

May 31, 2011

Balsamroot blooms this spring in the Horse Heaven Hills just below Heaven's Cave winery.

(Photo by Andy Perdue, Wine Press Northwest)



Fresh Press is a weekly publication of Wine Press Northwest magazine. In each edition, we review recently released wines from Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Idaho. Feel free to forward to your wine-loving friends and family. For more information on our tasting methods and review process, please go to the last page.

# Spotlight: JoieFarm

2825 Naramata Road, Penticton, B.C. VOH 1N0  
250-496-0073 • <http://www.joie.ca>

In these chaotic times, we seek the comfort of a consistently delicious glass of wine.

JoieFarm continues to meet expectations. Wine Press Northwest's 2007 B.C. Winery to Watch developed into the 2010 B.C. Winery of the Year.

It's not just us, though. Earlier this month, JoieFarm's 2010 Re-Think Pink brought back the Best Rosé at the 30th annual Riverside International Wine Competition in Temecula, Calif. Last year, JoieFarm's 2009 Noble Blend earned Best White Wine at the California judging, which draws more than 2,000 entries.

Heidi Noble and husband, Michael Dinn, proved to be quick studies since their debut vintage of 2004. Noble graduated from college and worked as a chef in Toronto and Montreal before moving to Vancouver and becoming a sommelier. Dinn also is a certified sommelier.

The synergy explains why their wines work so well with food, and affirmation came when acclaimed Chez Panisse in Berkeley, Calif., began serving Joie.

Robert Thielicke joined their winemaking team in 2009, and JoieFarm hasn't looked back.

Thielicke left Mount Boucherie Winery in West Kelowna to manage the vineyard and the run the winery. Dinn continues to explore a distribution channel into the United States, however baby boy Theo and the success of the Vancouver Canucks have created enjoyable distractions.

However, JoieFarm's production looks to be expanding soon with the recent purchase of 12 acres for \$1.2 million nearby on the Naramata Bench.

And while these erstwhile sommeliers know who to wield a wine key, they are devoted to screwcaps.

**Outstanding! JoieFarm 2010 A Noble Blend, Okanagan Valley, \$24.** The translation of Edelwicker is "a noble blend," and it fits in so many ways, starting with Gewürztraminer (43%) from five vineyards, including their estate. Next is Riesling (38%), Pinot Auxerrois (14%) and Pinot Gris. Wide-ranging aromas lead with gooseberry and passion fruit as its carries a tantalizing theme of Juicy Fruit and Wrigley's Spearmint gum, backed by delicate notes of jasmine, elderberry blossom and honeydew melon. The packages rushes through on the palate, then the acidity lifts it to another level. Those tropical flavors and white peach are ripe, but not sweet as Riesling takes the steering wheel for the final drive of lime and wet stone. The residual sugar finishes at 1.7%. (3,775 cases, 13% alc.)

**Outstanding! JoieFarm 2010 Riesling, Okanagan Valley, \$23.** The winemaking team of Heidi Noble and Robert Thielicke focused on three vineyards — 8th Generation in Okanagan Falls, St. Hubertus in Kelowna and Zeller Family in Naramata — for a classic B.C. expression of this German grape. A wide assortment of aromatics includes Granny Smith apple, Thompson seedless grape, white peach, hominy, candy corn and diesel. The flavors sing with lime, jasmine, rosewater, honeysuckle, lychee and more apple. They liken it to a German spatlese with its residual sugar of 2.5%, and the amount of tartness is akin to a piece of Quench Gum. Enjoy with ceviche sprayed with lime juice or serve it in a cool glass. (1,119 cases, 11.9% alc.)

**Recommended. JoieFarm 2010 Un-Oaked Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley, \$23.** 8th Generation Vineyard is not the only Okanagan Falls site to grow the aromatic clone Chardonnay Musque, and it accounts for 22% of the grapes in this bottle. Gooseberry, lime peel and nectarine notes play out in a structure that is slaty,

## WINE ON THE WEB

The Largest Selection of Northwest Wines Online

*mad*WINE™

ESQUIN WINE MERCHANTS

[www.madwine.com](http://www.madwine.com)

# JoieFarm continued

briny, savory and mouthwatering. Enjoy with a grilled pork loin. (1,008 cases, 13.2% alc.)

