



A TOUR THROUGH THE GATEWAY TO OREGON'S WINE COUNTRY ***More than 16 wineries and the only American-owned sakery in the country call Washington County, Oregon, "home"***

Washington County, Oregon, is part of a centuries-old wine making tradition, and is home to more than 15 of Oregon's hundreds of wineries, and home to the only American-owned saké brewery in the world. Each wine has its own distinctive personality, and each showcases the delicate tastes of Oregon-grown grapes.

Oregon perhaps is best known for its Pinot Noir. Several factors of the soil, climate and geology of the Willamette Valley make the state perfect for the production of temperate-climate grapes, such as Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris. The nutrient-rich soil is ideal for producing succulent and robust wine, due in part to the rich volcanic soil, a direct result of a volcanic eruption at Mt. Hood more than 10,000 years ago. Underneath is a layer of deep clay that retains water during long summer afternoons. The final ingredient is Oregon's unpredictable climate, consisting of cool coastal marine weather drifting across the mountain range, with "rain shadows" protecting the region's vineyards from excessive rain, thus producing a flavorful grape.

Sustainability: Biodynamic and Organic Wines

For many years, Oregon's agricultural industry incorporated sustainable farming techniques, and the region's wine industry adopted techniques to create biodynamic and organic wines.

Sustainable wine growing is defined as environmentally friendly, socially equitable and economically feasible, and uses practices such as recycling, conserving energy and water, protecting air and water quality, reducing pesticide use, composting, and other methods to preserve biological diversity. Although a broad term, "biodynamic" and "organic" are more specific methods of sustainable wine and grape production.

Biodynamic agriculture methods are based on principles developed in the 1920s, which are now gaining in popularity in the U.S. Biodynamic wine growing is a holistic science, utilizing natural remedies, and planting, harvesting and bottling in accordance with the positions of the planets and lunar phases. Natural animal and vegetable matter is applied to soil to strengthen it, and various homeopathic herbal and mineral preparations are added to help the soil maximize light and heat for photosynthesis.

Organic wine grapes must be made with grapes that are grown without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides or fungicides for a period of at least three years with third-party inspection. Wines that are recognized as organic do not have added sulfites to sustain prolonged shelf life, and must have laboratory certification.

In keeping with the state's reputation for sustainable farming, it is no surprise that several Washington County wineries incorporate these environmentally friendly methods into their grape and wine production.

The Future of Washington County Wines

Wine production in Washington County continues to grow, as more vintners are looking to Oregon to produce high-quality wines. Several new wineries are expected to open in the county over the next few years. In addition, Oregon's unique Urban Growth Boundary has protected the region's agricultural lands by limiting urban growth and sprawl.

As gateway to Oregon's wine country – with many wineries only 45 minutes or less from downtown Portland – Washington County offers a variety of wines and wineries (many with tasting rooms that are open to the public), from well-known brands to boutique labels, quirky blends to traditional styles.

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Sustainable Wines

Several of Washington County's wineries practice sustainable farming and wine making techniques, ranging from organic to biodynamic. The result is some of the most flavorful, eco-friendly wine available on the market.

Cooper Mountain Vineyards

Cooper Mountain Vineyards (www.copermountainwine.com) was the first winery in the Pacific Northwest to produce all of its wines from 100-percent certified organic and Biodynamic estate-grown grapes. Their efforts in organic viticulture led directly to Biodynamic farming practices, which enhance the earth and allow their vines to give forth superior fruit that is rich in the unique flavors of their terroir. The pioneering efforts of owner, Dr. Robert Gross, have positioned the winery as an example to others who seek a natural relationship with the earth and the elements that provide for balance and harmony in producing great wine.

Location: Beaverton, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay and Malbec

Notable tidbits: Cooper Mountain Vineyards produces an Italian-style, barrel-aged, gourmet Apicio Balsamic Vinegar.

Montinore Estate

Established in 1982, Montinore Estate (www.montinore.com) has 240 acres of vineyards, and is committed to sustainable agriculture. Montinore produces estate-grown and bottled wines that are true to their varietal characteristics, as well as reflecting the unique character of the northern Willamette Valley region. The vintner's farming practices include cultivating vineyards according to strict biodynamic farming standards.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Gewurztraminer and Muller-Thurgau

Notable tidbits: In keeping with biodynamic farming techniques, Montinore Estates often uses chamomile or diluted milk on their grapes.

Boutique Wineries

Most of Washington County's wineries are small, boutique wineries that produce very limited quantities of wine, and with some exceptions, many are open to the public by appointment only. Today, these wineries have a small, yet loyal, following, and are examples of how sophisticated the wines, as well as the vintners, of Oregon's wine country have become.

Alloro Vineyards

Alloro Vineyards (www.allorovineyard.com) is an artisan winery dedicated to the small production of handcrafted, world-class Pinot Noir. Established in 1999, the winery is located in the Chehalem Mountains in northern Willamette Valley. The low-yield vineyard is tended with a commitment to the land and vines – complemented by sustainable farming practices - that ensure production of high-quality, well-balanced wines from year to year.

