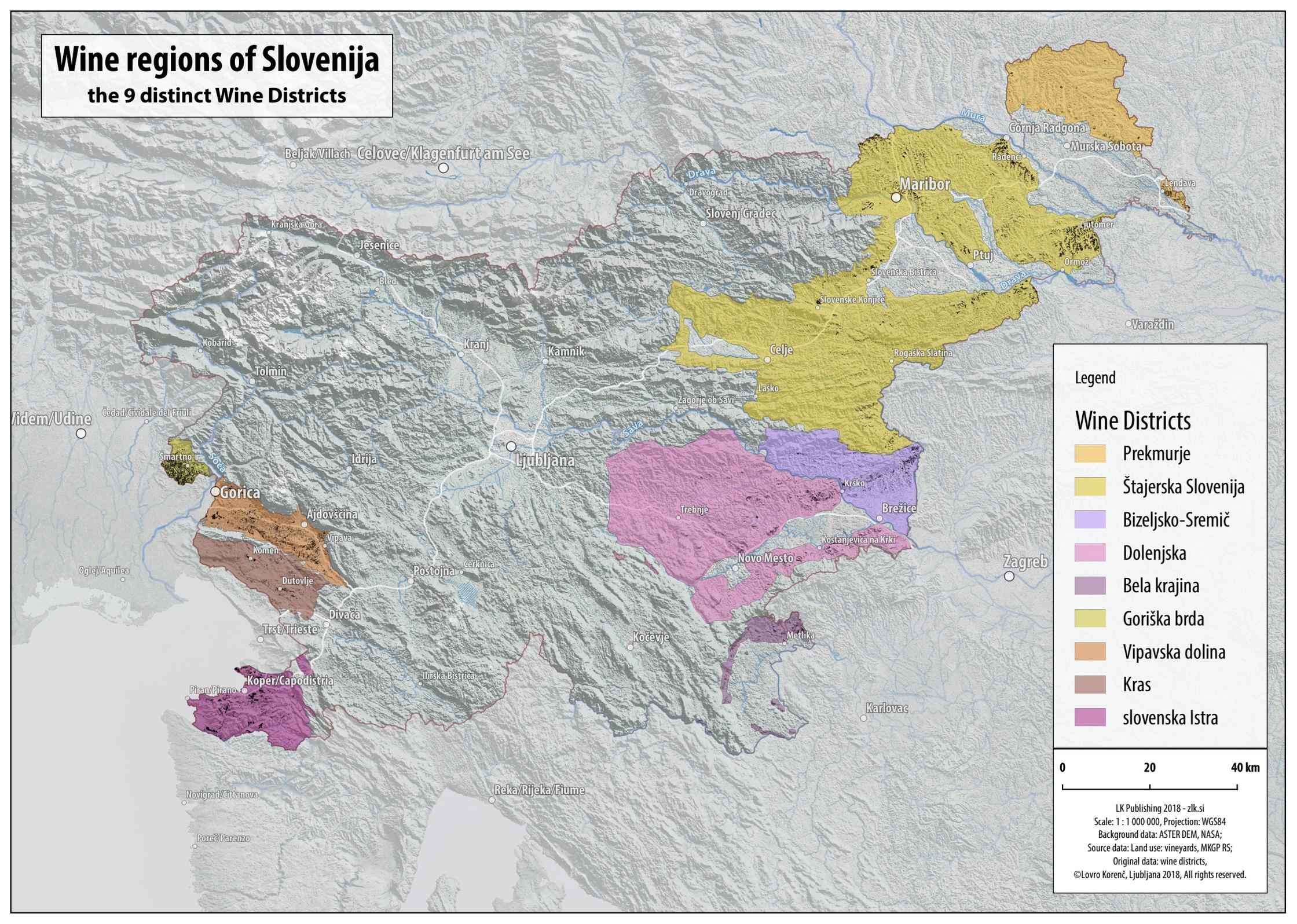
**Vipavska dolina** a narrow river valley between two plateaus influenced by warm and humid winds from SW and strong cold winds from the forested Dinaric mountains in the N. Slopes of this hills are home the the most interesting varieties of endemic vines, *Pinela, Zelen* and *Klarnica* are dry white varieties, with unique aromas, best when left with a little skin contact and not matured.

**Kras** (native Karst) is an area with harsh conditions for agriculture, wines produced here have a special character. The biggest of slovenian reds – *Teran*, is made from *Refošk* (Refoško) vines planted on a *terrarosa* soil that give it its richness and tenderness while the harsh climate gives it its strength.

**Slovenska Istra** is the part of Istrian peninsula on Slovenian territory. Mediterranean climate influenced by high Dinaric mountains in the east. Long established as a wine region, it has red *Refošk* (Refoško) and white *Malvazija* varieties as its trademark. Around the city of Koper the vineyards are planted to the seaside level, while some of the best terroirs are also on the steep hills above it.

# Wine regions of Slovenija

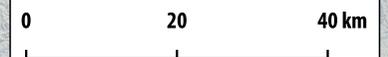
## the 9 distinct Wine Districts



### Legend

### Wine Districts

- Prekmurje
- Štajerska Slovenija
- Bizeljsko-Sremič
- Dolenjska
- Bela krajina
- Goriška brda
- Vipavska dolina
- Kras
- slovenska Istra



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 Scale: 1 : 1 000 000, Projection: WGS84  
 Background data: ASTER DEM, NASA;  
 Source data: Land use: vineyards, MKGP RS;  
 Original data: wine districts,  
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