

# Trellis Systems: Support structures for the vine framework required for a given training system.

Training systems vary considerably around the world. Grapevines are truly “vines” and not self-supporting like a tree. Man has devised innumerable training systems for vines over the centuries. There is often confusion between the terms Training Systems, Trellis Systems, and Pruning. In fact, all three are distinct, yet closely related.

- ✦ **Trellis System:** A man-made physical structure, consisting normally of wood and wires.
- ✦ **Training:** Describes the actions of pruning in winter and summer, and shoot and cane placement so the vine’s trunk, arms and cordons are appropriately located on the trellis system. Training systems that involve trellises often incorporate the trellis in their name.
- ✦ **Pruning:** Involves cutting off all unwanted vegetative parts in the form of canes in the winter. Summer pruning is another term for “trimming.” “Shoot thinning” and “trimming” refers to cutting off unwanted vegetative growth in the form of excess shoots in early spring and shoot tips in the summer.

Clos LaChance utilizes four different types of Trellis Systems in our 150 acres of Estate Vineyards.

**VSP: Vertical Shoot Positioning.** A system used throughout the world where annual shoot growth is trained vertically and held in place by foliage wires.

**GDC: Geneva Double Curtain.** A system where the canopy is divided into two curtains, trained downwards from high cordons or canes. The system was developed by Professor Nelson Shaulis of Geneva Experiment Station in upstate New York in the mid-1960’s. This training system was one of the first examples of divided canopy developed in the New World. By reducing shade, it increases both yield and quality.

**Head Trained.** A common American term for a vine trained so that a group of spurs arise in one zone, called the head. Such vines are normally cane-pruned but may also be spur-pruned. Here the spurs elongate into arms and the resulting structure is something of a hybrid between a vertical cordon and a gobelet.

**Lyre.** A system where the canopy is divided horizontally into two curtains of upward-pointing shoots, which resembles a lyre in shape. Developed in Bordeaux in the early 1980’s by Dr. Alain Carbonneau (now Professor of viticulture at Montpellier). The lyre system improves the canopy microclimate and leads to improvement in yield and quality because of better leaf and fruit exposure to sunlight. Either spur or cane pruning can be used.



VSP



GDC



Head



Lyre