



HOME ABOUT WTM
 WTM PARTNERS STAFF
 ADVERTISING

Washington In The Willamette | Willamette Valley | Washington /June 1, 2016 By Matt Wieland



Matthew Wieland resides in Portland, Oregon, where he explores the world of wine and vine with a focus on the wines of the Northwest. He works in the Willamette Valley wine industry and as an independent wine writer.

I lust for Pinot Noir. The nuanced layers seduce the senses. Oregon lures many who have heard the whispers from the Willamette, the siren. Come, follow the melodious tune.

During an Oregon visit, however, you may come to desire a counterpoint to the chic Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays. Fortunately, Washington fruit has found an embrace amid the slim-waisted beauties in the Willamette.

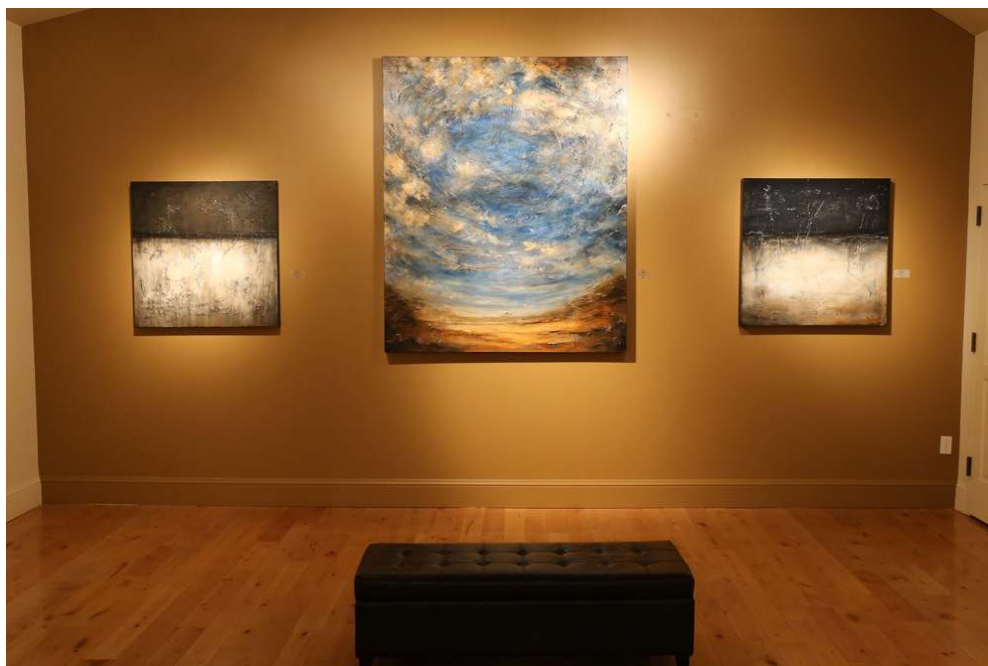


18401 Cellars At Trisaetum

Did you say Leonetti? James Frey, winemaker and owner of [Trisaetum Winery](#) in the Ribbon Ridge AVA (Oregon), received a phone call a few



years ago. Chris Figgins of [Leonetti Cellar](#) was on the other end. As one of *the* cult wineries in Washington, a call from Chris Figgins perks your interest. From this fated conversation, a fruitful and delicious partnership began. Starting with the harvest of 2013, Leonetti swapped a few tons of their Walla Walla Valley AVA Bordeaux varietals for some of Trisaetum's estate Pinot Noir. Each winemaker then crafts wine with this novel fruit, providing a counterpoint to their flagship wines.



James Frey, Winemaker at Trisaetum, also shares his renowned paintings at the Tasting Room

Come to Trisaetum to taste their Pinot Noir, Riesling, and newly-introduced Chardonnay. The wines will capture your heart and mind. While there, make sure you also taste a bottle of 18401 Cellars Bordeaux blend. The 2013 leads with black fruit, cranberry sauce, dried Italian herbs and black olive, with a kiss of cocoa powder. While smooth and stunning today, this wine will age well for decades.

