

# 'Elvira'



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**Pedigree:** 'Taylor' (*V. riparia* x *V. labrusca* hybrid) x 'Martha' (1, 6).

**Origin:** According to Hedrick et al. (5), Jacob Rommel of Morrison, Missouri propagated 'Elvira' from seeds of 'Taylor', which some say were pollinated by 'Martha'. It was first planted in 1863 and fruited for the first time in 1869.

**Introduction:** 1874 by Bush and Son and Meissner; and placed on the grape list of the American Pomological Society fruit catalog in 1881 (5).

**Type:** Interspecific hybrid (including *V. riparia*; *V. labrusca*; *V. vinifera*) (1, 6).

**Color:** White

**Berry:** Hedrick et al. (5), describe the berry as medium sized; roundish to slightly oblate; and often misshapen on account of compactness. They add that the thin skin adheres slightly to the pulp, contains no pigment and is slightly astringent. The skin is vulnerable to cracking at harvest time.

**Cluster:** Small to medium; cylindrical, usually single shouldered and compact (5).

**Viticultural Characteristics:** Very vigorous, with a semi-procumbent growth habit (3). The vine produces very heavy crops (5) and if young vines are allowed to overbear in their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year, severe injury can occur (1). Cluster thinning is required (3).

**Disease/Pests:** 'Elvira' is rated as highly susceptible to Botrytis bunch rot; moderately susceptible to crown gall, downy mildew and powdery mildew; and slightly susceptible to black rot, Eutypa dieback and Phomopsis cane and leaf spot (2, 3, 7). It is not sensitive to injuries from sulfur but is moderately sensitive to injuries from copper when applied under cool, slow drying conditions (2, 3).

**Wine Quality and Characteristics:** Hedrick et al. (5) describe the wines as light (containing comparatively little alcohol) and somewhat foxy. They noted that the wines do improve with age and are well suited to blending with more highly flavored wines. Reisch et al. (7) comment that as grapes are usually harvested before maturity (due to cracking), and the must is typically high in acidity.

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Bradt et al. (1), report that when grapes are fully mature, wine is interesting with practically no *labrusca* present.

**Season:** Late Midseason (3).

**Cold Hardiness:** Very hardy (20°F) (5, 7).

**Use:** Juice and bulk wine production.

**Notes:** The Ontario Horticultural Research Institute in Ontario released an 'Elvira' offspring named 'Ventura' in 1974, which upgraded the older cultivar in its resistance to fruit cracking (4).

## Literature Cited

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