

WASHINGTON

FALL 2018

TASTING ROOM®

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The magazine for
people who love
wine tasting

Maryhill Winery

An interview with
the visionaries behind an
iconic Northwest winery

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TASTING
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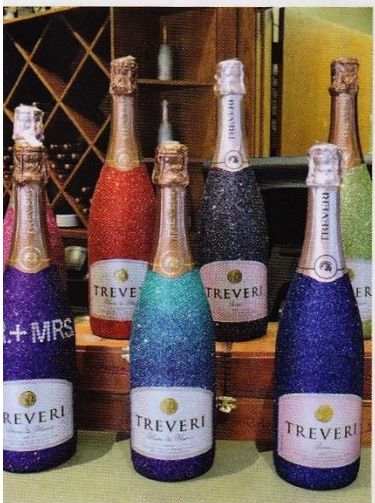
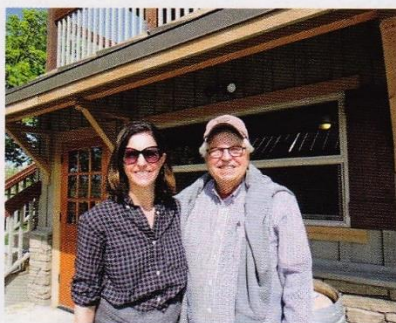
A TASTE OF YAKIMA

Yakima's low-key vibe, *culinary renaissance* and nearby *world-class tastings* make it an ideal *base camp* for *exploring the valley*

WRITERS & PHOTOGRAPHERS **Pamela and Gary Baker**



Hike or picnic at Cowiche Canyon among flowering meadows, sage and grasslands, in a dramatic landscape framed by basalt cliffs and abundant wildlife



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Baked goods at **Essencia Artisan Bakery**; Pat Dineen and his daughter of **Dineen Vineyards**; **J. Bell Cellars** in Zillah; **Christian Grieb of Treveri Cellars**; **Treveri's** tasting room is an oasis; decorated sparkling wines.

WHEN the Missoula Floods ripped through Eastern Washington 15,000 years ago, they scoured away all the topsoil, leaving a base of broken basalt and, in places, a type of limestone called caliche. Limestone soils are prized throughout the wine world for the mineral quality they impart to the grapes. The result is the characteristic influence of “terroir” on wines.

As you descend the eastern slopes of the Cascades and drop down into Yakima Valley, the unique landscape begins to take shape, first in the form of arid, high desert, followed by fertile valleys of fruit trees, row crops, hops and grape vines.

Washington's wine history is rooted in this valley, where immigrants planted some of the first vines in the mid-1800s. Today this remarkably fertile valley is a magical escape that welcomes travelers from around the world, including many wine aficionados, outdoor enthusiasts and those looking to relax or connect with local cuisine.

Home to the state's first official AVA in 1983, the Yakima Valley's low-key vibe with its small-town tastings gives “laid back” a whole new meaning. The City of Yakima, founded in 1885, makes a great base for exploring the valley. A new culinary renaissance is taking place here, where no less than six restaurants have recently opened, led by restaurant owners in their 30's and 40's. Here are a few highlights of Yakima wineries, eateries and activities.

SATURDAY AM

8AM *Essencia Artisan Bakery*

This warm and friendly bakery shop on North 3rd Street in downtown Yakima offers a wide variety of sweet treats, baked goods and fresh coffee—regulars say the bread is the best in town. Start the day with a ham, egg and cheese strata.

9AM *Cowiche Canyon Trails*

Just west of Yakima, Cowiche Canyon offers 30 miles of trails through 5,000 acres of flowering meadows, sage and grasslands, in a dramatic landscape framed by basalt cliffs and abundant wildlife. Hike, mountain bike, or pack a picnic.

SATURDAY PM

12PM *Dineen Vineyards*

Dineen Vineyards is in full swing most weekends, including Fridays, from April through October. In a brick oven kitchen built across the

patio from the Dineen tasting room, Chris Guerra and his crew bake their delicious Neapolitan style pizzas for lunchtime guests.

Vineyard owner Pat Dineen claims to be more of a grape grower than winemaker. This family-owned vineyard and winery is dedicated to growing the highest quality grapes to make their estate bottled Bordeaux-style blend, and two stand-alone varietals, Cabernet Sauvignon and Viognier. They are located on Gilbert Road in the hills of Yakima Valley, just north of Zillah.

2PM J. Bell Cellars & Lavender

Lavender rows greet visitors along the drive into this pastoral winery. Wes Teslo, winemaker and owner, renovated a former house into a tasting room. The backyard serves as the courtyard. Surrounded by blooming Bartlett pear trees and shaded by overhead canopies, the outdoor setting is so comfortable and relaxing, it's easy to linger. Teslo started the winery in 2010 with nine barrels sourced from Red Mountain grapes. Today, he produces 3,000 cases a year, and serves food cooked in his signature brick oven. On weekends, he invites local celebrity chefs to serve gourmet cuisine at special events and runs a twice-monthly summer jazz series.