Owen Roe

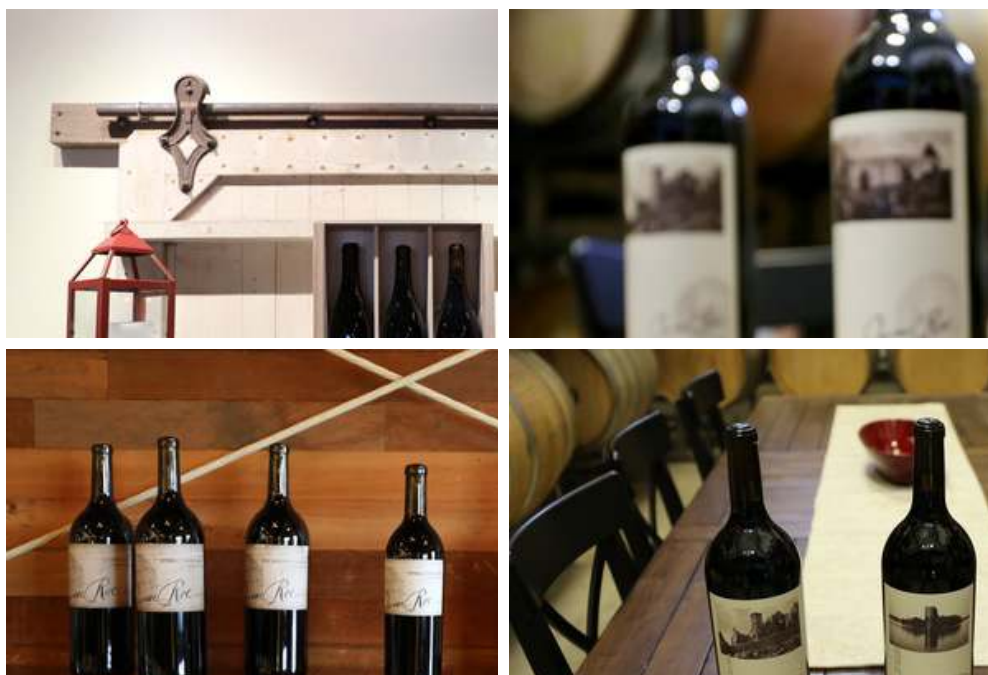
Don't judge this book by its cover. Located off the tried trail, [Owen Roe](#) will astound from the moment you walk through the door. Owen Roe started releasing wines in 1999. With a base in the Willamette, they successfully



embrace both Willamette Valley Pinot Noir and Washington varietals. By my judgment, the soul of winemaker David O'Reilly's craft resides in Washington. He recently built a substantial new winery in Yakima Valley AVA of Washington, sustaining my claim. Owen Roe provides the preeminent tasting of Washington varietals in Oregon. The wines speak purely. O'Reilly consistently produces dense, pure wines that maintain buoyancy. The duality mesmerizes. An additional perk, Owen Roe provides quality at many price points. Beyond the signature Owen Roe label, O'Reilly also produces the Sharecropper's and Corvidae wines, which retail primarily in the teens.

Owen Roe wines in the Oregon winery cellar and private tasting room, featuring their three core vineyards-- Red Willow, Union Gap, and DuBrul

Interesting fact: O'Reilly has eight children with his wife, Angelica, who owns the winery with him. They fortunately have a dynamic fan base to support their venture ... and family.



Variety Show

Of the many Willamette Valley Pinot Noir producers who purchase a ton or two of juice from Washington, a few others should ping your radar screens. **Bergström Wines**, lauded for its distinguished Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays, purchased Washington Syrah starting with the 2015 vintage. Based upon their recent foray into Syrah from southern Oregon, you can expect greatness when they release the 2015 Washington Syrah.

Domaine Serene, respected as a top-tier Dundee Hills producer, crafts a unique Syrah/Pinot Noir blend worthy of attention.



Oak barrel rockers crafted for Zerba Cellars at their Dundee Tasting Room

For those seeking a more rustic and “Wild West” tasting experience, head to **Zerba Cellars**’ satellite tasting room in Dundee. Zerba resides in the Walla Walla valley of eastern Oregon. However, their wines align with warm climate Washington offerings since they share geology and climate. I have included them as a result. Zerba produces a wide range of warm climate whites and reds, Cab Franc to Tempranillo, Roussanne to Chardonnay. Not only will you enjoy the weight of full-bodied wines at Zerba, you will also taste wines with substantial oak profiles. They primarily use American Oak, and the toast and vanilla aromas pour from the glass on most of their wines as a result. This will delight those seeking more oak after tasting the delicately oaked, cool-climate varietals grown locally.

Planning Your Trip

Eat

Amid your tastings, stop for lunch at the **Red Hills Market** (\$) in Dundee. The barn atmosphere warms the soul, and the sandwiches, salads and wood-fired pizzas are made with serious love. As a bonus, the price points

stay around \$10-\$15, which feels like robbery. You'll come back for lunch every day.



Welcome to Red Hills Market

For dinner, the northern valley boasts a fantastic list of restaurants. My personal favorites include **The Joel Palmer House** (\$\$\$) in Dayton, **Recipe** (\$\$) in Newberg, and **Jory at the Allison** (\$\$\$), also in Newberg. All three are top-tier institutions.

Stay

The Willamette Valley offers a range of accommodations for your visit. If you want it all, the **Allison Inn & Spa** (\$\$\$) is tops in the valley. The aforementioned **Jory** shares the facility—expect perfection at every turn. Other mid-price options include **Stoller Family Estate's Guest Houses** (\$\$) and **Maresh Red Hills Vineyard Retreat** (\$\$), both located in the vineyards of respected local producers. The college town of McMinnville serves as another hub in the valley, and the McMenamin brothers have brought their golden touch to **Hotel Oregon** (\$\$). For those on a budget, **Champoeg State Park** (\$) offers Cabins and Yurts to those who enjoy the serenity of the Willamette River flowing through the park, as well as simple rooms.

Fin

Let your cup overflow with the provocative Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays and Rieslings from the valley. When you need a jolt to awaken from the dream, even if temporary, seek out some of these memorable warm-climate wines hiding in plain sight.

2 Likes / Share

Comments (0)

Newest First Subscribe via e-mail

Preview POST COMMENT...

← SONOMA AND NAPA SEEN THROUGH R... Oh Shenandoah, I long to see you. I Shen.. →

©2015 Wine Tourist Magazine