

9 HISTORY

- 1871 Missionaries and French fur traders bring *vinifera* plants to eastern Washington and teach Native Americans how to irrigate the Yakima Valley.
- 1912 Hollywood Farm is established northeast of Seattle by lumber baron Frederick Stimson and is the site on which Chateau Ste. Michelle is now located.
- 1934–1935 NAWICO (National Wine Company) founded in Seattle and Grandview. Pommerelle fruit wines founded in Seattle.
- 1951 Under guidance from general manager Vic Allison, NAWICO begins planting *vinifera* grapes in the Columbia Valley. First variety planted is Grenache.
- 1954 Pommerelle and NAWICO merge to become American Wine Growers. Grenache released in cork-finished bottles.
- 1965 American Wine Growers plants first White Riesling in the Yakima Valley at Hahn Hill Vineyard.  
Howard Somers becomes enologist and begins making premium wines.
- 1966 Wine writer and historian Leon Adams visits Yakima Valley and is impressed by the Grenache wine. He suggests to Vic Allison that Washington vintners should make *vinifera* wine on a commercial scale.
- 1967 André Tchelistcheff, recently retired winemaker from Napa Valley’s Beaulieu Vineyards, visits Yakima Valley. Allison asks Tchelistcheff to become consultant to American Wine Growers.  
American Wine Growers launches “Ste. Michelle” wines made from *vinifera* grapes grown in eastern Washington. Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Sémillon, Grenache Rosé are the first varieties produced.
- 1972-1973 Cold Creek Vineyard planted.
- 1974 Los Angeles Times holds blind tasting of 19 White Rieslings. Ste. Michelle’s 1972 Riesling ranks first. Winery catapulted into national spotlight.  
Joel Klein becomes winemaker (through 1982).
- 1975 Ste. Michelle Vintners harvests its first Chardonnay grapes.
- 1976 Chateau Ste. Michelle’s Woodinville “chateau” opens in September for winemaking and visitor tours. Label changes from Ste. Michelle Vintners to Chateau Ste. Michelle.  
Chateau Ste. Michelle harvests its first Merlot grapes.
- 1978 The first Cold Creek Cabernet Sauvignon is made.  
A small amount of Johannisberg Riesling is left on the vine into November and is hit by a freeze, resulting in Chateau Ste. Michelle’s first Ice Wine.  
Kay Simon named White Winemaker (through 1983).  
The Stimson estate and gardens are listed on the National Register of Historical Places.

- 1983 Cheryl Barber named Head Winemaker (through 1989).
- 1984 Columbia Valley is designated as an appellation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.
- Chateau Ste. Michelle launches its outdoor Summer Concert Series. Over the years, the series features top artists including Stevie Wonder, Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, John Legend, Don Henley, Harry Connick Jr., Bonnie Raitt, Crosby Stills and Nash, Lyle Lovett and many more.
- 1988 Chateau Ste. Michelle named “Best American Winery” by *Tasters Guild* and “Best American Winery” by *Wine Country* magazine.
- 1990 Mike Januik is named Chateau Ste. Michelle’s Head Winemaker (continues through 1999). Charlie Hoppes named Assistant Winemaker and later becomes the Red Winemaker (through 1998).
- Robert M. Parker, Jr. names Chateau Ste. Michelle “Wine Producer of the Year.”
- 1991 Chateau Ste. Michelle’s 1987 Cabernet Sauvignon is awarded the only gold medal for an American red wine at VinExpo in Bordeaux, France.
- Canoe Ridge Estate Vineyard is planted. Chateau Ste. Michelle’s Canoe Ridge Estate Winery is under construction.
- 1993 Wine writer Richard Nalley rates the 1991 Indian Wells Merlot #1 in the country. Robert M. Parker, Jr. calls the wine “World Class.”
- Erik Olsen named White Winemaker (through 2002).
- 1994 Chateau Ste. Michelle’s Canoe Ridge Estate Red Winery opens for harvest.
- 1995 *Wine Spectator* names Chateau Ste. Michelle’s 1991 Late Harvest White Riesling Reserve and 1993 Cold Creek Chardonnay to its “Top 100 Wines” list.
- Chateau Ste. Michelle announces partnership with Tuscan Winemaker Piero Antinori. The internationally-styled red wine, Col Solare, debuts in the spring of 1999 using Washington grapes.
- 1996 The 1993 Artist Series, a Bordeaux-style wine, is launched featuring labels depicting artwork by internationally-acclaimed glass maker Dale Chihuly.
- 1999 Ron Bunnell is named Red Winemaker (through 2003).
- Wine Spectator* names 1997 Cold Creek Chardonnay to its “Top 100 Wines List.”
- Chateau Ste. Michelle joins with Dr. Ernst Loosen, one of Germany’s premier winemakers, to harvest Washington state grapes for a new off-dry Riesling, Eroica, and a premium sweet wine (*trockenbeerenauslese*), named Single Berry Select.
- 2000 Eroica, a new Dry Riesling made with Ernst Loosen of Germany using Washington state grapes, released nationwide in June. The wine earns a 91 point rating from *Wine Spectator*.
- Single Berry Select, a new sweet wine made in the German *trockenbeerenauslese* style released in the fall. *Wine Spectator* rates the wine 97 points — the publication’s highest ever rating for an American Riesling at the time.
- 2001 Chateau Ste. Michelle’s 1999 Cold Creek Chardonnay is ranked 16th on the *Wine Spectator*’s “Top 100,” making it the highest ranked white wine in the world.
- Chateau Ste. Michelle College Scholarship Fund is created to provide four-year college scholarships to underserved students in Washington state. Over the next decade, the Chateau Ste. Michelle Scholarship Fund raised more than \$3 million for college scholarships. Many of the recipients are children of agricultural workers who otherwise would not be able to attend college.

