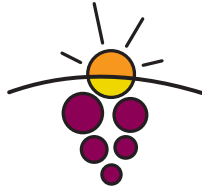


WASHINGTON STATE WINE

Press Kit



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Welcome to the land of discovery

More than two hundred years ago, the pioneering American explorers Lewis and Clark traversed the amazing terrain of what is now Washington State. Many of the open vistas that captivated them remain today; but modern explorers discover something those early visitors never witnessed – one of the world's most dynamic wine regions. Here's what they find:

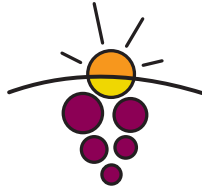
Washington State is a diverse wine region. We cultivate great wines from Riesling, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and many other classic grape varieties. That diversity extends beyond the bottle, too. Washington is a mosaic of landscapes extending from evergreen coasts and snow-capped mountains to a vast sagebrush desert where the sun shines across more than 300 days each year. Diversity is also part of our culture. The Washington wine industry is a collection of creative people drawn from many different backgrounds and from several countries around the world.

Alongside that complexity, Washington State's wine country is also a very genuine place. Our grape growers and winemakers live and work in small towns where restored old homes, beautiful barns, and converted mills truly reflect the modern American west. These communities are among the most easily approachable in the wine world. The person you see walking through the vineyard in jeans, or driving a forklift through the winery, or behind the tasting room counter is often the owner. Even our wines reflect authenticity: rare natural conditions here permit the cultivation of classic varieties without the common, manipulative practice of vine grafting or the intensive use of chemicals. So we harvest the purest expression possible for every wine.

Washington State is also keenly ambitious. As the home of global giants Microsoft, Starbucks, Costco, Amazon.com and many others, it's not hard to appreciate that our wine industry also reflects tremendous vision and drive. Our pioneering growers and winemakers broke ground in a vast, wild territory where conventional wisdom said they could not. And they have expanded that work to create America's second-largest wine region, with more than 40,000 acres (16,187 hectares) of vines across 12 official appellations (or AVAs) and more than 700 wineries.

Finally, Washington State's wine industry is supremely integrated. Vineyards and wineries here are often spread across hundreds of miles, and that geography has guided growers and vintners to work in real partnership. From individual vine rows reserved for specific winemakers to fully fledged joint-ownership projects, our region is one of shared endeavors. And our wines show that same spirit of integration – combining the vibrant fruit character expected of American wine with the defined structure typical of European production.

Of course, this is just a snapshot of Washington State's dynamic wine region. Discover more by visiting our website or by exploring the state firsthand. You'll be amazed.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Industry Facts

#### Production

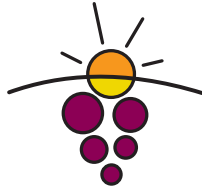
Licensed Wineries:	700 +
Appellations (AVAs):	12
Acres / Hectares Planted:	43,849 / 17,745
Tons Harvested:	160,000
Cases Produced (9L equivalent):	≈ 12 million

#### Leading Varieties

Riesling:	21%
Cabernet Sauvignon:	20%
Chardonnay:	18%
Merlot:	18%
Syrah:	7%

#### Annual Economic Impact

Full Economic Impact:	\$4.7 billion
Grape Farm Gate Value:	\$144 million
Winery Revenues:	\$436 million
Taxes Paid:	\$471 million
Wine-related Tourists:	1.7 million
Wine-related Tourism Spending:	\$238 million



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Appellations

Washington State embraces a diverse collection of world-class vineyard areas. Twelve of these appellations have been officially designated as American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) by the US Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Each AVA possesses a unique combination of climate, topography, and soils that define the aromas and flavors of locally grown grapes and the wines crafted from them.

**Yakima Valley** – Established in 1983, the Yakima Valley was the first AVA designated in Washington State. It now contains more than 17,000 acres (6,879 hectares) of vineyards and 65 wineries. It also surrounds the Rattlesnake Hills, Red Mountain and Snipes Mountain appellations. Aside from growing some of the state's finest wine grapes, the Yakima Valley also harvests more than 75 percent of hops grown in the United States.