Handcrafted and unfiltered, J. Bell produces primarily Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and a few Rhône varietals. A self-made winemaker, Teslo says he "likes to try things on the wild side," producing big, bold wines. The winery is on Knight Hill Road in Zillah.

4PM Treveri Cellars

This family-owned producer specializes in sparkling wines. They are located a short drive from Yakima's city limits in the rolling hills of the apple and vineyard-laden valley. Winemaker and owner, Juergen Grieb, along with his son Christian, draw from the family's German heritage to craft some of the finest sparkling wines in the U.S. Each bottle is handcrafted at the winery's Wapato location on Gangl Road, using the traditional Méthode Champenoise (bottle fermented).

Founded in 2008, Juergen's wine production has increased steadily every year due to popular demand. Treveri's lodge-like natural setting of wood beams and stone walls include a "Club Lounge" with an outdoor deck. The large and comfortable tasting room offers small bites and makes a great place to wind down the day, especially in the umbrella-shaded areas surrounded by sprawling green lawn, rose and flower gardens.

TASTING ROOM PICKS

Dineen Vineyards 2014 Heritage Red Blend, \$35

This well-crafted Bordeaux varietal blend flexes its muscle with chalky, sweet tannins wrapped around rich, deep flavors of dark cherry, blackberry and violet. Gravel and loamy earth notes mingle with tobacco on the drawn out finish.



Dineen Vineyards 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon, \$39

Supple in texture, displaying exquisite structure and polish, deftly layered with cassis, blackberry, red plum and pomegranate flavors that meld effortlessly with leather, tobacco and mineral notes. Firm, yet fine tannins grace the complex finish.

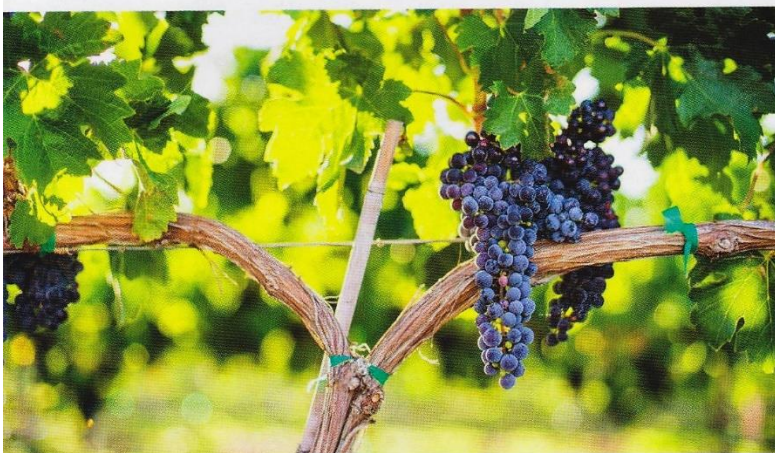
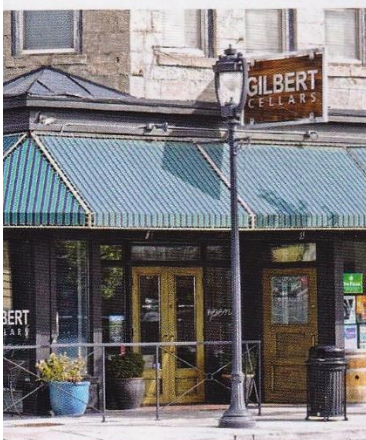
J. Bell Cellars 2012 Essence, \$40

This Cabernet Sauvignon-forward red wine is bold and broadly textured, steeped with black fruit flavors of macerated blackberry, dark cherry and plum. Grainy, powerful tannins are backed by graphite, Madagascar vanilla and tobacco spice that linger on the aftertaste.



J. Bell Cellars 2013 Syrah, \$37

Ultra plush and powerful, with massive depth to the macerated plum, ripe marionberry, black currant, and violet flavors streaked with caramel, tobacco and allspice. Warm spice notes fuse with the black fruit on the deep finish.



CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT Mural on Crafted Eatery's historic building; penny covered bar at Norm's of Yakima; Cowiche Canyon Kitchen and Ice House; Linda Haralson of Antolin Cellars; Yakima Valley grapes; Gilbert Cellars tasting room

7PM Dine at Crafted Eatery

Crafted Eatery and Bar owners, Dan and Mollie, have reinvented casual dining at their cafe in downtown Yakima. The vibe here is comfortable and the wait staff super friendly. Dine at tables or sit at the Chef Counter and watch the talented chefs prepare wonderful culinary works of art in the kitchen.

This restaurant offers one of the newly revitalized North Yakima Historic District's farm-to-fork experiences. An extensive wine list of mostly Yakima producers accompanies the chef's curated menu, which changes often. Try the Laotian crispy rice made with peanuts, grilled pork sausage, fresh herbs and lime. "Mollie's Manny," aged in a wooden barrel for several weeks, makes a delightful cocktail.

SUNDAY AM

9AM Hit the Farmer's Market

The Yakima Valley offers more than 1,000 varieties of fruits and vegetables, and you'll find many of them at the downtown farmer's market every Sunday between 9am-2pm, from Mother's Day weekend through October.

