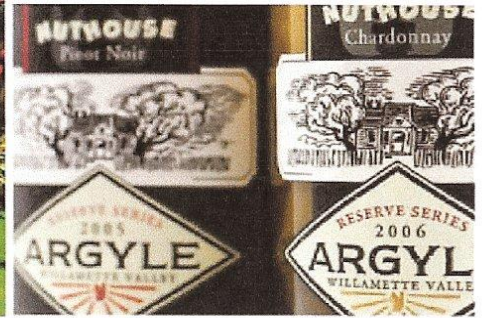
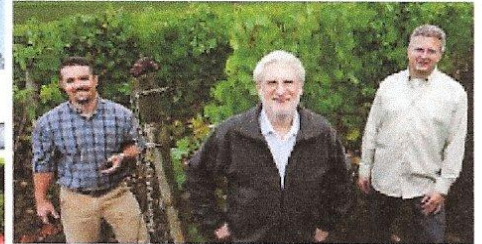


OREGON WINE COUNTRY

The New Napa

Text By Patrick Jones

Dedicated trekking oenophiles (aka wine lovers) have long considered the Napa and Sonoma valleys of California as the Holy Grail for anything wine related — especially when planning vacations. But California's immediate northern neighbor, Oregon, has recently started to gain credence as a fruitful alternative for impassioned travelers seeking a wine-filled getaway.



"We continually hear that visiting Oregon today is like visiting Napa 15, 20 or 25 years ago. What I believe that means is that you are less likely to feel like 'just another tourist' in Oregon."

Oregon is perhaps best known for blowing its top (think Mt. St. Helens) and for manufacturing running shoes with a waffle iron (thank you Nike). But now, Oregon's temperate climate, laid-back vintners and eco-friendly stewardship have nudged it into the consciousness and travel itineraries of those seeking wine nirvana.

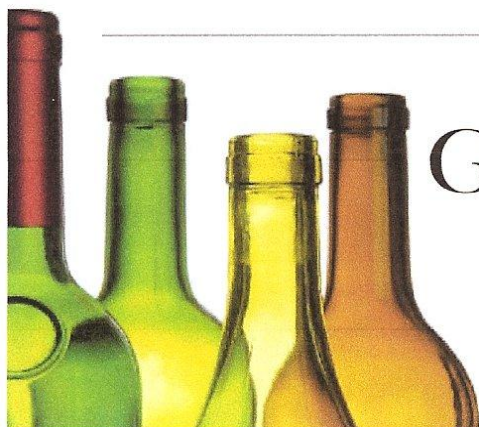
Winemaking isn't new to Oregon. Its genesis hailed when a Californian, against all odds and advice, planted a few grape varieties in Oregon's Umpqua Valley in the early 1960s. His growing success lured other vintners to the state, and by 1969, as Neil Armstrong set foot on the lunar surface, the Oregon Winegrowers Association was founded. Since then, it's estimated that Oregon draws 1.5

million visitors to its wineries each year, and the industry provides more than \$1.4 billion in annual economic activity.

As opposed to many mass-production California wineries, Oregon features mostly smaller artisan wines produced by individual farmers and families. Most produce no more than 5,000 cases per year. Oregon winemakers believe that providing a personal touch is just as important as creating great wines.

David Adelsheim of Adelsheim Vineyard in Newberg, one of the state's first vintners, concurs that one of Oregon's prime appeals as a wine destination is that it welcomes visitors into the fold with the warmth of visiting family.

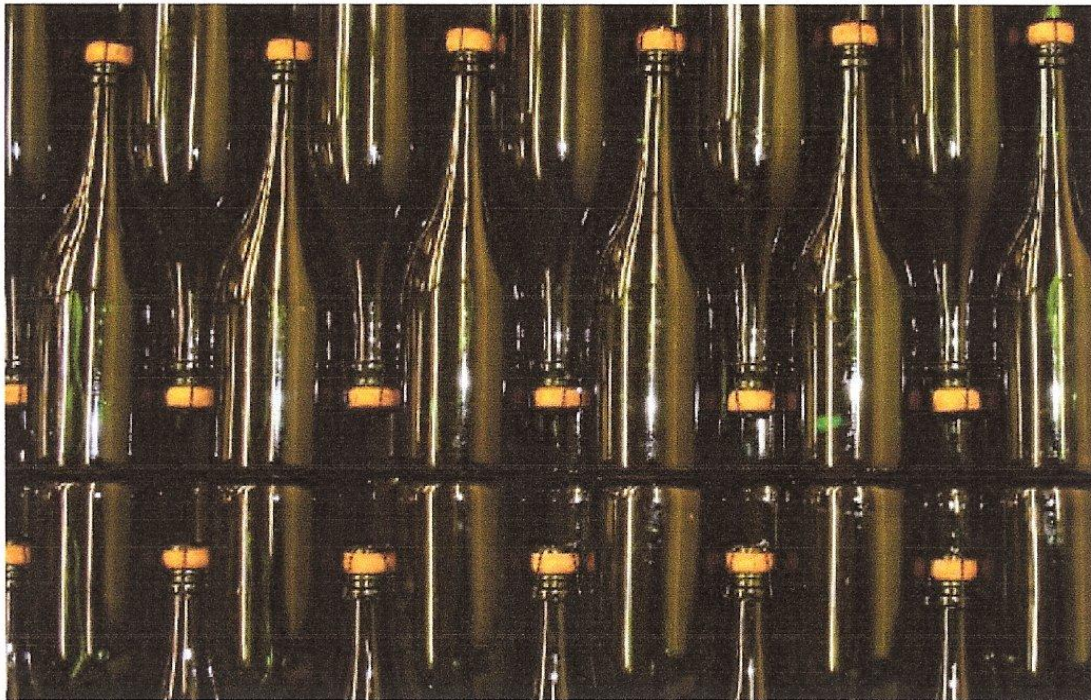
"We continually hear that visiting Oregon