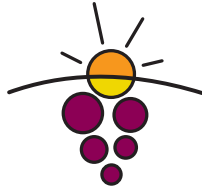
**Walla Walla Valley** – Established 1984, the Walla Walla Valley is home to more than 100 wineries and tasting rooms, the largest concentration in the state. More than 1,600 acres (647 hectares) of vineyards are planted in this AVA, which is located in the southeastern corner of Washington, and crosses the border into Oregon. Besides being one of Washington's famous winemaking areas, Walla Walla is also known for its sweet onions, asparagus, and expansive wheat fields.

**Columbia Valley** – Columbia Valley is by far our largest AVA, comprising about one third of the land mass of Washington State. Within its borders fall the Red Mountain, Yakima Valley, Walla Walla Valley, Wahluke Slope, Rattlesnake Hills, Horse Heaven Hills, Snipes Mountain, and Lake Chelan AVAs. Established 1984, the Columbia Valley AVA includes 99% of the total vineyard area planted in the state of Washington.

**Puget Sound** – The Puget Sound AVA, established in 1995, is the only AVA located in western Washington. This area enjoys long, mild and dry summers, but gets enough rainfall to grow grapes without irrigation. It also rarely suffers significant freezes in winter. The Puget Sound is best known for growing grape varieties such as Siegerrebe and Madeleine Angevine – which pair very well with the region's famous fresh seafood.

**Red Mountain** – One of Washington State's smallest AVAs, Red Mountain cultivates some of the state's most sought-after wine grapes. This very warm site, where growing season daytime temperatures average 90 degrees, gets only 5 inches (127 mm) of rain each year. Established in 2001, Red Mountain is located at the east end of the Yakima Valley AVA and grows mostly red varieties in its 1,200 vineyard acres (486 hectares).

**Columbia Gorge** – The establishment of the Columbia Gorge AVA in 2004 gave recognition to a uniquely beautiful area straddling the Columbia River along the Oregon border. It's also a place of great viticultural diversity: its almost 400 acres (161 hectares) in Washington State include overtly marine-influenced, higher rainfall sites for cool-weather varieties to the west, as well as truly sunny, very dry sites for warm-weather varieties in the east. The Columbia Gorge is also a National Scenic Area with a dramatic natural landscape.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Appellations (continued)

Horse Heaven Hills – The Horse Heaven Hills AVA is located between the Yakima Valley appellation and the Columbia River at the Oregon border. It grows more than 10,584 acres (4,283 hectares) of wine vineyards – about a quarter of Washington State’s total. More than 1500 feet (457 meters) of elevation change across the face of the appellation, combined with high winds and well-draining soils have helped establish this AVA (designated in 2005) as one of the premier wine grape sources in the Pacific Northwest.

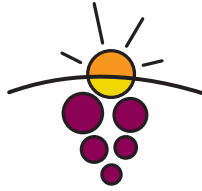
Wahluke Slope – The Wahluke Slope AVA, bounded by the Columbia River to the south and west and the Saddle Mountains to the north, is a dry, very warm site near the center of the larger Columbia Valley AVA. Established in 2006, the Wahluke Slope is home to more than 6,645 acres (2,689 hectares) of vineyards and a handful of significant wine-production facilities.

Rattlesnake Hills – The Rattlesnake Hills AVA, established in 2006, is located along the north-central edge of the Yakima Valley appellation. The high elevation of the Yakima Ridge to the north of the Rattlesnake Hills protects the area from winter freezes that can affect other areas of the state. Nearly 70% of the 1,599 acres (647 hectares) of vinifera grapes in this region are winery owned. There are now 18 wineries in the Rattlesnake Hills AVA.

Snipes Mountain – The Snipes Mountain AVA, located at the center of the Yakima Valley AVA, is one of the smallest in Washington State, only 704 (284 hectares) acres of grapes are planted, and is set apart from the surrounding terrain by an elevated topography and distinct soils. Though Snipes Mountain was established recently (February 2009), it is one of the state’s oldest wine grape-growing districts – including our second-oldest plot of Cabernet Sauvignon vines.

Lake Chelan – Established in April 2009, this AVA wraps around the tourist-popular Lake Chelan. Set at the northwest corner of the larger Columbia Valley appellation, the Lake Chelan AVA has a high elevation and a temperate climate relative to its neighbor AVAs to the south. The lake itself dominates the local conditions, resulting in a longer growing season and a reduced risk of winter freezes. There are now 16 wineries in the Lake Chelan appellation and 247 acres (99 hectares) of winegrapes.

