



WELCOME TO WASHINGTON WINE COUNTRY

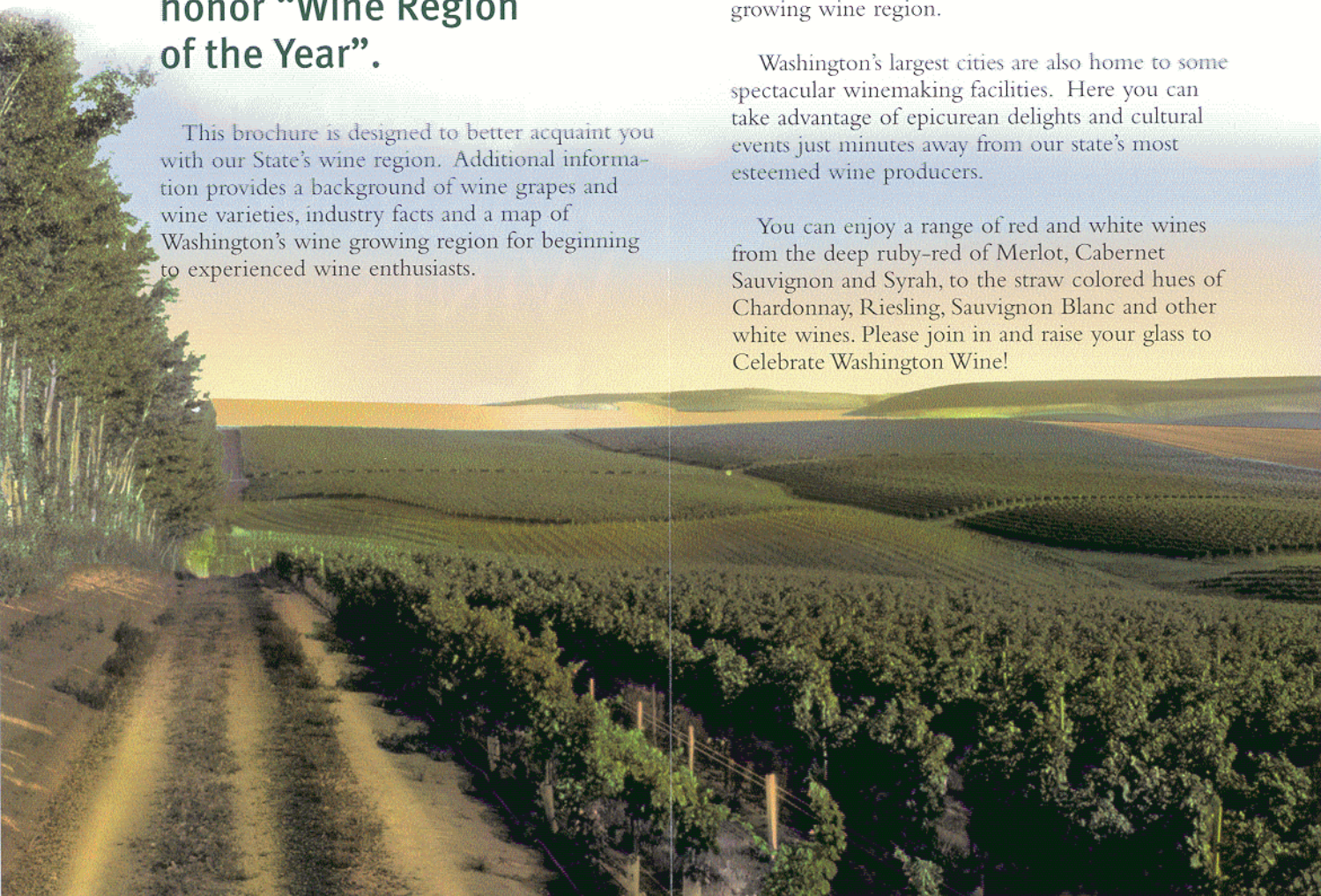
The first American wine region to receive the honor "Wine Region of the Year".

This brochure is designed to better acquaint you with our State's wine region. Additional information provides a background of wine grapes and wine varieties, industry facts and a map of Washington's wine growing region for beginning to experienced wine enthusiasts.