**Outstanding! JoieFarm 2010 Re-Think Pink, Okanagan Valley, \$21.** Last year's cool vintage didn't seem to damage the construction of this rosé, a blend of Pinot Noir (53%), Pinot Meunier (25%), Gamay (12%) and Pinot Gris. Aromas of Rainier cherry, light strawberry, watermelon, apricot and pineapple don't

mislead. The fruit is lively, bright and delicious to drink. Notes ran from those cherries, to plum and a rhubarb jellybean with blood orange acidity. While there's a delicate feel, there's some nice grip too, which brought thoughts of oven-baked lasagna or fun fare such as barbecued hamburger served with a slice of fresh tomato. (3,032 cases, 13.2% alc.)

## Wine ratings

All wines reviewed here are tasted blind after being submitted by producers. They are rated Outstanding, Excellent and Recommended by a tasting panel.

**Outstanding:** These wines have superior characteristics and should be highly sought after.

**Excellent:** Top-notch wines with particularly high qualities.

**Recommended:** Delicious, well-made wines with true varietal characteristics.

**Best Buy:** A wine that is \$15 or less.

Priced are suggested retail and should be used as guidelines. Prices are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise noted.

For more details about our judging system, see the last page of this document.

# New releases we've tasted

## Cabernet Sauvignon

**Excellent. Bateaux Cellars 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, Yakima Valley, \$24.** This upstart winery in Toledo, Wash., made a wise choice in retaining the services of its winemaker — Marcus Miller of Airfield Estates. His first release for them is impressive and big, launching with aromas of dusty cherries, strawberry, cassis, coffee and hints of a fresh-baked Cinnabon. Cherries dominate the flavors, starting with its smooth entry and gradual build up of cherry skin tannin, pie cherry acidity and more cinnamon in the

finish. And the screwcap is another thumbprint of Miller. (100 cases, 14.5% alc.)

## Merlot

**Outstanding! Arch Terrace 2006 Terra Blanca Estate Vineyard Merlot, Red Mountain, \$20.** Keith Pilgrim's second label from his showpiece facility on Red Mountain serves as another example of why many wines from Washington's smallest appellation show best if given a bit more time in the bottle than most. Strawberry, dried cherry, tobacco and cedar aromas become fully developed on the remarkably

The poster for the Vintage Spokane Wine & Food Festival features a central graphic with the word "VINTAGE" in large white letters, "SPOKANE" in green below it, and a cluster of purple grapes to the right. Below this, it says "A FOOD & WINE AFFAIR" in white. The date "JUNE 5TH" and location "THE LINCOLN CENTER" are prominently displayed, along with the price "\$60 PER TICKET". On the left, a wine glass is shown with red wine being poured. On the right, a bottle of wine is featured with text that reads "SAMPLE AN ARRAY OF WASHINGTON & IDAHO WINES" and "DELICIOUS BITES FROM SPOKANE'S TOP RESTAURANTS". At the bottom, there are logos for sponsors including "DAREWINE", "VINO", "VIRING", and "MUCKLEBROOK CASINO". It also mentions "TICKETS AVAILABLE AT VINTAGESPOKANE.COM" and "HOSPICE OF SPOKANE" with a note that "A portion of the proceeds benefit Hospice of Spokane".

## New releases we've tasted

smooth and lively palate. It's akin to a berry milkshake. (1,000 cases, 13.5% alc.)

**Outstanding! Kyra Wines 2007 Merlot, Wahluke Slope, \$16.** Those who say Washington-made Merlot is a tough sell haven't tasted this little gem from Kyra Baerlocher's quaint winery in Moses Lake. The nose is a berry medley with rich blackberry jam and strawberry, and a puff of pleasing dustiness. It's a drink of hedonism, filled with flavors of cherry, raspberry, smooth chocolate and coffee. Nicely integrated tannins carry into a finish of strawberry filled hard candy. (238 cases, 14.2% alc.)

