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FOOD & DRINK

Read This Wine Lover's Washington State Wine Guide



By Mark Stock
February 16, 2022

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As the second-largest wine-producing state in the country, Washington has no shortage of options for the intrepid wine tourist. Many flock to well-known locales like Walla Walla or Woodinville, set just outside of Seattle. But there's much more to the Evergreen State when it comes to all things fermented grapes.

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A total of 19 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) dot the Washington map. It's a remarkably diverse wine state, from the wet Puget Sound to the west to the much drier Yakima Valley to the east. Down along the scenic Columbia River, there are stunning appellations like the Columbia Gorge and Horse Heaven Hills. Red Mountain also has to be on the list of esteemed growing areas, a high-desert stretch near Tri-Cities that's producing some of the state's most exciting wines at the moment.

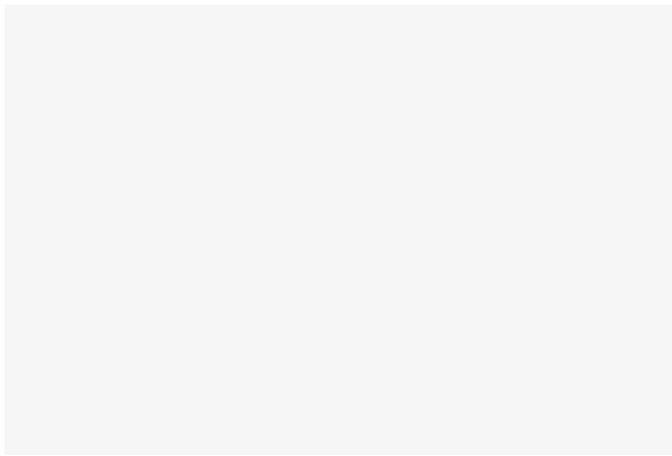


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Washington Wine Commission

Most of the Washington wine scene occurs on the drier, eastern side of the Cascades. There, you'll find grapes that take advantage of the arid climate, like Cabernet Sauvignon. According to the Washington State Wine Commission, reds accounted for about 60% of the production in 2020. The leading white was Chardonnay, which thrives in some of the state's cooler, higher-elevation areas. Other popular varieties include Merlot, Syrah, Riesling, and, increasingly, Pinot Noir.

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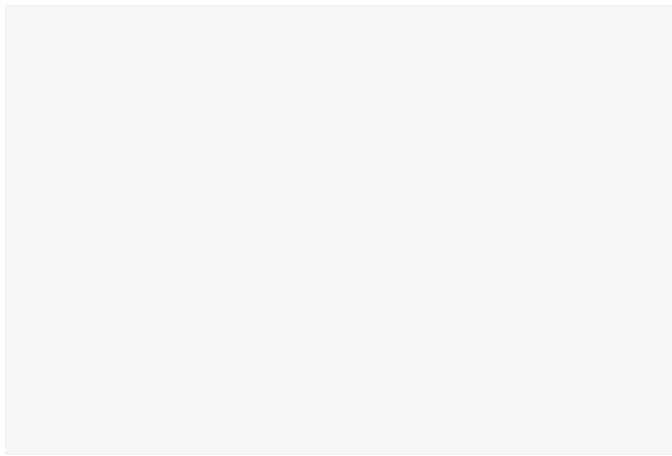


Here are a handful of wineries to visit in the great state of Washington, plus a few suggestions on where to eat and stay. As always, chat up your local wine steward or person-in-the-know for additional suggestions on what to try and look out for within this expansive scene. Each one of the selections below really epitomizes the best of what's happening in their respective appellations.

Related Reading

- [Walla Walla Wine Guide](#)
- [Woodinville Wine Guide](#)

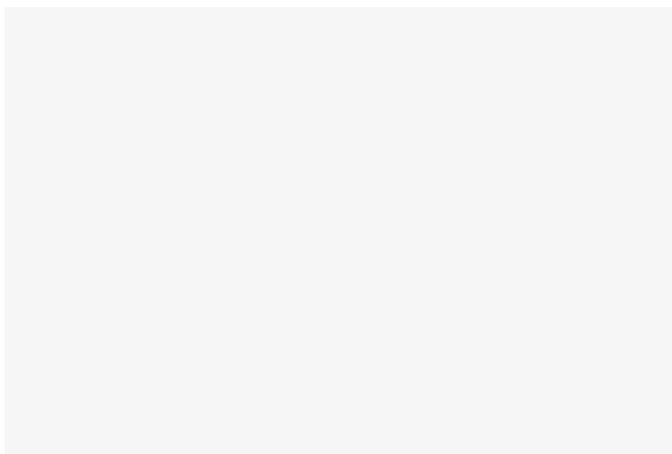
Kiona Vineyards



Facebook/Kiona Vineyards

This Red Mountain label is a pioneering outfit of the area, arguably one of Washington's most unique growing zones. The desert-like conditions here yield less rainfall per year than [Phoenix](#) gets, but that doesn't mean the grapes don't do well. Quite the opposite, as some truly stunning Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, Sangiovese, Malbec — even Lemberger — is coming out of Kiona's estate. The label first planted in 1975, seeing the potential well before the masses. Today, the area outside of Benton City is making some of the most captivating wines of the Pacific Northwest.