The wine industry offers diverse opportunities to explore Washington State. Wineries, located across the state offer consumers a chance to relax and enjoy a sip of wine in the nation's fastest-growing wine region.

Washington's largest cities are also home to some spectacular winemaking facilities. Here you can take advantage of epicurean delights and cultural events just minutes away from our state's most esteemed wine producers.

You can enjoy a range of red and white wines from the deep ruby-red of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, to the straw colored hues of Chardonnay, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc and other white wines. Please join in and raise your glass to Celebrate Washington Wine!



WASHINGTON WINE FACTS

VITICULTURE REGIONS

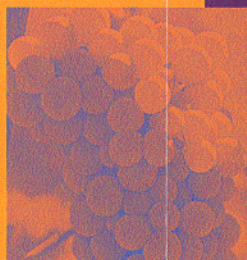
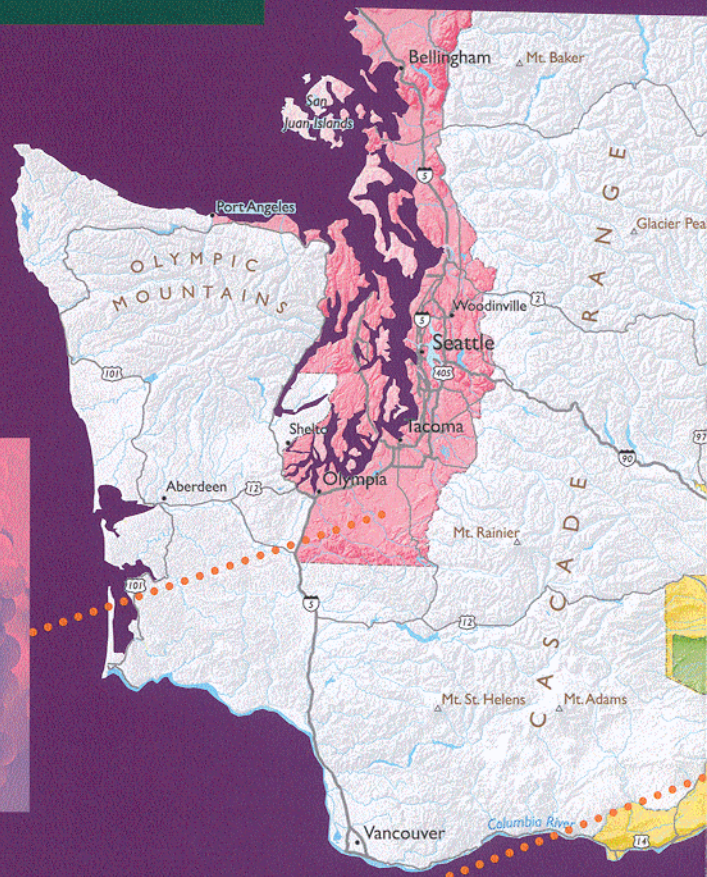
Washington State's northerly latitude allows for an average of 17.4 hours of sunlight during the summer growing season, two hours more than California's prime growing regions. This extra daylight allows grapes to ripen fully and cool nights allow the fruit's natural acids to remain high, creating richly flavored and well-balanced wines.

PUGET SOUND

The Puget Sound appellation, established in 1995, includes more than 60 acres and approximately 35 wineries. The temperate climate rarely suffers from prolonged freezing weather in winter and often enjoys a long, warm summer growing season. The core area of this appellation has a growing season that is drier and sunnier than many classic wine grape growing regions in Europe. Early ripening varieties such as Madeleine Angevine, Müller Thurgau, and Siegerrebe are the predominant varieties. Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir also show promise in this appellation. New varieties are being tested and expansion is anticipated.

RED MOUNTAIN

Washington State's newest appellation, established in 2001, is located at the easternmost tip of Yakima Valley. Red Mountain has a total of 4,040 acres with over 600 acres of planted vineyards situated between Benton City and Richland and is home to six wineries. This appellation is best known for producing red varietals and is widely planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Syrah and Sangiovese.