**Excellent. Birchfield Winery 2008 Merlot, Horse Heaven Hills, \$19.** Onalaska, Wash., isn't known as wine country, but if you find some fox lawn ornaments down a road with a white picket fence, you've found the Fox family's tiny winery. Real estate partner Craig Steepy is the winemaker, and he should have no problem selling this offering of black cherry and cassis that's backed by plenty of oak notes. Skill shows with the tannins akin to fine-grain sandpaper, cranberry acidity and a finish of a blueberry muffin. (100 cases, 13% alc.)

### Syrah

**Recommended. Ash Hollow Vineyards & Winery 2007 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley, \$28.** Bella Terra Vineyard allowed for a rustic expression of black raspberry, strawberry and bell pepper, black peppercorn notes, chased by a balance of acidity with tannin and a squirt of cherry juice. (560 cases, 14.7% alc.)

**Excellent. Barrister Winery 2007 Morrison Lane Vineyard Syrah, Walla Walla Valley, \$28.** Greg Lipsker and Michael White have been working with prized Walla Walla fruit almost from the time these to Spokane attorneys got started making wine. This starts with aromas of plump blueberry, cherry cola, smoked jerky and sweet caramel. It's even better on the palate with more blueberry, black pepper and smooth homemade fudge flavors. The scales of tannin and acidity, while weighty, are balanced. (168 cases, 15.7% alc.)

**Excellent. Birchfield Winery 2008 Syrah, Horse Heaven Hills, \$20.** The Fox family is creating a planned community east of Chehalis, and the logo for the project also adorns the label of their wines. A product of two barrels from McKinley Springs Vineyard, this release might make it out of the housing development. The nose is filled hints of blueberry and smoky barrel tones reminiscent of an Almond Joy. Fruit dominates the rich drink, however, as blueberries continue, mixed with blueberry and chocolate-covered

cherries. The tannins drive in late, just behind the pomegranate acidity. (50 cases, 13% alc.)

**Excellent. Capstone Cellars 2006 Boushey Vineyard Syrah, Yakima Valley, \$25.** Roy Bays long has had the privilege of taking Dick Boushey fruit back to this Longview, Wash., winery. And the pleasure is yours, starting with a wafting of dusty cherry, marionberry and blueberry, along with white pepper and hints of spice cake. There's elegance to the palate of blueberry, blackberry and raspberry, backed by hints of pomegranate. Its finish shows off a pinch of white pepper, a bite of cigar leaf and almost no tannin. (200 cases, 13.4% alc.)

**Outstanding! Eleganté Cellars 2008 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley, \$28.** There's a history in Walla Walla of educators who turned into successful winemakers, and Doug Simmons is among the latest turn the tassel on the mortarboard. Unlike many expressions of this Rhône variety, his product of Les Collines Vineyard presents food-friendly acidity and reduced alcohol. But there's more, starting with aromas of black raspberry, black pepper, crushed leaf and fresh-baked brownies. Blueberry and black currant flavors rule the palate, backed by leather and late tannins. Enjoy with bison or elk. (70 cases, 13% alc.)

**Outstanding! Ginkgo Forest Winery 2006 Syrah, Wahluke Slope, \$18.** A big percentage of Washington's wine grapes roll through Mattawa, but at this point, Mike Thiede's winery is the only winery with a tasting room. Here's a tasty reason to swing by, starting with a youthful nose of raspberry freezer jam, boysenberry preserves and juniper berry. On the attack, it's a mouthful of boysenberry, raspberry, Bing cherry and a rub of juniper berry and eucalyptus. The finish of black pepper and blackberry would pair deliciously with a big rib eye steak. It earned Best of Show at the 2011 Capital Food and Wine Festival. (239 cases, 14% alc.)

**Excellent. Otis Kenyon Winery 2007 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley, \$30.** This multi-generation family winery in Walla Walla blends estate Stellar Vineyard fruit with the dry-farmed Patina Vineyard for a big and flavorful package. Aromas open with black cherry, blueberry, cedar and a hint of caramel macchiato. Berry and cherry flavors spill out with notes of white pepper, tobacco and chocolate. Lingering lime peel and sour cherry flavors seal the deal. (658 cases, 14.3% alc.)

