



WASHINGTON WINE COMMISSION
PRESS KIT

WA
46°N
WINE



FAST FACTS

- Number of licensed wineries: 1,070
- National rank as wine producer in the United States: 2nd
- Wine grape acreage: 60,000+ acres
- Number of wine grape growers: 400+
- Varieties produced: 80+
- Total annual in-state economic impact: \$8.4 Billion
- Growing season diurnal shift: 30-40°F
- Annual wine production: ~17.7 million cases
- Record harvest, 2016: 272,000 tons
- Most recent harvest, 2022: 240,000 tons
- Average summer sunlight: 16 hours per day, about one more hour during the peak of the growing season than California's prime growing region.
- Annual rainfall in Columbia Valley: 6-8 inches
- Wineries making less than 5,000 cases per year: 90%
- Number of AVA's: 20



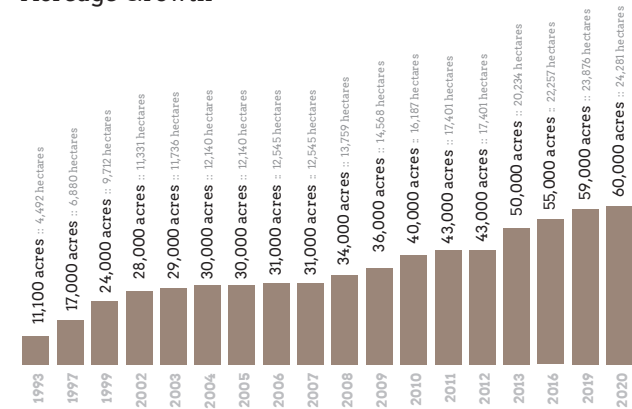
**“NO ONE CAN TOUCH
WHAT’S HAPPENING IN
WASHINGTON STATE
RIGHT NOW.”**

— CRAIG COLLINS, MASTER SOMMELIER, AUSTIN, TX

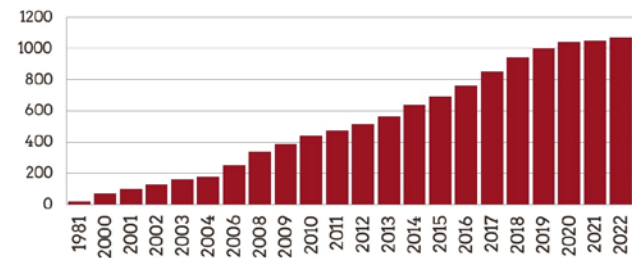
WASHINGTON WINE'S GROWING INDUSTRY


Washington State adds 4 new wineries per month on average. It's estimated that Washington is only about a quarter of the way planted to our potential vineyard acreage.

Acreage Growth



Licensed Wineries





**“WASHINGTON IS A
HANDFUL OF SMALL,
OBSESSIVE PRODUCERS
PUSHING QUALITY
FORWARD UNTIL
IT’S WORLD-CLASS.”**

— JAMES SUCKLING, JAMESUCKLING.COM

GROWING SINCE 1825.

Washington wine’s earliest days date back to 1825, when the first grape vines were planted. Pioneer William B. Bridgman planted grapevines in Yakima Valley in the early 1900s. In subsequent years, Dr. Walter Clore, recognized as the father of the Washington wine industry, researched what varieties would grow well in Washington. Today the industry is thriving with more than 1,000 wineries and 80 different varieties planted.





WASHINGTON WINE TIMELINE



1825
First Grapes Planted
Washington's first grapes were planted at Fort Vancouver by the Hudson's Bay Company



1914
Important vineyards spring up,
in the Yakima Valley—most notably the vineyards of W.B. Bridgman of Sunnyside.

1940
Dr. Walter Clore,
"The Father of Washington Wine," began trials of grape varieties in Eastern Washington to determine what would grow where and under what conditions.



1960
Commercial vineyards are planted in Washington.



1967
Ste. Michelle Vintners was established.
Now known as Chateau Ste. Michelle, it is Washington's largest winery.



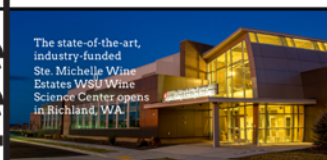
1983
Yakima Valley AVA was established
as Washington's first American Viticultural Area (AVA).



1998
Taste Washington
takes place in Seattle for the first time, later becoming the nation's largest single-region food and wine festival.

2015

Wine Science Center



The state-of-the-art, industry-funded Ste. Michelle Wine Estates Wine Science Center opens in Richland, WA.

2022

1,050+ wineries



1903
Large-scale irrigation,
fueled by runoff from the melting snowcaps of the Cascade Mountains, begins in eastern Washington.