AniChe Cellars

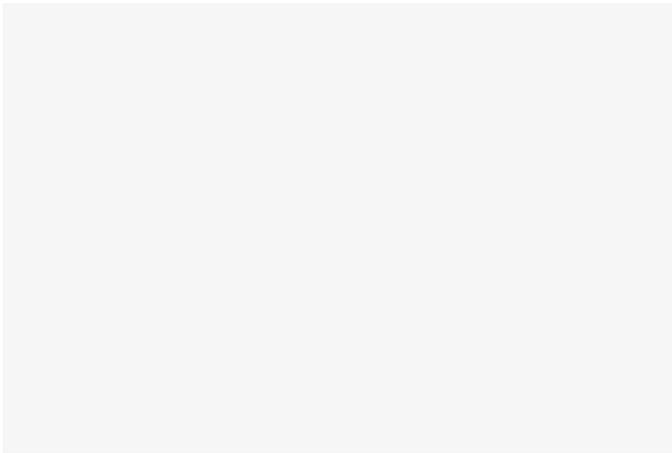


Facebook/AniChe Cellars

Set in the town of Underwood in the breathtaking Columbia River Gorge, AniChe is quietly turning out some of the most interesting blends and sparkling in the region. They specialize in [Rhône](#) grapes especially, like Roussanne and Marsanne,

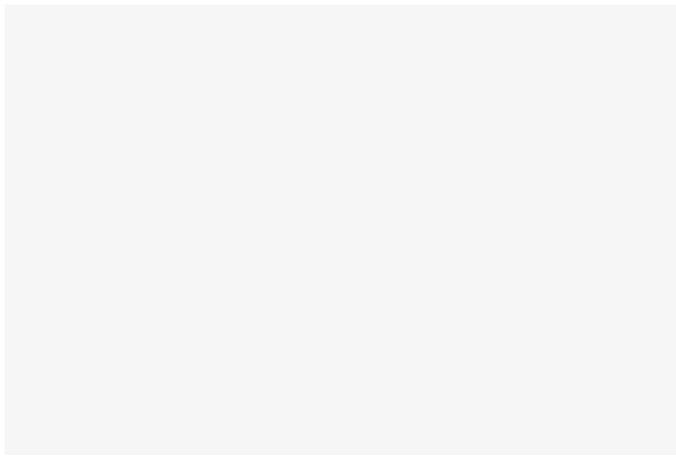
but also other Euro-informed grapes like Sangiovese and Albariño. It's beautifully situated, located right on the river with great views of Mt. Hood in the background and kite-surfers and cliffs in the foreground.

Amos Rome Vineyards



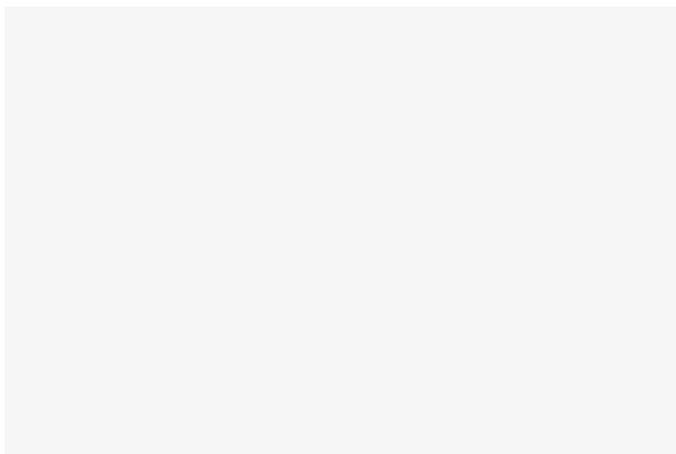
Amos Rome does its thing out of the beautiful Chelan region, set in central orchard country Washington. At the core is Lake Chelan, with the foothills occupied by dozens of wineries, cider houses, inns, and more. Among the best is Amos Lee, known more and more for its sparkling wine, clean [Chardonnay](#), and impressive blends. Production is so small, typically, that it pays to go to the source to experience the full breadth of the winery and its estate vines. Moreover, the setting is stunning, with sprawling grounds, great views, and multiple patios for sipping.