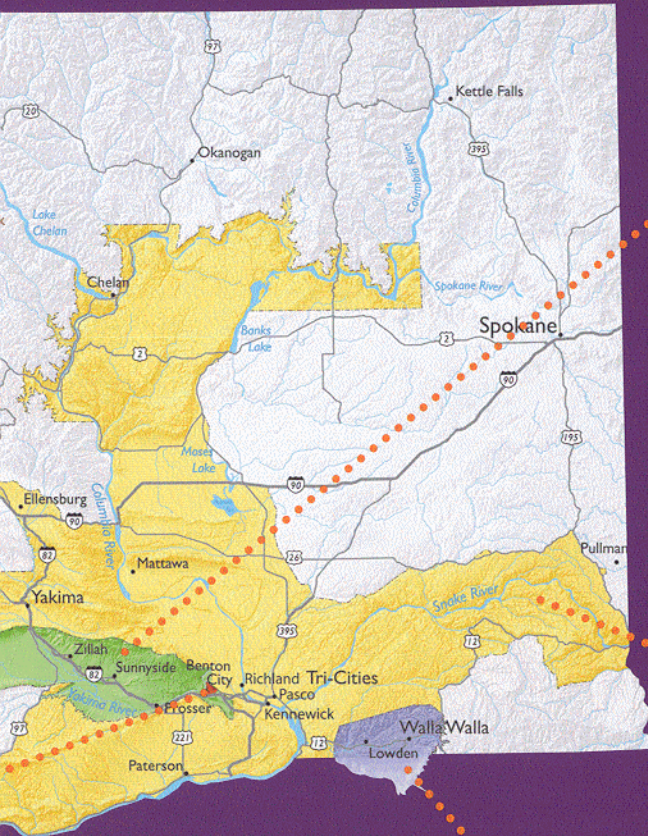


What is

Washington State's AVAs (AVAs) as recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. An AVA has unique characteristics that distinguish it from other wine-growing regions.

- Ranks second nationally in wine production—more than doubled in the past ten years.
- Wine grape growers—nearly 300
- Number of state wineries—170

- Record 2001 harvest—97,600 tons
- Impacts state economy by \$2.4 billion annually
- Employs over 11,000 people

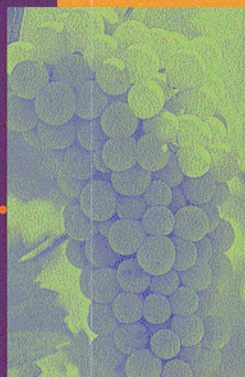


What is an AVA?

Washington has five major American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) established and defined by the U.S. Treasury Department of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms. These areas are defined by their unique climate, soil and physical features, which distinguish them from surrounding areas.

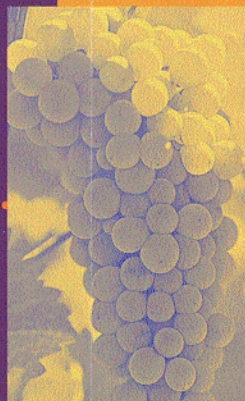
- Production is 4.9 million cases (58.7 million/750 ml bottles)–\$579.9 million retail value
- Red to white wine grape ratio–52 percent red to 48 percent white

YAKIMA VALLEY



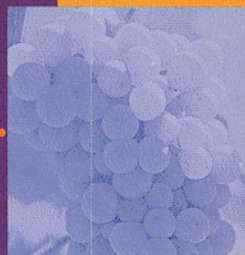
Washington State's first appellation established in 1983 is home to more than 30 wineries and over one third of the state's vineyards. The land mass boasts 11,000 acres with the most widely planted grapes including Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. The foothills of the Cascades form the western boundary with the area extending east to the Kiona Hills near Richland. The Yakima River, the Roza and Sunnyside canals form a network of irrigation that has led to the state's highest percentage of vineyard plantings per square mile. Interstate 82 forms a convenient route for tourists to visit the many wineries concentrated in this area.

COLUMBIA VALLEY



Washington's largest appellation, established in 1984, covers nearly 11 million acres—a third of the state's land mass. It contains the Yakima, Red Mountain and Walla Walla Valley AVA's within its borders and extends from its northern boundary near the Okanogan wilderness south into Oregon and east along the Snake River to the Idaho border. The Western border follows the Cascade Mountains to the beginning of the Columbia Gorge. Columbia Valley is home to more than 16,000 acres of wine grape vineyards and approximately 20 wineries. Varieties planted throughout the region include Merlot, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Riesling.