Naches Heights – Established in 2012, Naches Heights is located in the Yakima Valley on a volcanic plateau. The AVA encompasses 13,254 acres, with 37.3 currently planted to wine grapes. The oldest vines in the Naches Heights AVA are Pinot Gris and Syrah, planted in 2002. The AVA has a higher elevation than most regions in Washington, with its lowest point at 1,200 feet and elevations rising to 2,100 feet. Due to this high elevation, Naches Heights was unaffected by the Missoula Floods during the last ice age that formed the soils of many other grape growing regions in the state.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Vintage Conditions

Washington State encompasses a diverse collection of climates, grape varieties, vineyard practices, and winemaking styles. Outside of a few basics that apply to any wine region, it would be impossible to outline a “perfect” vintage for the state as a whole. However, a combination of several factors throughout the year can contribute to ideal vintage conditions, while other factors can present certain challenges.

#### Winter

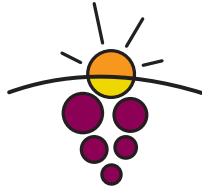
**Ideal Conditions** – Cold temperatures (between 28 and 45 degrees) to promote full dormancy to allow vines to store energy in the form of carbohydrates to utilize in spring budding, root growth for nutrient storing, kill off many potential colonies of vine pests.

**Potential Challenges** – Full deep freeze (below 28 degrees for an extended period of time), which might kill the vines to the ground and force either regrafting/replanting.

#### Spring

**Ideal Conditions** – Gradually rising but cool temperatures (between 50 and 60 degrees) to promote mid-spring vine and leaf bud burst (March to April), rain to saturate the ground for resources during the dry summer months, leaf development to induce photosynthesis for more energy to grow the vine. Late spring (May) will bring flowering as temperatures warm (between 58 and 68 degrees) with some rain/irrigation needed for humidity/water levels necessary. Shortly thereafter (late May), fruit set in the form of tiny seeds are formed.

**Potential Challenges** – Late freeze/frost/snow storm/heavy rain/wind storms, which might damage the young bud burst/vine tendrils/flowers. Delayed temperature accumulation.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Vintage Conditions (continued)

#### Summer

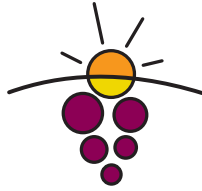
Ideal Conditions – Gradual, even rising temperatures (70 to 90 degrees) to promote grape development and lead to normal veraison (color development and phenolic ripening), increasing sunlight hours to provide photosynthetic energy from the canopy to produce sugars, periodic small amounts of rain (rare but welcome), diurnal temperature variation (up to 40 degrees difference between 2 pm and 2 am) to ensure balancing acid levels remain high, medium level winds to control pests/fungal diseases.

Potential Challenges – Hot temperature (95 degrees plus) spikes/extended periods of time, which will force the vine to shut down and delay fruit development or raise sugar levels/drop acid levels. Cloudy days to hinder sunshine hours.

#### Autumn

Ideal Conditions – Gradually cooling temperatures (70 to 80 degrees) during Harvest to retain acids and allow for phenolic maturation without sugar accumulation, lack of rain to ensure there is no dilution to grapes during picking (through until November in many cases), medium level winds to control pests/fungal diseases.

Potential Challenges – Early frost/freeze, which might kill grapes on vine or vine itself. Early rain, which could dilute sugars in grapes.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

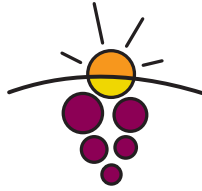
### Recent Vintages

2010 – Bud break arrived on schedule in early April, but a cool, wet spring led to delayed flowering and reduced fruit set across many varieties. An unusually cool summer produced dramatic differences in ripening between warmer and cooler sites, with veraison extending well into September in some cooler areas. However, naturally low yields, combined with over a month of consistently warm weather from late September through late October, produced phenolic ripeness and flavor development with extraordinary natural acidity. Cool, wet weather returned in late October, an appropriate bookend to a challenging harvest. Overall, 2010 produced balanced, elegant wines with lower alcohol and higher acidity.