1933



1962
Associated Vintners was established,
which later became Columbia Winery.

1970
10 wineries

2001
100 wineries milestone



**“WASHINGTON STATE
CONTINUES TO PRODUCE
A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF
BEAUTIFUL WINES.”**

— JEBDUNNUCK.COM

2022 HARVEST

The 2022 growing season was notable for a cool, wet spring, a hot, but brief, summer, and nearly-unprecedented warm finishing weather in late September and almost all of October. The final crop showed a 34% increase in tonnage over the previous year, due in part to larger berries and clusters. The vintage produced top-quality grapes.

240,000
TONS HARVESTED

REDS 136,870 TONS

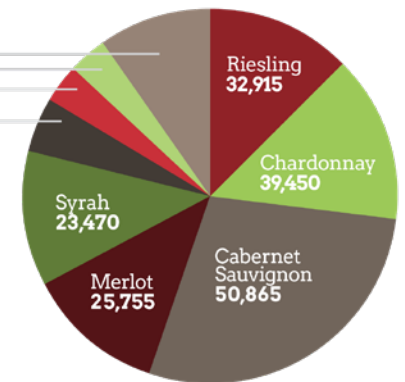
WHITE 103,130 TONS

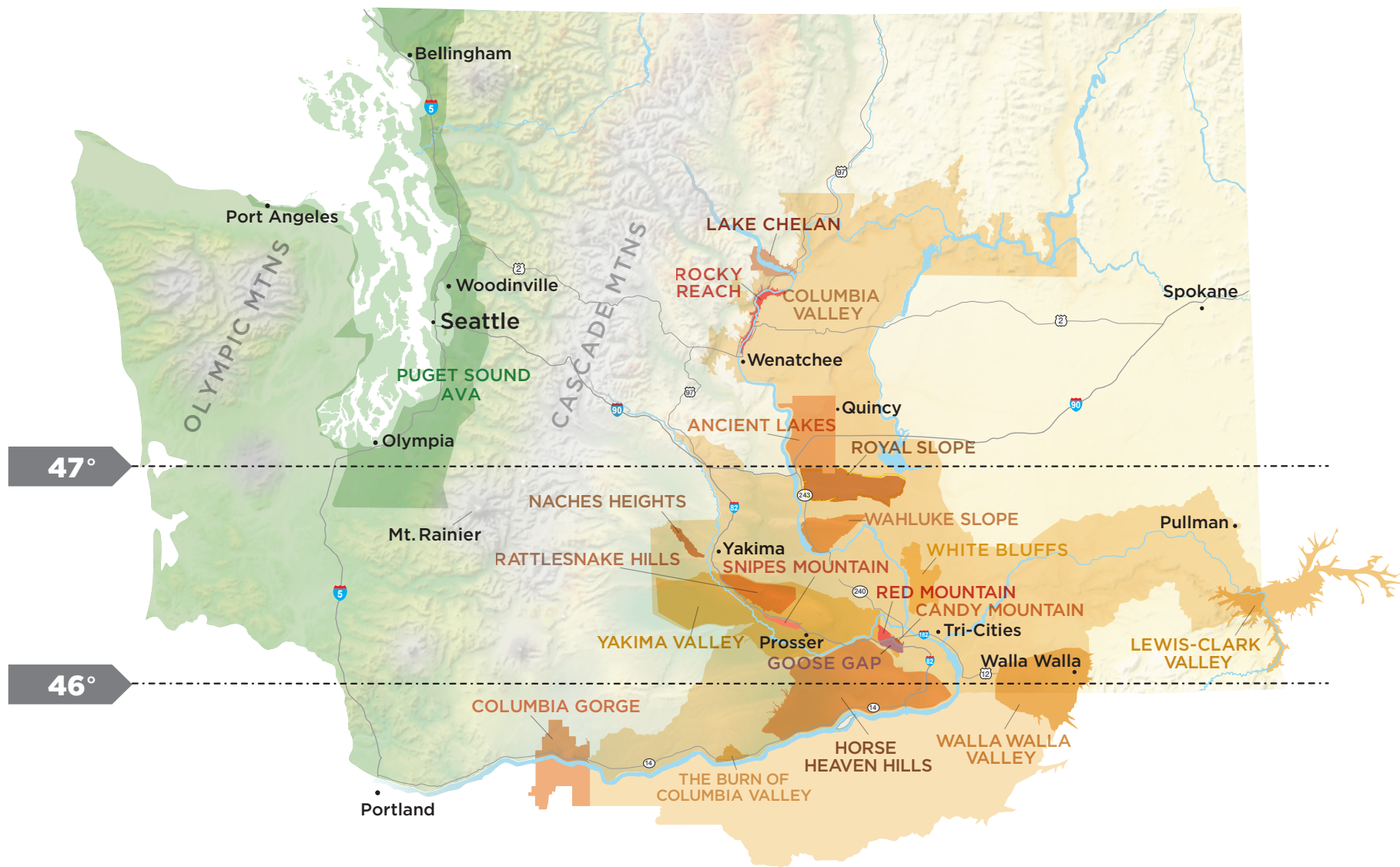
GRAPE VARIETIES

Cabernet Franc – 3,025
Malbec – 3,980
Sangiovese – 1,695
Grenache Noir – 2,020
Petit Verdot – 1,110
Pinot Noir – 2,860
Mourvedre – 1,425
Other Red Varieties – 4,515

Gewurztraminer – 2,055
Viognier – 1,800
Semillon – 525
Chenin Blanc – 420
Other White Varieties – 2,625

Pinot Gris – 10,540
Sauvignon Blanc – 12,800





WINE GROWING REGIONS

Washington is home to 20 American Viticultural Areas. Of these, four are cross-boarder AVAs. Columbia Valley, Columbia Gorge, and Walla Walla Valley are shared with Oregon. Lewis-Clark valley is shared with Idaho.



**“I’VE SEEN BEAUTIFUL,
FLAVORFUL, CHENIN
BLANC GROWING ONE
ROW FROM PERFECT
CABERNET. THAT
DOESN’T HAPPEN
ANYWHERE BUT
WASHINGTON.”**

— **ERIK SEGELBAUM,**
ADVANCED SOMMELIER / WINE DIRECTOR, STARR RESTAURANTS, PHILADELPHIA PA

AVA ESTABLISHMENT DATE AND AREA SIZE

Ancient Lakes

Est. 2012