Freehand Cellars



Up in the land of hops otherwise known as the Yakima Valley, there's a bustling wine community, too. Freehand Cellars has become a worthy stop on the wine trail, crafting elegant Pinot Gris, Cab Franc, Syrah, and more. There's an accompanying food program if you're hungry or just want to explore a good pairing and you can even stay there, which you should, as it's hard to give up the wines, the sleek tasting room (perhaps to be expected from architect owners), as well as the arresting views of Mt. Adams and the nearby Rattlesnake Hills.

Quilceda Creek Winery



Routinely garnering 100-point scores from the top critics, Quilceda Creek has built quite the reputation. If you love smooth-as-silk red wines built for hearty fare like steak, this label is for you. Better, it's right near Woodinville in Snohomish, although it pulls fruit from the eastern side of the state, like so many labels. You'll be hard-pressed to find a better Cabernet Sauvignon in America. Launched in 1978 with its first winemaking vintage the following year, it remains one of Washington's oldest and most talked-about wineries.

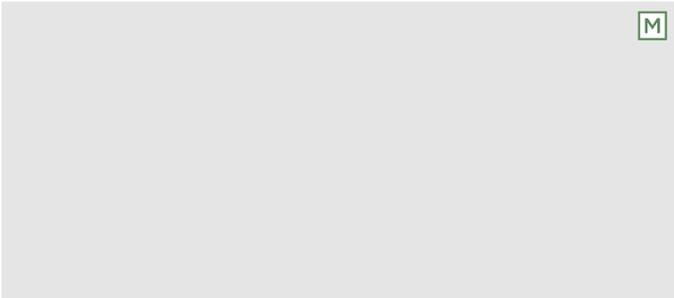
Beyond Wine

In terms of lodging, there are many, many directions but we suggest picking a home base in the heart of one of the appellations and setting up shop there for a long weekend or week. [The Lodge at Columbia Point](#) is a great option for those looking to check out Red Mountain and the Yakima Valley especially. In the Gorge, [Skamania Lodge](#) is a great place to call home briefly, with many amenities and even tree houses you can cuddle up in. It's close to tasting rooms along the Columbia and charming little towns like White Salmon where you can get fresh and vibrant eats at places like [Henni's Kitchen and Bar](#).

Up in Chelan, you can live the winery life at the guest house at [Nefarious Cellars](#). There are also plenty of fine resorts and eateries, like [Kelly's Resort](#) and the [Lake Chelan Artisan Bakery](#). Look out for [Andante](#) if you like Italian-inspired fare and want to try out some more local wines or just a good cocktail. If you're tired of wine, Washington is home to a colossal craft beer and cider scene. In Yakima, especially, you'll find tons of options, like the esteemed [Bale Breaker Brewing](#). Cheers!

Editors' Recommendations

- [A Quick and Easy Guide to Biodynamic Wines](#)
- [These Celebrity Liquors Ranked While Others Just Didn't](#)
- [NBA Great Scottie Pippen Does Bourbon and Tea](#)
- [Patrón and Hennessy NFT Offer Exclusive Spirits Via BlockBar](#)
- [The 12 Best Valentine's Day Cocktail Recipes to Make](#)



These are the Best Places to Hike in Las Vegas

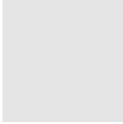


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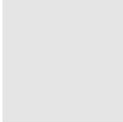
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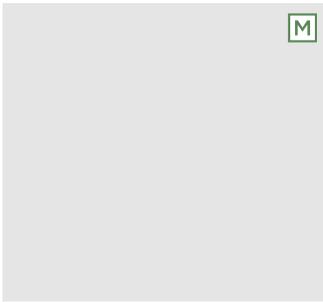
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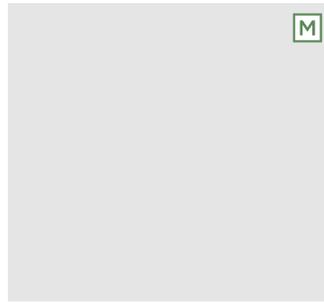
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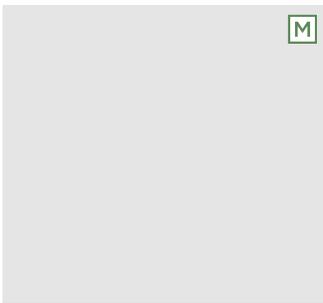
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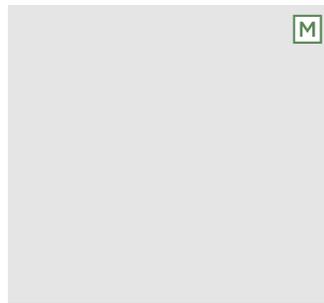
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