



Lavaux, Vineyard Terraces

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UNESCO - Statement of Outstanding Universal Value



The Lavaux Vineyard Terraces, stretching for about 30 km along the south-facing northern shores of Lake Geneva from the Chateau de Chillon to the eastern outskirts of Lausanne in the Vaud region, cover the lower slopes of the mountainside between the villages and the lake. Although there is some evidence that vines were grown in the area in Roman times, the present vine terraces can be traced back to the 11th century, when Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries controlled the area. It is an outstanding example of a centuries-long interaction between people and their environment, developed to optimize local resources so as to produce a highly valued wine that has always been important to the economy.

Brief synthesis

The Lavaux vineyard landscape is a thriving cultural landscape that demonstrates in a highly visible way its evolution and development over almost a millennia, through the well preserved landscape and buildings, and also the continuation and adaptation of longstanding cultural traditions, specific to its locality. It also illustrates very graphically the story of patronage, control and protection of this highly valued wine growing area, all of which contributed substantially to the development of Lausanne and its Region and played a significant role in the history of the geo-cultural region; and, has prompted, in response to its vulnerability next to fast-growing settlements, exceptional popular protection.

Criterion (iii): The Lavaux vineyard landscape demonstrates in a highly visible way its evolution and development over almost a millennium, through the well preserved landscape and buildings that demonstrate a continuation and evolution of longstanding cultural traditions, specific to its locality.

Criterion (iv): The evolution of the Lavaux vineyard landscape, as evidenced on the ground, illustrates very graphically the story of patronage, control and protection of this highly valued wine growing area, all of which contributed substantially to the development of Lausanne and its Region and played a significant role in the history of the geo-cultural region.

Criterion (v): The Lavaux vineyard landscape is an outstanding example that displays centuries of interaction between people and their environment in a very specific and productive way, optimising the local resources to produce a highly valued wine that was a significant part of the local economy. Its vulnerability in the face of fast-growing urban settlements has prompted protection measures strongly supported by local communities.

Integrity and Authenticity

The nominated boundaries include all the elements of the wine growing process, and the extent of the traditional wine growing area since at least the 12th century. The terraces are in continuous use and well maintained. They have evolved over several centuries to their present form; there is now agreement that change needs to be tempered by respect for local traditions.

Protection and management requirements

Strong protection has evolved as a reaction to the creeping urbanization from the growing towns of Lausanne to the west and the Vevey-Montreux conurbation to the east. This Protection is provided by: the Federal Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire (LAT), the Inventaire fédéral des paysages, sites et monuments naturels (IFP) resulting from the LAT, its Inventaire fédéral des sites construits (ISOS), the cantonal Loi sur le plan de protection de Lavaux (LPPL), the cantonal Inventaire des monuments naturels et des sites (IMNS), and the cantonal land-use plan (Plan général d'affectation - PGA) and its building regulations (RPGA). A buffer zone has been established. The state of conservation of the villages, individual buildings, roads and footpaths, and vineyard plots within the nominated area is high. A Management Plan has been approved for the property. It provides an analysis of socio-economic data, and a series of management strategies for research and culture, economy, land-use planning and tourism.

(source : <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1243/>)