Location: Sherwood, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir

Notable tidbits: Alloro Vineyards was named after the Latin and Italian word for *laurel* (the vineyards are located on Laurel Ridge in the Chehalem Mountains), which also is the evergreen plant that in ancient times symbolized immortality, and is now a symbol of peace and victory.

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Beran Vineyards

Beran Vineyards (www.beranvineyards.com) specializes in the only one grape – Pinot Noir – and produces fewer than 1,000 cases annually of this truly handcrafted wine. The grapes are carefully and individually tended under the guidance of the winemakers, Bill and Sharon Beran. The result: one of the most notable Pinot Noir wines to emerge from Oregon, which has received international attention.

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir

Notable tidbits: Beran Vineyards' 2004 Estate Pinot Noir won a Gold Medal at the Northwest Wine Summit and a Silver Medal at the Atlanta International Wine Challenge.

Freja Cellars

The vintners at Freja Cellars (www.frejacellars.com) are dedicated to the pursuit of producing artisan Pinot Noir. In the classic Burgundian style of winemaking, Freja Cellars' wines resemble Cote de Beaune Burgundies, with Volnay serving as a benchmark. However, the finished product reflects the terroir of the Chehalem mountainside, with distinctly Oregonian characteristics, resulting in complex and fragrant wines.

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir

Notable tidbits: The name *Freja* is a tribute to the Burgundy region of France, the birthplace of Pinot Noir, and to the Scandinavian nomads who first settled Chehalem area. *Freja* is the goddess of love and fertility and patron of crops and birth in Norse mythology.

Gypsy Dancer Estates

Gypsy Dancer Estates (www.gypsydancerestates.com) is an estate-grown winery located in the heart of the Chehalem Mountain. Owner Gary Andrus crafts world-class Pinot Noir from grapes harvested from the northern Willamette Valley in Oregon, and from Central Otago, New Zealand. The wines have been described as an “exploration of two New World appellations.”

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris

Notable tidbits: Proprietor Gary Andrus co-founded *Pine Ridge Winery* in Napa, California and *Archery Summit* in Dundee, Oregon.

Helvetia Winery

Helvetia Winery (www.helvetiawinery.com) is located just 25 minutes from downtown Portland, has made a name for itself among wine connoisseurs with its Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir. Owners John Platt and Elizabeth Furse have been producing wines since 1987 (as Helvetia Vineyards), from vines that were planted in 1982; however, it wasn't until 1996 when they opened their own winery.

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris

Notable tidbits: During the holidays, Christmas trees are available for purchase at the winery. Co-proprietor Elizabeth Furse was a congresswomen in the United States House of Representatives from 1993-1999.

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Vintage Grapes

Oregon has been producing wine grapes and wine since the late 1880s, and a local legend tells a story of growers planting Oregon's first Pinot Noir grape in the rich Washington County soil. Today, Washington County has several vineyards and wineries that have been producing grapes and wines for decades.

David Hill Vineyards and Winery

David Hill Vineyards and Winery (www.davidhillwinery.com) is one of the most picturesque wine venues in northern Willamette Valley, with its sweeping views of Oregon's Coast Range. Current owners Milan and Jean Stoyanov purchased the property in 1992; however, the vineyard boasts some of the oldest vines in the state, which produce a variety of rich, flavorful wines.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer

Notable tidbits: Grapes were first planted at the site in 1883, but most were torn out during Oregon's Prohibition in 1913.

J. Albin Winery

J. Albin Winery and Laurel Vineyard are owned and operated by John Albin. In 1981, he and his wife, Lynn, purchased and planted vines at his Laurel Vineyard, which, until 2000, were sold to other wineries in Oregon. Now, some of the fruit produced from the oldest vines are kept to make Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris under the J. Albin label.

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris

Notable tidbits: John Albin started his wine-making career in the state of Washington with *Associated Vintners* (now Columbia Winery).

Oak Knoll Winery

Founded by Ronald and Marjorie Vuylsteke in 1970, Oak Knoll (www.oakknollwinery.com) is the oldest winery in Washington County. The first wines produced under the Oak Knoll label were fruit wines, which satisfied the palates of wine drinkers at the time. However, the winery became known for its Pinot Noir in the 1980s. Today, Oak Knoll, under the direction of the second generation of vintners, continues its winemaker traditions. And although American connoisseurs of wine have developed more sophisticated palates, the winery still produces its raspberry wine, which remains one of their most popular wines.

Location: Hillsboro, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer, Cabernet Sauvignon, Muller Thurgau, American Niagara and Frambrosia

Notable tidbits: Oak Knoll does not grow its own wine grapes; however, the winery uses grapes grown throughout the state, which the vintners to produce an extensive selection of varietals. Oak Knoll's 1980 Vintage-Select bottling won Best of Show and the Governor's Trophy at the 1983 Oregon State Fair wine competition.