1,603 vineyard acres

The Burn of Columbia

Est. 2021
1,500 vineyard acres

Candy Mountain

Est. 2020
110 vineyard acres

Columbia Gorge

Est. 2004
381 WA vineyard acres

Columbia Valley

Est. 1984
59,234 WA vineyard acres

Goose Gap

Est. 2021
1,800 vineyard acres

Horse Heaven Hills

Est. 2005
17,082 vineyard acres

Lake Chelan

Est. 2009
269 vineyard acres

Lewis-Clark Valley

Est. 2015
9 WA vineyard acres

Naches Heights

Est. 2011
41 vineyard acres

Puget Sound

Est. 1995
121 vineyard acres

Rattlesnake Hills

Est. 2006
1,807 vineyard acres

Red Mountain

Est. 2001
2,382 vineyard acres

Rocky Reach

Est. 2021
117 vineyard acres

Royal Slope

Est. 2020
1,900 vineyard acres

Snipes Mountain

Est. 2009
859 vineyard acres

Wahluke Slope

Est. 2006
8,932 vineyard acres

Walla Walla Valley

Est. 1984
1,672 vineyard acres

White Bluffs

Est. 2021
1,127 vineyard acres

Yakima Valley

Est. 1983
18,924 vineyard acres

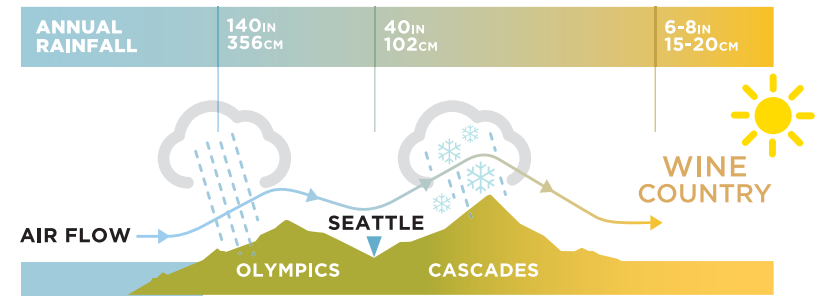
**“WASHINGTON’S
EXCEPTIONAL TERROIRS
AND MICRO-CLIMATES
SEEM TO ALLOW QUALITY
FROM JUST ABOUT
ANY GRAPE TYPE.”**

— NICK STOCK, JAMESSUCKLING.COM

WASHINGTON WAS MADE FOR WINE

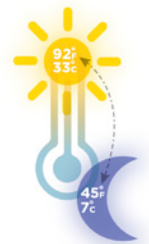
RAIN SHADOW

Two mountain ranges create a rain shadow effect that protects the Columbia Valley from wet weather systems. This results in a perfect climate for growing grapes in the warm and dry eastern part of the state.



DURINAL SHIFT


Warm days provide ripe fruit flavors while cool nights help maintain the natural acidity of the grapes. Washington State has some of the largest day and night temperature fluctuations of any wine region.