2009 – Cool spring temperatures and high wind conditions led to late bud break and a small quantity of poor fruit set. Very hot, dry summer (the hottest July on record for many sites) accelerated ripening of sugars and a need to pick most grapes by early October, earlier than generally practiced in the past 15 years. Night time temperatures were slightly higher than normal, as well. An even, warm, dry September helped balance the sugars/acids and allow phenolic ripeness/flavor development to occur. Colors in black grape varieties were deep, tannins developed quickly. Early frost hit vines on October 11, damaging 15% of the harvest. Overall, 2009 was a compressed harvest with little uniformity but good to very good overall quality for big red wine grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah, with slightly higher than normal alcohol levels. White wines generally had higher sugars/lower acids as a result of the hot summer.

2008 – Cool spring temperatures with some rain led to 2-weeks-later-than-normal bud break. The summer was average to slightly below average in terms of temperatures, resulting in veraison occurring one week late. Harvest was 10-14 days later than normal, but summer and early fall were dry, allowing for sugar and phenolic ripening with no loss of acid. Fruit flavors are less ripe, acid levels are slightly higher than normal. Overall, 2008 was a very good vintage across the board for most varieties. Reds will be lighter bodied, with purity of fruit and balance, with lighter bodied grapes like Cabernet franc and Merlot performing well. Whites will be clean, crisp and fresh, with Riesling, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc all performing well. Fine potential to age based upon the heightened acid levels.

2007 – Ideal spring temperatures lead to even, timely fruit set. Late spring was warmer than usual. Summer was uneven – overall averages of temperatures were slightly lower, but there were major heat spikes to shut the vine down. Sugar levels remained slightly lower than usual. Ideal, slightly cool but sunny and dry fall weather allowed for very long hang time when necessary. Flavor development, acid balance, phenolic ripeness all occurred without the threat of high sugars. 2007 is an excellent vintage for most grape varieties and regions, with ripeness to enjoy now but balance to allow for a decade of aging for the structured varieties of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Riesling and Syrah.

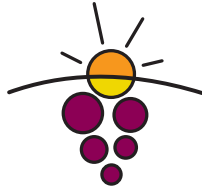


## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Recent Vintages (continued)

2006 – A mild, rainy spring led to slightly late, but uniform, fruit set. Summer was warm to hot and completely dry. Diurnal shift was strong, maintaining balance between the strong sugar development and acid presence. September cooled down considerably, with some humidity and rain, which slowed sugar development and allowed phenolic and flavor development to occur. October was dry and sunny with moderate temperatures, allowing longer hang time when needed. Very good to excellent vintage for both reds and whites, with some tannic structure/higher acid combinations pointing to strong ability to age for structure varieties.

2005 – A mild winter and warm spring led to relatively early and heavy fruit set, and a hot summer rapidly accelerated ripening. September and October cooled significantly, allowing for extended hang time and flavor development. Overall, the 2005 vintage produced highly concentrated and intensely colored red wines, along with ripe yet expressive white wines.



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

### Washington State Wine Commission

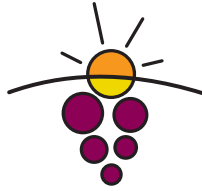
The Washington State Wine Commission represents every licensed winery and every wine grape grower in Washington State. Guided by an appointed board, the Commission provides a marketing platform to raise positive awareness of the Washington State wine industry and generate greater demand for its wines. Funded almost entirely by the industry - through assessments based on grape and wine sales - the Commission is a state government agency, established by the legislature in 1987.

#### Board of Commissioners:

Kent Waliser, Chair - Sagemoor  
Martin Johnson, Treasurer - Ste. Michelle Wine Estates  
John Bookwalter - J.Bookwalter Winery  
Dick Boushey - Boushey Vineyards  
Dan Ewer - Young's Columbia Wine Company  
Patricia Gelles - Klipsun Vineyards  
Chad Johnson - Dusted Valley Vintners  
Steve Newhouse - Upland Vineyards  
Kim Roberts - Westport Winery  
Jay Soloff - DeLille Cellars  
Chris Sparkman - Sparkman Cellars  
Rebecca Weber - Washington State Dept of Agriculture

#### Commission Staff:

Rob Andersen, Events Director  
Jayne Cain, Office Manager  
Madeline Dow, Marketing Manager  
Cathy Jaramillo, Finance Manager  
Ryan Pennington, Public Relations Director  
Robin Pollard, Executive Director  
Katie Sadler, Marketing and Events Coordinator  
Chris Stone, Deputy Director  
Erica Waliser, Public Relations Coordinator



## WASHINGTON STATE WINE

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