**Excellent. Trillium Creek Winery 2008 Syrah, Columbia Valley, \$20.** Claude Gahard retired from Continental Airlines and launched his winery in Home, Wash., along Carr Inlet. The approach to this Syrah is all about young fruit such as blueberry and marionberry, along with a whiff of caramel. He nails the landing with raspberry and blueberry flavors. Tobacco

## New releases we've tasted

leaf gives complexity and its long skid of blackberries brings lots of acidity. (125 cases, 13.6% alc.)

**Excellent. Walter Dacon Wines 2007 C'est Syrah Belle, Columbia Valley, \$30.** Year after year, Lloyd Anderson produces three of the Northwest's top Syrahs. This offering — traditionally the least expensive of his troika — is no exception, opening with baked berry compote, caramel and hints of a dusty country road. The contributions of Ranch at the End of the Road, Destiny Ridge and Boushey vineyards also make for flavors of juicy blackberry and black raspberry in a nice structure that's led by suitable tannin. (450 cases, 14.9% alc.)

**Best buy! Recommended. Weatherwax Cellars 2006 Syrah, Yakima Valley, \$15.** Finding Syrah at this price is rare, yet Onalaska, Wash., winemaker Ralph Warner not only keeps the cost to the consumer down, but also the alcohol level. That's rare these days in Washington Syrah. This is no fruit bomb. Instead, there's food-friendly finesse with its tones of blueberry, cracked black pepper, tobacco leaf and low tannin. (100 cases, 12.75% alc.)

### Cabernet Franc

**Recommended. Barrister Winery 2008 Cabernet Franc, Columbia Valley, \$28.** As far as Cab Francs go, this lacks the leafiness normally associated with the variety. Frankly though, it rates high when it comes to drinkability and will have a strong attraction among those who seek oak nuances. Plum, Bing cherry, mulberry, saddle leather and smoky tobacco aromas come wafting. It's plummy on the palate, joined by blackberry and strawberry flavors, bittersweet chocolate, spicy tannins and some late minerality. (1,200 cases, 14.9% alc.)

**Excellent. Northwest Mountain Winery 2008 Cabernet Franc, Columbia Valley, \$28.** Ray Curtis moved to the Northwest from Ohio and recently opened a winery in Olympia. He coaxed out aromas of strawberry, black currant, clove and white pepper, and the drink that follows flows with flavors of pomegranate, dried cranberry and more cherry and cocoa powder. That fruity acidity, backed by note of tobacco leaf and black olives, opens the door to a variety of Italian fare. (30 cases, 14.8% alc.)

### Sauvignon Blanc

**Best buy! Excellent. Bateaux Cellars 2009 Sauvignon Blanc, Yakima Valley, \$15.** With their tasting room near the Cowlitz River and in the shadow of Mount St. Helens, this young winery uses its name to pay tribute to the small boats during the days of Lewis & Clark. And this wine would score well in Anthony's Oyster Olympics. Green apple, lime peel,

gooseberry and grassy notes sail onto the lean palate. There's a good stream of acidity and an enjoyable hint of fresh peach. (100 cases, 14% alc.)

**Excellent. DiStefano Winery 2009 Sauvignon Blanc, Columbia Valley, \$20.** Hillary Sjolund lifted this longtime Woodinville cellar to new heights — and our 2008 Washington Winery of the Year award — before leaving to start her own winery. Her remarkable consistency with this grape shows nicely here, opening with dusty gooseberry, muskmelon, lemon yogurt, banana and orange aromas. There's complexity to the palate with a crisp entry of lime juice, more creamy lemon in the middle and a bite of Granny Smith apple in the finish. Delicious on its own or with shellfish. (1,400 cases, 14.2% alc.)