WALLA WALLA VALLEY



Established in 1984, the Walla Walla appellation has become home to more than 35 wineries and over 1,500 acres of vineyards including areas in both Washington and Oregon. Leading varietals in the appellation include Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay and Syrah. Many wineries host tasting rooms in downtown Walla Walla to provide tourists with easy access to sampling Walla Walla appellation wines.

- Leading red varieties–Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Sangiovese
- Leading white varieties–Chardonnay, Riesling Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Viognier

WASHINGTON'S WINE GRAPES

MERLOT

Washington Merlot, known for its sweet cherry, berry flavors and complex aromas that include mint, cigar box, and sweet spices like nutmeg and cardamom tends to be more full-bodied, moderately tannic and slightly higher in alcohol than its Bordeaux cousins and higher in acidity than those from California. Traditionally used in blends, Merlot gained popularity as a stand-alone wine in the early 1970's. It captured center stage as Washington's star varietal almost 15 years after its first commercial release in 1976.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The king of red grapes grows magnificently in Washington. The heady fruity character of this complex grape develops slowly. In its youth, the wine appears more subtle and restrained than Washington Merlots. Its character can emerge as black currants, cherry, berry, chocolate, leather, mint, herbs, bells pepper, or any combination of these. The wine ages beautifully. Frequently, several years of bottle aging are needed for the wine to show its best. Many of the state's vintners employ traditional blending practices, adding Merlot or Cabernet Franc to the wine.

SYRAH

A relative newcomer to Washington, acreage for Syrah has more than doubled in the past few years. Syrah is just one of the Rhone varietals sparking new interest in Washington. Washington soils and climate are the perfect setting for this grape. A spicy, rich, complex varietal, Syrah grapes turn into big, dark, intensely concentrated wines with aromas and flavors of blackberries, black currants, roasted coffee and leather.

CABERNET FRANC

Long considered primarily a blending grape, Cabernet Franc has recently captured attention of Washington's winemakers who are exploring the grape's unique varietal characteristics. A hardy grape, Cabernet Franc has been of primary value for the sturdy core and firm tannins it adds to softer wines. On its own, it offers delicious, spicy notes with mellow coffee and intense blueberry

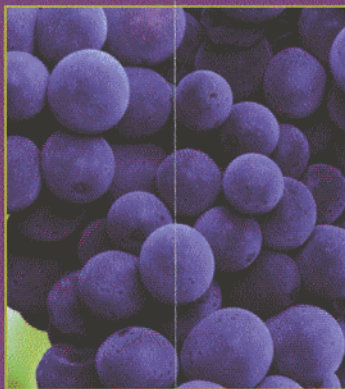
fruit. Washington vineyard acreage devoted to Cabernet Franc has tripled in the last five years.

LEMBERGER

Washington is one of the few places outside of Germany and Austria to successfully cultivate this grape. Washington Lemberger is made in a range of styles, from fresh, fruity Beaujolais-like wines, to rich, hearty types with full oak aging.

OTHER REDS

Sangiovese, Grenache, Zinfandel, Nebbiolo and Pinot Noir

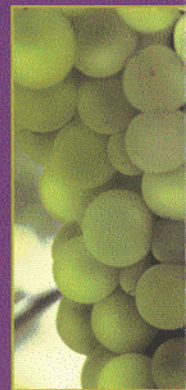


CHARDONNAY

Washington's most widely planted grape is also the best manifestation of the state's winemaking character. While Chardonnay is noted in many other regions as a rich and powerful wine, Washington Chardonnay's are often distinctively crisp and delicate, like fresh apples. Oak is often used with a lighter touch, showing off the varietal character. Some wineries use malolactic fermentation to add rich vanilla and buttery nuances.

RIESLING

Riesling is one of the original grape varieties grown in Washington and tends to be very floral in the nose, with intense apricot-peach flavors. Occasionally "noble rot" (botrytis cinerea) works its magic on Riesling, concentrating the sugars and flavors to produce a late-harvest or ice wine of incomparable intensity. Most Washington Rieslings are vinted in a dry to slightly off-dry style to accompany food.