Tualatin Estate Vineyards

Established in 1973, Tualatin Estate Vineyards (www.tualatinestate.com), sister property to the internationally recognized Willamette Valley Estates, has built a reputation as one of the most respected winery and vineyard sites in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Building on this experience, Tualatin Estate has cultivated innovative winemaking and viticulture practices, resulting in the production of award-winning wines.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc, Gewürztraminer, Muscat

Notable tidbits: Tualatin Estate Vineyards is the only Oregon vineyard to have won the Best of Show in both the red and white wine categories at the London International Wine Competition in the same year.

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Italian Style Wines

Several wineries in Washington County created wine in the traditional Italian style of winemaking, which has resulted in some of the most savory white and red wines this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Apolloni Vineyards

Apolloni Vineyards (www.apolloni.com) produces outstanding traditional wine from a variety of pinot grapes using traditional Italian winemaking methods to blend the best of aspects of old- and new-world winemaking. “Tradition, Italian, and Family” are the foundations of Apolloni Vineyards and its winemaking, which was founded in 1999 by Alfredo and Laurine Apolloni.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Viognier

Notable tidbits: Apolloni Vineyards practices the standards of the Oregon LIVE sustainable viticulture program

Ponzi Vineyards

Perhaps one of the best-known wineries in the state is Ponzi Vineyards (www.ponziwines.com). As visionaries and pioneers of the Oregon wine industry, founders Dick and Nancy Ponzi were responsible for creating the industry’s foundation. Founded in 1970, Ponzi is internationally recognized for its wine, and for its viticultural innovation that includes 100-acres of LIVE-Certified, family-owned vineyards. Ponzi Vineyards continues to excite Oregon’s wine industry by introducing Italian-style wines such as Arneis and Dolcetto to the Willamette Valley.

Location: Beaverton, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Chardonnay, Arneis and Dolcetto

Notable tidbits: As true pioneers in wine tourism, Dick and Nancy Ponzi were considered pioneers in the Oregon wine industry due to their lobbying efforts that helped allow wineries and adjoining tasting rooms to be constructed on agricultural farm land.

Non-Traditional Wine and Saké

As new trends emerge, several wineries in Washington County are cultivating reputations as bold innovators in the industry, bringing new products and winemaking techniques to the burgeoning region.

Purple Cow Vineyards

Purple Cow Vineyards (www.purplecowvineyards.com) is a family-owned winery that entered the Oregon wine market in 2005. The winery, which produces only 500 cases per year, has started gaining attention for its selection of red and white wines, as well as innovative blends. In addition, the winery has garnered awards for their aggressive production of grapes generally regarded as too heat-demanding for the geography of the cool northern Willamette Valley, resulting in wines that aren't common to the region, such as Muscat and Tempranillo.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Marechal Foch, Dry Muscat, Cabernet Franc/Sauvignon blend

Notable tidbits: Purple Cow’s 2005 Marechal Foch award won “Best in Show” at the Washington County Fair in 2007, a notable feat for a newcomer in the Oregon wine industry.

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SakéOne

Brewed like beer, but regarded by many as a sophisticated alternative to wine, saké has been growing in popularity in the U.S. SakéOne (www.sakeone.com) is the only American-owned sake brewery in the world, and produces world-class saké - from traditional premium ginjo to innovative fruit-infused saké – using the same traditional methods as in Japan.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Labels: G, Momokawa, Moonstone

Notable tidbits: SakéOne has partnered with Momokawa Brewing Japan, and imports to the U.S. Japanese saké under the label *Murai Family*.

Each year, SakéOne hosts a *Shinto* ceremony, a ritual with deep Japanese meaning and originally used as a gift to an *Okamisama* (divine being).

Shafer Vineyard Cellars

The vineyards of Shafer Vineyard Cellars (www.shafervineyardcellars.com) were established in 1973, with the first wines produced from these vines in 1978. Under the guidance of proprietors Harvey and Miki Shafer, the winery produces a variety of wines, including Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris, as well as some varietals that aren't as common in the region, including Ice Wine, Muller-Thurgau and Fume Blanc.

Location: Forest Grove, Oregon

Varietals produced: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Riesling (dry and sweet), Gewürztraminer, Muller-Thurgau

Notable tidbits: *Miki's Christmas Shop*, located next to the tasting room and open year-round, has one of the largest collections of German smokers (incense burners) in the United States.

About Washington County, Oregon

Washington County, Oregon, is scenically situated between Portland and the Oregon Coast, and is only minutes away from downtown Portland. The county spans 727 square miles, and includes the growing communities of Banks, Beaverton, Cornelius, Durham, Forest Grove, Gaston, Hillsboro, King City, North Plains, Tigard, Tualatin, Sherwood and Wilsonville. Washington County is home to world-class golf courses, award-winning wineries, an array of outdoor recreation opportunities, lush, natural and scenic wetlands and wildlife preserves, superb dining and myriad shopping, from boutiques to antiques. Its thriving corporate business parks house some of the largest high-tech and industrial companies in the world, such as Nike, Columbia Sportswear and Intel. For more information on the region, visit the Washington County Visitors Association's website, www.visitwashingtoncountyoregon.com, or call 503-644-5555, toll-free, 800-537-3149.

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