GREEN WINE

Another appeal of Oregon's wine industry is that it is forging the way in 'green' winemaking. The state offers numerous brands that are labeled as Oregon Certified Sustainable Wines, meaning that the wineries earning that distinction have adhered to rigorous organic agricultural and winemaking practices.

"We care about the land and its future," says Rollin Soles of Argyle Wine in Dundee. "Oregon is a leader in sustainable farming practices. It's with this care and emotion that we continue to give a unique culture to our wines."



today is like visiting Napa 15, 20 or 25 years ago," says Adelsheim. "What I believe that means is that you are less likely to feel like 'just another tourist' in Oregon. You are more likely to meet and have a conversation with the winery owner or winemaker. Wineries here can truly engage with their visitors. Tasting room people are actually happy to see guests. And [from a travel budget standpoint], the price of top restaurants and lodging in Oregon wine country has not yet reached the levels seen in some parts of California, but the quality has reached those levels."

For those who are interested, there is no shortage of outfits willing to help people set up every detail of an Oregon wine-tasting trip. Try Oregon Wine Country Explorer (Exploreroregonwine.org), Willamette Valley Wineries Association (Willamettewines.com), or the Southern Oregon Wine Tours (Southernoregonwinetours.com). And for those who aren't wine savvy, Hillsboro-based "Nose for Wine" provides numerous tour options that include wine education classes designed to help clients, "learn to expand your tasting ability," prior to embarking on a wine sampling odyssey.

California may have a longer track record as a wine destination, but Oregon, with its charms of individual craftsman vintners, open-arms hospitality and eco-friendly consciousness, has risen to the rank of formidable challenger in the discriminating tastes of wine lovers everywhere.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY

The Willamette Valley, a region that includes cities

such as Portland, Corvallis and Eugene, sandwiched between the Oregon Coast Range and the Cascade Mountains, contains a majority of the state's wineries. Eugene, home to the University of Oregon, offers a plethora of wine-tasting opportunities nearby. Willamette Valley Vineyards, located in Turner, is a solid choice with their array of Pinot Noir choices as well as Riesling and Chardonnay flavors. The eco-friendly Willamette Valley Vineyards has partnered with national grocer Whole Foods in an effort to recycle some of the 13 billion natural corks produced each year.

SOUTHERN OREGON

The Southern Oregon AVA (American Viticultural Area) has a more Mediterranean climate than the cooler Willamette Valley. There are approximately 40 wineries to tour in cities including Roseburg, Sutherlin, Jacksonville, Ashland and Medford. The appropriately named Raise Your Glass and the Bella Sera Wine Bar in Roseburg are a pair of tasting destinations to consider in Southern Oregon.

EASTERN OREGON

Warm climate varieties are grown throughout the Columbia River Gorge, the Cascade Mountains and the famous Mt. Hood. Syrah, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon (along with Oregon's ubiquitous Pinot Noir grape). Eastern Oregon's wineries share regions with Washington and the Snake River Valley in Idaho.



SHIP YOUR WINE HOME

Fall in love with a new varietal? Arizona is one of the states that accepts direct wine shipments. Consult the tasting room manager for guidance. Alternatively, you can take your wine home with you on the plane -- but make sure you ask for guidance to help protect your wine during travel.

ARGYLE WINERY

691 Highway 99W
Dundee, Oregon 97115
Phone: 503.538.8520 x233
Argylewinery.com

Tasting Room: Open daily from 11-5. Argyle's tasting room is a wonderful place to enjoy the Oregon winemaking culture. Argyle Winery's tasting room often holds special events such as the Labor Day Celebration and Thanksgiving Event that feature local artists, live music, and world-class chefs.

ADELSHEIM VINEYARDS

16800 NE Calkins Ln
Newberg, OR 97132
Phone: 503.538.3652
Adelsheim.com

Tasting Room: Open seven days a week from 11-4, the tasting room includes newly released and some exclusive Pinots sold only through the winery. Private tastings are also available.

WINDERLEA VINEYARD & WINERY

8905 NE Worden Hill Road
Dundee, OR 97115
Phone: 503.554.5900
Winderlea.com

Tasting Room: All proceeds from Winderlea's tasting fee are donated to iSalud! - a unique alliance between Oregon winemakers, Quality Healthcare and medical professionals to provide education and access to healthcare services for Oregon's seasonal vineyard workers and their families.