WASHINGTON
WINE QUALITY
ALLIANCE

The Washington Wine Quality Alliance (WWQA) is a voluntary organization designed to promote quality among the state's wineries and wine grape growers. The logo is designed to aid wine drinkers around the world to recognize and appreciate superior wines. WWQA quality guidelines include:

■ Using 100% vitis vinifera grapes from Washington or clearly labeling the percentage of wine from each alternate source.

SAUVIGNON BLANC

These grapes make wines that appear under two names—Sauvignon Blanc and Fumé Blanc. They are becoming increasingly popular for their distinctive character. Often described as fruity with a touch of herbaceousness and lively acidity. As with Chardonnay, styles range from slightly tart to tangy pineapple overlaid with oak.

SEMILLON

Washington is known for its Semillon, and while this wine is most often enjoyed young, Washington Semillons' have been known to age beautifully into rich, honeyed, nutty wines. When young, it offers a broad spectrum of flavors. Ranging from crisp citrus to melon and fig, and from fresh pears to vanilla. A wine with somewhat lower acidity than Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon is luscious, yet light. Its lower acidity makes it more susceptible to botrytis, resulting in a fair number of late-harvest bottlings.

CHENIN BLANC

This is the white grape variety of Vouvray in the Loire Valley of France. In Washington, it is often used to make similar wine—delicately fruity and highly floral. It brings to mind apple blossoms and citrus with a slightly rich and earthy note found in classic Vouvray. Chenin Blanc is made in both dry and off-dry styles and occasionally produces late-harvest wines.



GEWÜRZTRAMINER

An early Washington success story because of its ability to withstand the cold winters, Gewürztraminer typically offers an allspice, tropical fruit flavor with zesty aroma. Previously made only in off-dry, or slightly sweet style, Gewürztraminer is now being explored by Washington winemakers who wish to make dry styles to retain the varietal's rich aromatics.

OTHER WHITES

Viognier, Pinot Gris, Muscat Canelli, Müller Thurgau, Madeleine Angevine and Aligote

■ Clearly defining the term "Reserve" to reflect wines made from 100% Washington State grapes. A "Reserve" wine must also be among the winery's higher priced wines, and it must not account for more than 3000 cases or 10% of the WWQA member winery's production of a given varietal or blend.

■ Establishing that varietal wines must contain at least 75% or more of the grape type indicated.

WINES WITH FOOD

Living in the Northwest is almost an unfair advantage in learning about food and wine. It's as if a grand design has placed excellent grape-growing sites in the midst of rich cattle-grazing lands, surrounded by cold waters abundant with fish. There's a satisfying sense of completion when you bite into Yakima asparagus or a Walla Walla sweet onion and follow it with a sip of a wine from the same region. Or maybe it's Ellensburg lamb matched with a Washington merlot or Dungeness crab and crisp, dry Washington Riesling.

