



Appellation Overview

Island breezes, warm summers, early harvest

Pelee Island, a small island of approximately 10 000 acres, is Canada's most southerly point at a latitude of N41°45' and Canada's smallest viticulture area. Situated in Lake Erie about 20 kilometres off the shoreline, Pelee Island enjoys the longest growing season of all appellations in Ontario.

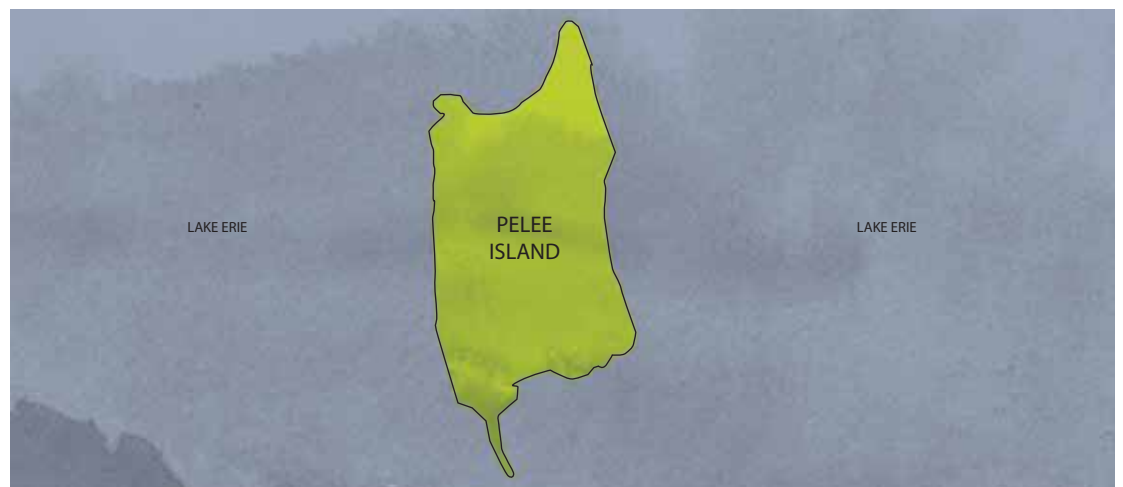
Warm breezes off of Lake Erie moderate summer and fall temperatures, and harvest usually begins two to three weeks earlier than in the other appellations – often in August. The long, warm growing season favours some varietals that are unusual for Ontario, including Tempranillo. These unique conditions have ensured a long history of successful wine grape growing on the Island.

NOTABLE FEATURES

Pelee Island is the site of Canada's first commercial winery, VinVilla, which began operations in 1866. A hundred years later, its vineyards of native grapes were replanted with premium *Vitis Vinifera* vines.

STATISTICS

GROWING DEGREE DAYS (AVG.): **1592**
 FROST FREE DAYS: **195 (-2°C)**
 JULY MEAN TEMPERATURE: **23.2°**
 GROWING SEASON: **April to October**
 PRECIPITATION: **568mm (grow season)**
 COMMON VARIETALS: **Chardonnay, Pinot Noir**
 PRODUCTION (2011 REPORTING YEAR): **N/A (9L cases)**
 NUMBER OF APPROVED WINES: **N/A**
 NUMBER OF WINERIES: **1**



Terroir Overview

Soil Characteristics

This appellation has a soil make up very similar to the mainland in southwestern Ontario, with sandy loam and clay over a limestone bedrock. The soils here have only moderate drainage due to the underlying bedrock but dry out later in the season as dry conditions often prevail later in the season. The majority of vineyards are planted on the southwestern corner and centre of the island, where the soils are the deepest and allow for root systems to properly set. Careful stewardship of the soils, with the help of drainage canals and protective dykes, have made for a productive experience with viticulture.

Topography

The topography of the Pelee Island appellation is simple but ideal for ensuring even sun exposure and ripening. The island is flat with its highest point at only 12 meters above the lake and an elevation of about 174 meters above sea level.

Climate

Pelee Island has been characterized as humid continental, with warm summers and cool winters. As the shallowest of the Great Lakes, Lake Erie warms quickly and has the warmest surface temperature of the five lakes. This warms the Island during the spring, summer and fall, and produces a longer growing season than any other wine appellation in Canada, often thirty days more than on the mainland. This makes Pelee Island Ontario's best location for long season, late ripening grapes.