46°

LATITUDE MATTERS

Washington State shares the same latitude as top wine regions in Europe. With this northern latitude and a growing season that sees up to 17 hours of sunlight a day, Washington’s geography and climate deliver a perfect balance of New World fruit with Old World structure.



THE MISSOULA FLOODS TRANSFORMED THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST LANDSCAPE

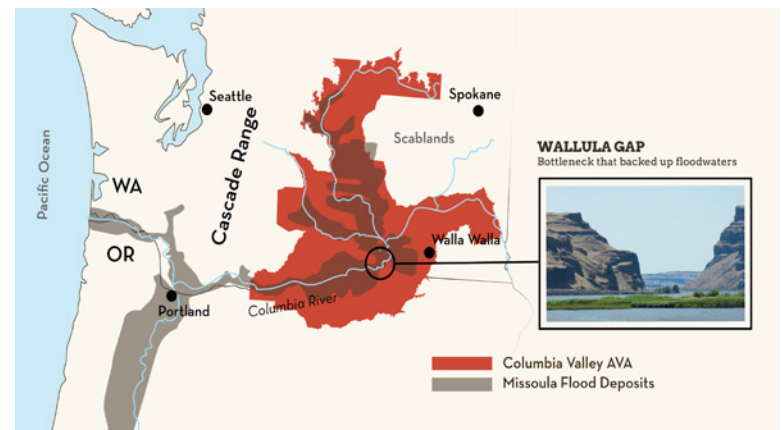
The Touchet beds shown here in the Walla Walla valley shows repeated flood deposits. Each layer represents a separate epic flood event.

**“THIS IS A PLACE
THAT HAS A STORY
OF ITS OWN THAT’S
STILL EVOLVING.”**

— **DOUG FROST**
MASTER SOMMELIER & MASTER OF WINE, KANSAS CITY, MO

MISSOULA FLOODS

Geologist estimate that the cycle of flooding and reformation of the Missoula Lake lasted an average of 55 years and that the floods occurred several times over the 2,000-year period between 15,000 and 13,000 years ago. The floods deposited nutrients all over eastern Washington up to 1,200 feet (366 meters) above sea level.





“...THE SOIL AND CLIMATE ARE ABSOLUTELY SPOT-ON, WITH HOT DAYS AND COOL NIGHTS GIVING NEW WORLD FRUIT AND OLD WORLD STRUCTURE.”

— JONATHAN RAY, SPEAR'S MAGAZINE

THE PERFECT MIX OF CONDITIONS

SOIL

Loess is a soil type ideal for growing wine grapes, as it is porous and well-draining. The composition of the soil is also a good source of minerals that grape vines need to thrive.

WATER

The Columbia River is the fourth largest river, by volume, in the US. The drainage basin of the Columbia River and its tributaries is roughly the size of France, covering seven US states.



SUSTAINABILITY

- Washington wine is sustainable by nature.
- Winter freeze kills many pests
- Arid temps, low humidity and wind help control development of fungal diseases (less need for spray)
- Fewer pests allows for planting on natural rootstock
- Less need for spraying and pesticides

“SOME OF THE MOST
EXCITING WINES
IN AMERICA.”

— JAMES SUCKLING, JAMESUCKLING.COM

Media Contacts

Heather Bradshaw

hbradshaw@washingtonwine.org

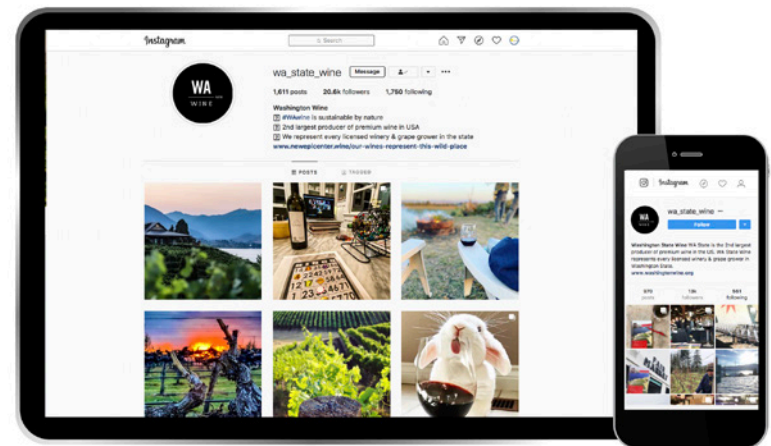
Averyl Dunn Mooney

admooney@washingtonwine.org

Connect with WA Wine.

Website: washingtonwine.org

Contact: info@washingtonwine.org



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