### Pinot Gris

**Excellent. Bateaux Cellars 2009 Pinot Gris, Yakima Valley, \$15.** A group of friends near Vancouver, Wash., tapped into Prosser's Airfield Estates — Wine Press Northwest's 2010 Washington Winery to Watch — for their fruit and their winemaker. Done in a fruit-forward style, there's tartness to the nose as it hints at starfruit, honeydew melon, jicama, Bosc pear and Granny Smith apple. It's a very tasty and tropical drink, starting with the entry of pineapple. Lingering acidity of citrus and tart apple in the finish bode well for ling cod drizzled with lemon juice. The tasting room is in Toledo, Wash., a few miles north of Longview. (100 cases, 14% alc.)

### White blends

**Best buy! Recommended. Brooks Wines 2008 Amycas White, Oregon, \$15.** Six vineyards and six varieties — Pinot Gris (30%), Pinot Blanc (23%), Gewürztraminer (15%), Chardonnay (14%), Muscat (12%) and Riesling — show signs of *surlie* aging with buttery, lush and sweet notes of baked apple, lemon custard, lychee, vanilla, anise and citrus pith. (1,050 cases, 13.1% alc.)

**Best buy! Excellent. Mount Baker Vineyards & Winery NV Willapa Bay Oyster Blanc, Washington, \$13.** While not labeled as such, legally it could be called Sauvignon Blanc (75%), even though it's backed up by Semillon (15%) and Pinot Gris (10%). Nose-tickling aromas include hints of lime, apricot and tom cat, while vibrant flavors feature lime, gooseberry, fig and apricot with the pit. It's dry as a bone, so serve with ceviche topped by mango. Or maybe a flaky white fish with grilled pineapple, apricot or peach. (216 cases, 13.5% alc.)

**Best buy! Recommended. Ste. Chapelle 2009 Soft White, Snake River Valley, \$8.** Idaho's largest winery increased production of this sweet blend of Chenin

## New releases we've tasted

Blanc, Sauvignon Blanc and Muscat Blanc by 50% over the 2008 vintage. Each variety can be picked out in the aromas with sugar cane, honeycomb, apple box, gooseberry and lychee. On the palate, envision peaches and ice cream. The sugar (6%) and acid level slots it into the "chill-it and kill-it" category and serve it with a plate of Stilton and dried fruits. (22,000 cases, 10% alc.)

### Fortified

**Excellent. Bavarian Cellars NV Naked Raspberry Port-style, Rattlesnake Hills, \$25.** David Padgett might crafts a wider assortment of dessert wines — many of them fortified — than anyone else in the Northwest. This offering under his third label carries a striking neon-red color, and the aromas soar with hints of raspberry, sweet strawberry and lemon zest. Its very syrupy structure makes it an easy sipper, akin to candied raspberry and black cherry Kool-Aid. (110 cases, 19.5% alc.)

**Recommended. Bavarian Cellars NV Pleasure Point Peach Dessert Wine, Rattlesnake Hills, \$25.** Fresh fruit from near this Zillah, Wash., winery in the Rattlesnake Hills makes for a delectable drink of white tree-ripened peaches with hints of nectarine and rose petal. Serving it cold will best highlight its acidity. These wines are poured and sold at David Padgett's tasting room in the Bavarian-themed resort town of Leavenworth. (110 cases, 19.5% alc.)

**Excellent. Ginkgo Forest Winery 2008 Late Harvest Syrah Port-style, Wahluke Slope, \$22.** The Thiedes grow several varieties at their 28-acre site near Mattawa, Wash., but Syrah might be their specialty. To make this, they use brandy to halt fermentation at 4% residual sugar and move it into American oak for eight months. It results in notes of blackberry, black cherry, dried plums, gun metal and bittersweet chocolate with good acidity. (160 cases, 19.1% alc.)

**Recommended. Horizon's Edge Winery NV Wishful Thinking Port-style, Yakima Valley, \$19.** David Padgett makes a dozen different fortified wines among his three labels in Zillah, Wash., and this is chocolate-based with notes of Irish cream, coffee and plums. Look for the label that depicts the lower torso of a woman in a fuchsia-colored skirt and green stockings with a leg up on a barrel. (210 cases, 19.5% alc.)

