

Home > Travel inspiration > Food + Drink > Wine

# 6 of the Best Wineries in Washington State

By Bryce Wiatrak    Nov 17, 2021



Photo by Heather Hill

Abeja, in Walla Walla, unfolds on a restored, century-old farmstead with 38 acres of vineyards; there's also an inn on the property.

Trailing only California, Washington is the USA's second-biggest wine-producing state—and these half-dozen Washington wineries offer some of the finest pours around.

Washington's history of grape growing dates back to 1825, when the Hudson's Bay Company planted vines at [Fort Vancouver](#) (now a National Historic Site, set across the river from [Portland](#) in [vineyard-heavy Oregon](#)). By the time an early Prohibition struck the Evergreen State in 1916, Washington had already nursed a burgeoning wine industry, supported by its sizeable population of European immigrants, many from wine-loving countries like [Italy](#), [France](#), and [Germany](#). The movement gradually rebounded post-Prohibition, starting in the mid-20th century, with pioneering and still-in-production labels, such as Quilceda Creek, Chateau Ste. Michelle, and Leonetti, which helped forge a path to Washington's current status of harboring one of the country's most dynamic fine wine industries.

Washington cultivates grapes—with cabernet sauvignon, merlot, syrah, riesling, and chardonnay leading the charge—in several pockets across the state, including around the banks of Puget Sound and the trendy, emerging Columbia Gorge region. The largest and most classic wine region, however, is the Columbia Valley, which traverses the Oregon border and includes several important sub-appellations, such as Walla Walla, Yakima Valley, and Horse Heaven Hills, among others.

Many Washington wineries offer tastings on site, but several have also set up shop in the town of Woodinville, part of the Puget Sound viticultural area, roughly 30 minutes northeast of [Seattle](#). An easy trek from the city by car, Woodinville offers the opportunity to taste wines from across the state (including its most remote locales), all in one compact town. Whether in Woodinville or deep in wine country, here are six of the top wineries to visit in Washington State.



Courtesy of Abeja

Visits to the Abeja winery's idyllic country farmhouse setting are by appointment only.

## Abeja

### *Walla Walla*

Ken and Ginger Harrison founded [Abeja](#) in 2000, restoring a century-old farmstead in Walla Walla and cultivating a 38-acre property. The wines, focused on cabernet sauvignon, merlot, and chardonnay, are made by husband-and-wife duo Daniel Wamplfer and Amy Alvarez-Wamplfer. The name *Abeja* translates to “bee” in Spanish, a reference to the farmers' ethos of respecting the environment at all levels to maintain a fully functioning ecosystem. Visits to Abeja are strictly by appointment and the property itself is stunning—the most idyllic, elegantly rustic country farmhouse setting you can imagine.

### **What to drink**

Abeja's chardonnay charms with its gentle white floral aromas, coupled with notes of nectarine and fresh peach, and a broad, flowing undercurrent of lemon blossom acidity. Its cabernet sauvignon is exceptional, striking a balance between a taut line of rocky tannins and fleshier smoked cherry and violet pastille flavors.

### **Make it a getaway**

Abeja also operates an inn on the estate—a top option if visiting Walla Walla, [the Inn at Abeja](#) offers a gourmet breakfast and priority for Abeja tasting appointments.