

WALLA WALLA

Union-Bulletin

These Walla Walla Valley wineries give new life to historic buildings

Diane B. Reed May 29, 2022 0



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It's not a big surprise that some of our wineries are housed in historic buildings that were built for other uses. Many also have tasting rooms in historic buildings downtown.

If you want a small taste of local buildings reborn as wineries, here's just a few of these treasures in the Walla Walla Valley (in alphabetical order). If you're a history buff and a wine aficionado, get out there and enjoy all these historic buildings reborn as wineries and tasting rooms.



2014 Mill Creek Road, Walla Walla (abeja.net)

Abeja's winery has its roots in an early 20th century farmstead built by David and Catherine Kibler. In 1986, the abandoned buildings were sold to Greg and Vanessa Finch, who began restoring them and in 1997-99 opened the farmhouse as Mill Creek Inn.

Ken and Ginger Harrison bought the property in 2000 and planted the first vineyard in 2001. In 2002, the property was renamed the Inn at Abeja (Spanish for bee). The business' 2001 cabernet sauvignon was released in 2003, marking the debut of Abeja's winery.

For 20 years, the wine was crafted in the restored mule barn. When they outgrew the space and built a new building for production (in the same style as the complex), the barn became a popular events venue. The tasting room is next door, in the former cow barn.

Other repurposed buildings include the farmhouse, summer kitchen, bunkhouse and chicken coop, converted to lodging and the carriage house, which features suites and barrel rooms. In terms of the most adaptive reuse of buildings, Abeja stands out by sheer numbers.