**Outstanding! Maison de Padgett Winery NV The Smoking Gun Coffee Port-style, Yakima Valley, \$19.** Time and again, David Padgett's wide-ranging and fancifully named fortified wines rank among the most serious in the Northwest. This one, made from coffee, could be his most outlandish. In addition to notes of coffee, there are also hints at hazelnut and vanilla. One judge likened it to Patron XO Coffee Liqueur, only better because there's pleasing sweetness. It's both an eye opener and an eye closer. (185 cases, 19.2% alc.)

**Recommended. Northwest Mountain Winery NV Dark Mountain Berry Wine, American, \$19.** This new winery in the state capital of Washington creates an after-dinner wine using raspberry and chocolate. It takes you back to your childhood with hints of a purple Tootsie pop and cough syrup. And there's barely a touch of heat in the finish. (35 cases, 16.5% alc.)

**Recommended. Samson Estates Winery 2010 Oro Hazelnut Fortified Wine, Puget Sound, \$21.** In Oregon, they are known as filberts. In Washington's Nooksack Valley, they call them hazelnuts, and Evenson's Rob Dhaliwal roasts, ferments them into wine that's fortified and labeled under the Italian word for "gold." Those who enjoy Nutella should like this offering that includes hints of vanilla, peanut butter, walnut and heavy cream with a mouth feel of lanolin. Suggested pairing include on the rocks, over vanilla ice cream or in coffee. (500 cases, 18% alc.)

**Outstanding! Wedge Mountain Winery NV Roses and Rubies, Washington, \$25.** Charlie McKee takes a tasty approach to this red dessert wine, starting with 100% raspberries from Enfield Farms in Lynden. And he chooses not to fortify this wine with brandy, instead opting for a yeast strain that's tolerant to high alcohol, giving him a residual sugar of 15%. It's quite razzzy from start to finish, opening with an intense and fascinating nose that includes hints of burnt popcorn and pizza sauce. Bright acidity and not much heat give it balance. (167 cases, 18% alc.)

# Northwest wine regions

## Multi-state appellations

**Columbia Valley:** This multi-state appellation is 11 million acres in size and takes up a third of Washington. Established in 1984.

**Columbia Gorge:** This multi-state appellation begins around the town of Lyle and heads west to Husum on the Washington side of the Columbia River. It was established in 2004.

**Walla Walla Valley:** This multi-state appellation is in the southeast corner of Washington and around Milton-Freewater, Ore. Established in 1984.

**Snake River Valley:** This is in southwestern Idaho and southeastern Oregon. It covers 8,263 square miles and was established in 2007.

## Washington

**Yakima Valley:** The Northwest's oldest appellation (established in 1983) stretches past Wapato in the west to Benton City in the east and includes Red Mountain, Rattlesnake Hills and Snipes Mountain.

**Red Mountain:** Washington's smallest appellation is a ridge in the eastern Yakima Valley. It is 4,040 acres in size. Established in 2001.

**Horse Heaven Hills:** This large appellation — 570,000 acres — is south of the Yakima Valley and stretches to the Oregon border. It was established in 2005.

**Wahluke Slope:** Approved in early 2006, this huge landform north of the Yakima Valley is an 81,000-acre gravel bar created by the Ice Age Floods. It is one of the warmest regions in the entire Pacific Northwest. Established in 2006.

**Rattlesnake Hills:** This appellation is in the western Yakima Valley north of the towns of Zillah, Granger and Outlook. The appellation is 68,500 acres in size with about 1,300 acres of vineyards. It was established in 2006.

**Puget Sound:** This sprawling appellation is in Western Washington. It stretches from the Olympia area to the Canadian border north of Bellingham. It also sweeps through the San Juan Islands and to Port Angeles. Established in 1995.

**Snipes Mountain:** This is one of Washington's oldest wine-growing regions. At 4,145 acres in size, it is the state's second-smallest AVA. Grapes have been grown on Snipes Mountain and at the adjacent Harrison Hill (also part of the AVA) since 1914. This AVA is within the Yakima Valley appellation and was approved in 2009.