- 2002 Chateau Ste. Michelle introduces Pinot Gris and Syrah to its line up of Columbia Valley wines.  
Eroica is named to *Wine Spectator's* "Top 100" list — the third vintage to earn a "Top 100" honor. The 1999 Canoe Ridge Estate Merlot also makes the list.  
The 2000 Single Berry Select dessert wine earns a 98 point rating by *Wine Spectator* — the highest rating for a Washington wine at the time.
- 2003 Bob Bertheau named Winemaker for Chateau Ste. Michelle white wines.  
Eroica earns its fourth consecutive "Top 100 Wines" honor by *Wine Spectator*.
- 2004 *Wine Enthusiast Magazine* names Chateau Ste. Michelle its "American Winery of the Year 2004"  
Chateau Ste. Michelle parent company, Stimson Lane Vineyards & Estates, changes its name to Ste. Michelle Wine Estates to better reflect its rich history and vision for the future.  
Bob Bertheau promoted to head winemaker for Chateau Ste. Michelle.  
Eroica Riesling earns its fifth *Wine Spectator* "Top 100" honor.
- 2005 Named "American Winery of the Year 2005" by *Restaurant Wine Magazine*.  
Joshua Maloney named Red Winemaker (through 2011).
- 2006 2004 Canoe Ridge Estate Chardonnay makes *Wine Spectator's* "Top 100 Wines" list.
- 2007 Chateau Ste. Michelle & Dr. Loosen host the inaugural Riesling Rendezvous in June 2007. The three-day event brings together Riesling experts and producers to explore the versatility of Riesling worldwide. Riesling Rendezvous features 70+ producers from seven countries and is the largest Riesling event in the U.S. The event is held again in 2008, 2010, 2013, and 2016.  
Wendy Stuckey named White Winemaker (through 2008).  
Chateau Ste. Michelle Dry Riesling releases nationwide, after 15 years of exclusive availability in the Northwest. The 2007 Dry Riesling wins "Best Riesling of the New World" in the 2008 International Riesling Competition run by Rheinland Pfalz in Germany.
- 2008 Chateau Ste. Michelle named "Wine Brand of the Year" in *Market Watch* magazine's "Leaders Choice Awards."
- 2009 Chateau Ste. Michelle's Cold Creek and Canoe Ridge Estate vineyards receive LIVE and Salmon Safe third-party sustainability certification.
- 2011 Raymon McKee named Red Winemaker.  
Col Solare Bottega opens at Chateau Ste. Michelle to give guests a taste of Red Mountain in Woodinville.  
Voted "Washington's Most Respected Brands" in *Puget Sound Business Journal's* "Battle of the Brands" readers poll, beating out respected brands like Starbucks, Nordstrom, Microsoft and REI.  
Named "Winery of the Year 2011" by online wine retailer *Wine.com*.
- 2012 Awarded "United States Wine Producer of the Year" in the 2012 International Wine and Spirit Competition (IWSC.)
- 2013 Named "2013 Pacific Northwest Winery of the Year" by *Wine Press Northwest*  
2012 Horse Heaven Sauvignon Blanc makes *Wine Spectator's* "Top 100 Wines" list (#68), making it the 17th Chateau Ste. Michelle wine to make the *Wine Spectator* "Top 100" list over the last two decades.

- 2015 Washington State University dedicates the Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Wine Science Center, a state-of-the-art resource and teaching institution for the Washington grape and wine industries.
- 2016 Honored as a “Top 100 Winery of the Year” by Wine & Spirits Magazine for the 22nd time, more than any other American winery.
- 2017 Chateau Ste. Michelle is the number two premium domestic wine brand sold in the U.S. (Nielsen-Dollars), with wines available in all 50 states and more than 100 countries.

Washington State is the second largest premium wine producer in the United States with more than 900 wineries, 350+ wine grape growers and 50,000 acres of wine grapes (Washington State Wine Commission).