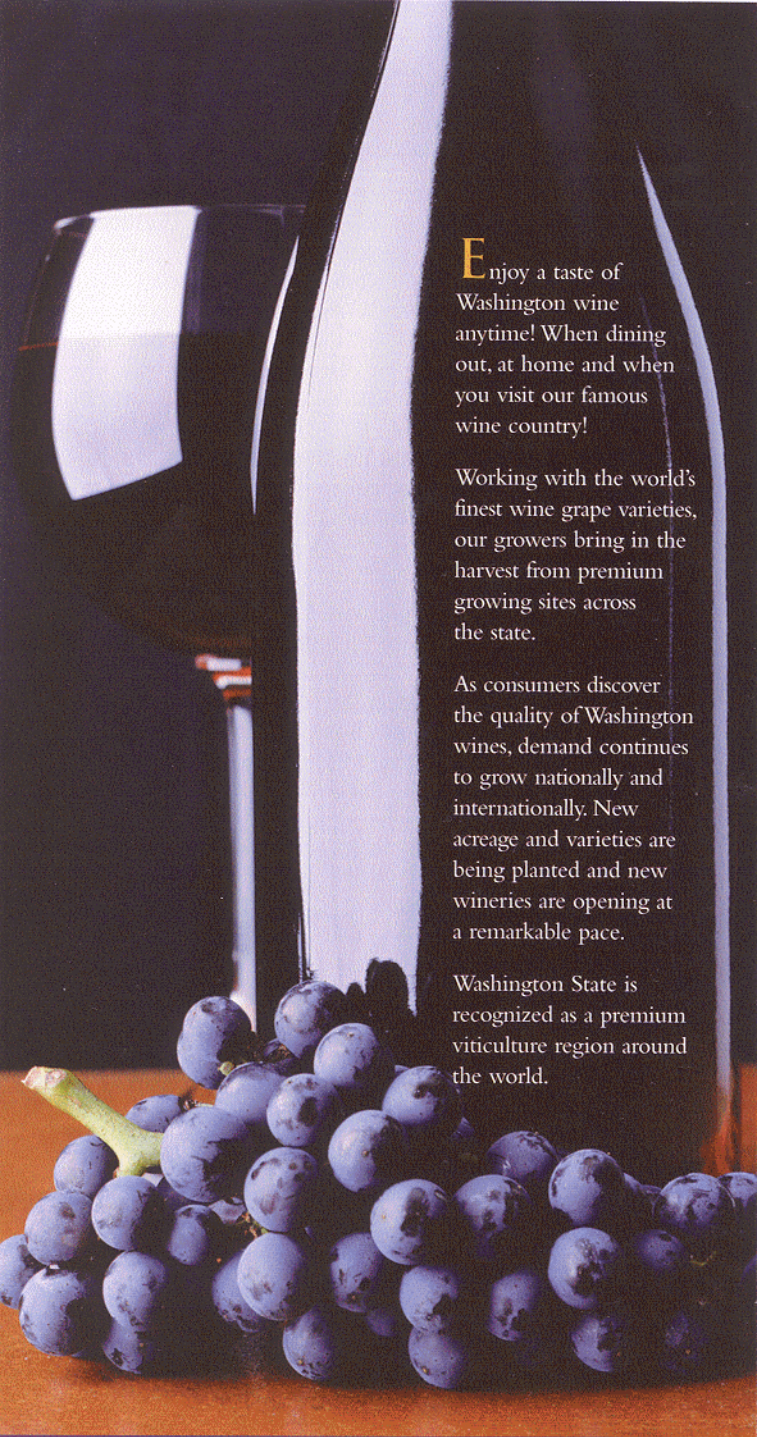
There are no absolute answers to the question of pairing flavors. It is strictly a personal and subjective affair, a matter of finding successful flavor combinations that work for you. The flavors of wine are derived from specific components: sugar, acid, salt, fat, and bitterness. These flavor components, along with texture, are the key factors in evaluating wine and food matches. Successful pairing is usually based on similar or contrasting textures and components.

As in life, balance and harmony are the key elements in putting wine and food together. A little common sense, an open mind, and some trial and error will go a lot further in educating your palate and delivering pleasure than following some tired old axioms. Relax, forget the rules, and try something completely different. Explore some new possibilities by trying to craft certain dishes to match specific wines. You are the ultimate authority when it comes to pleasing your palate. The best rule of thumb these days is to drink and eat what you enjoy and never stop exploring new combinations.

Adapted from *Northwest Wines* by Paul Gregutt, Dan McCarthy & Jeff Prather

■ Discontinuing the use of generic terms such as Burgundy, Bordeaux, Champagne, and Chablis on wine labels.

WWQA membership is open to all wineries and wine grape growers willing to abide by these guidelines. WWQA members can be identified by the WWQA logo displayed at the winery and on their wine labels.



Enjoy a taste of Washington wine anytime! When dining out, at home and when you visit our famous wine country!

Working with the world's finest wine grape varieties, our growers bring in the harvest from premium growing sites across the state.

As consumers discover the quality of Washington wines, demand continues to grow nationally and internationally. New acreage and varieties are being planted and new wineries are opening at a remarkable pace.

Washington State is recognized as a premium viticulture region around the world.

Washington



WINE
Commission

93 Pike Street, Suite 315
Seattle, Washington 98101
206-667-9463 phone
206-583-0573 fax
www.washingtonwine.org