**Lake Chelan:** This area in north-central Washington is almost entirely within the Columbia Valley. It is a young area, with the oldest vines dating to 1998. About 250 acres are planted here. It was approved in 2009.

## Oregon

**Willamette Valley:** Oregon's largest appellation stretches roughly from Portland to Eugene. Established in 1984.

**Ribbon Ridge:** This is the Northwest's smallest appellation at 3,350 acres. It is best known for its Pinot Noir and is within the Chehalem Mountains AVA. It was established in 2005.

**Yamhill-Carlton:** This is a horseshoe-shaped appellation that surrounds the towns of Yamhill and Carlton. It was established in 2005. The "District" was dropped in 2011.

**Chehalem Mountains:** This is the largest within the Willamette Valley. This 62,100-acre appellation is northeast of the Dundee Hills. It was established in 2006.

**Dundee Hills:** Many of Oregon's pioneer wineries are in the Dundee Hills within Oregon's Yamhill County. The appellation is 6,490 acres in size. It was established in 2005.

**Eola-Amity Hills:** This important region stretches from the town of Amity in the north to the capital city of Salem in the southeast. It is 37,900 acres in size. It was established in 2006.

**McMinnville:** The hills south and west of the Yamhill County city of McMinnville are more than 40,000 acres in size. It was established in 2005.

**Umpqua Valley:** This Southern Oregon appellation surrounds the city of Roseburg north of the Rogue Valley. It can produce Pinot Noir as well as warm-climate grapes. It was established in 1984.

**Rogue Valley:** The Northwest's southern-most appellation surrounds the cities of Medford and Ashland, just north of the California border. It is known for its warm growing conditions. Established in 2001.

**Applegate Valley:** This small valley within the Rogue Valley is known for a multitude of microclimates that can result in wines of distinction and complexity. Established in 2004.

**Southern Oregon:** This AVA encompasses the Umpqua, Rogue and Applegate valleys and Red Hill Douglas County. It was established in 2005.

**Red Hill Douglas County:** This tiny appellation — just 5,500 acres — is within the Umpqua Valley. Fewer than 200 acres of wine grapes, primarily Pinot Noir, are grown here. Established in 2005.

## British Columbia

**Okanagan Valley:** In the province's interior, this 100-mile valley stretches from the border in Osoyoos to Salmon Arm in the north. Most wineries are near Oliver, Penticton and Kelowna. It was established in 1990.

**Similkameen Valley:** This warm valley is west of the southern Okanagan Valley. It was established in 1990.

**Vancouver Island:** This marine-influenced appellation is in the southwest part of the province. Established in 1990.

**Fraser Valley:** This farming area is in the Lower Mainland, south of Vancouver. Established in 1990.

**Gulf Islands:** This appellation includes approximately 100 islands spread out between Vancouver Island and the southern mainland. Established in 2005.

## About us

Wine Press Northwest is a quarterly consumer magazine that focuses on the wine regions of Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Idaho.

Annual subscriptions are \$20. [Click to subscribe.](#)

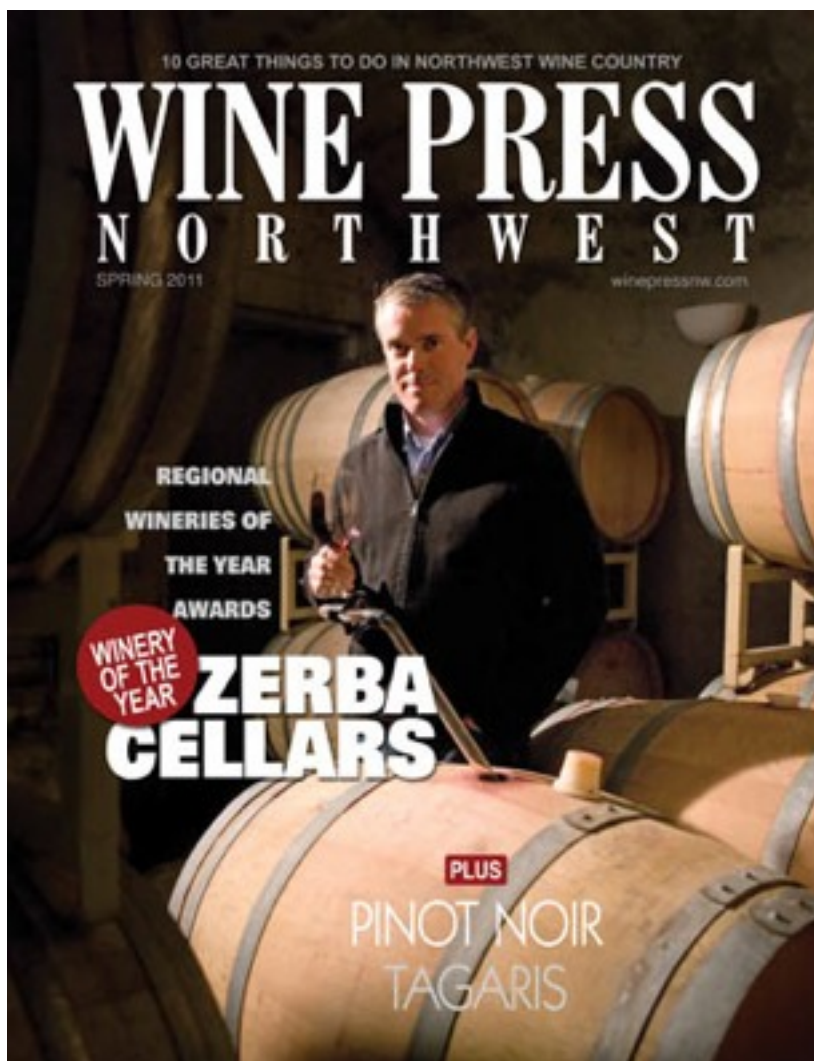
**Publisher:** Rufus M. Friday

**Editor-in-chief:** Andy Perdue  
[editor@winepressnw.com](mailto:editor@winepressnw.com)

**Managing editor:** Eric Degerman  
[edegerman@winepressnw.com](mailto:edegerman@winepressnw.com)

**Advertising inquiries:** Parker Hodge  
[phodge@tricityherald.com](mailto:phodge@tricityherald.com)

© 2011



## Tasting methods

Recent Releases are evaluated under strict conditions to ensure objectivity. Northwest wineries submit wines to Wine Press Northwest for evaluation by Wine Press Northwest's tasting panel. After wines are received, they are stored for at least two weeks and a third party serves them "blind," meaning the tasting panelists do not know the producer. In addition, the panelists are served glasses of wine and are not able to view the bottles or their shapes prior to tasting. Wines are stored in temperature-controlled conditions, allowing them to be served at perfect cellar temperatures.

Price is not a consideration in these evaluations, nor is a winery's advertising activity with Wine Press Northwest, as the magazine's editorial/wine evaluation activities and advertising/marketing efforts are kept strictly separate.

The panel has a combination of technical and consumer palates. If at least three of the four panelists consider a wine technically sound and commercially acceptable, it is included here as "Recommended." The panel may also vote the wine as "Excellent" or "Outstanding," our top rating. Wines considered

unacceptable by the panel are rejected and not included. Reviews are grouped by variety or style and listed alphabetically by winery. Prices listed are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise indicated.

To ensure we maintain an international perspective, our tasting panelists judge thousands of wines annually at various competitions, including: Los Angeles International Wine and Spirits Competition, Riverside International Wine Competition, Dallas Morning News Wine Competition, Indy International Wine Competition, Virginia Governor's Cup, Sonoma County Harvest Fair, Grand Harvest Awards, San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, Pacific Rim International Wine Competition, Long Beach Grand Cru, Washington State Wine Competition, Seattle Wine Awards, Northwest Wine Summit, British Columbia Wine Awards, New York Wine and Grape Foundation Competition, Tri-Cities Wine Festival, Capital Food & Wine Fest and Idaho Wine Competition.