11AM Lunch at Norm's

A recent transplant, owner Steve Habecker moved his popular pub and restaurant, Norm's (named for his dog), from Seattle into downtown North Yakima's historic Lund Building, built in 1898. A labor of love, Steve has covered the entire bar top with a dazzling array of new and old pennies under clear plexiglass. Take an early lunch and try the spicy, delicious signature chicken chili before an afternoon of wine tasting.

SATURDAY PM

1PM Gilbert Cellars Tasting Room and JB Newfeld

Charlie Gilbert, a fifth-generation farmer, and his wife Gloria, host a daily happy hour wine tasting. Also housed in the Lund Building, the tasting room is on the corner of Front Street and East Yakima Avenue in the North Yakima Historic District.

The Reserve Chardonnay from their Doc Stewart Vineyard is one of Gilbert's flagship wines. Live music flows in their basement tasting room on the first Friday of each month.

The Gilbert Cellar production winery, known as Hackett Ranch, on Ahtanum Road, is open by appointment from April through September.

You may run into Gilbert's winemaker, Justin Neufeld, while on a tour of the winery. Neufeld also crafts his own wines under the eponymous JB Neufeld label, sold locally in restaurants. The easygoing Neufeld grew up in nearby Naches, and produces about 800 cases per year of Cabernet Sauvignon sourced exclusively from Yakima Valley growers.

3PM Antolin Cellars

AntoLin Cellars has a large, well-appointed tasting room and event center next to the railroad tracks on North Front Street. The building that houses Tony and Linda Haralson's tasting room was formerly the old Burlington Northern Freight Depot, built in 1908. A railroad theme dominates the Caboose Room used for special events and there's music on Friday nights. It also serves as a gallery for local artists.

Their Carménère, a red wine grape rediscovered in Chile, won double gold at the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition. All their reserve wines are sourced from their estate vineyard just north of Zillah.

5PM Cowiche Canyon Kitchen and Ice House

Located on the corner of West Yakima Avenue and 3rd Street, this restaurant and bar opened in 2015 and was promptly awarded top honor at the American Institute of Architects/Central Washington for its dramatic design.

Owned by Graham and Kaulin Snyder, the restaurant manifests an open, industrial ambiance with exposed wood and iron beams across the ceiling. The booth seating arranged next to windows looks out over downtown Yakima's main avenue. Cut firewood stacked along a wall and surrounding the exposed "cook station" provides juxtaposition to the large, glass-enclosed, refrigerated wine cellar opposite. In the dining room, a large set of elk antlers decorate a wall above the booths.

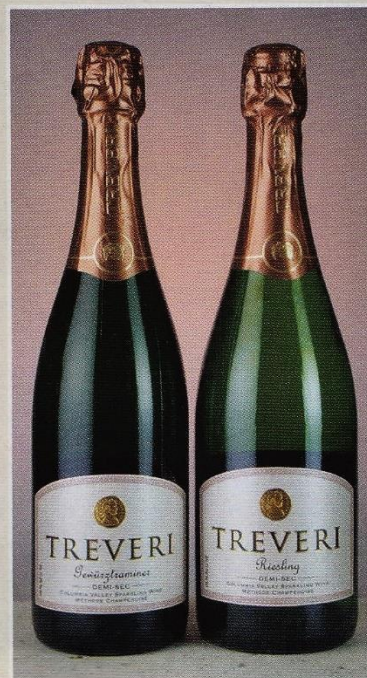
The Icehouse is a separate room with a full-length bar on one side and booth seating on the other. Fifteen cocktails are featured: Nine Ice House originals and six classics including a Bobby Burns and a Boulevardier.

The thin fries here are a big hit as nearly every entrée flying out of the kitchen was stacked with these crunchy, tasty delights. The menu features

TASTING ROOM PICKS

Treveri Cellars Sparkling Riesling Demi- Sec, \$17

Sourced from Yakima Valley fruit, this semi-dry bubbly exhibits refreshing aromas and flavors of apple, citrus and baked pear, spiced with exotic accents of apricot, ginger and tangerine peel.



Treveri Cellars Sparkling Gewürztraminer Demi-Sec, \$17

This sparkling wine is a gem, offering fine beads with a creamy mouthfeel and enticing aromas and flavors of quince, pear, apricot and orange blossom. Light footed and slightly sweet but not at all cloying.

Antolin Cellars 2012 Estate Malbec, \$30.25

Displaying aromas of dark stone fruit and leather, this 100% varietal is open textured and filled with juicy red plum, blackberry and cranberry flavors framed with cocoa powder, mulled spices and smooth tannins.



Antolin Cellars 2012 Estate Carmenere, \$30.25

Rich, aromatic and complex, with an underlay of red berries that carries through expressive flavors of jalapeno, grilled red bell pepper, violet, peppercorn and tobacco. Stays true to the varietal.

**JB Neufeld
2014 Yakima
Valley Cabernet
Sauvignon, \$35**

Muscular and harmonious, supported by svelte tannins and solid structure layered with dark chocolate, cocoa and tobacco notes draped over dark fruit flavors of plum, blackberry and raspberry. Spice notes accent the lengthy finish.

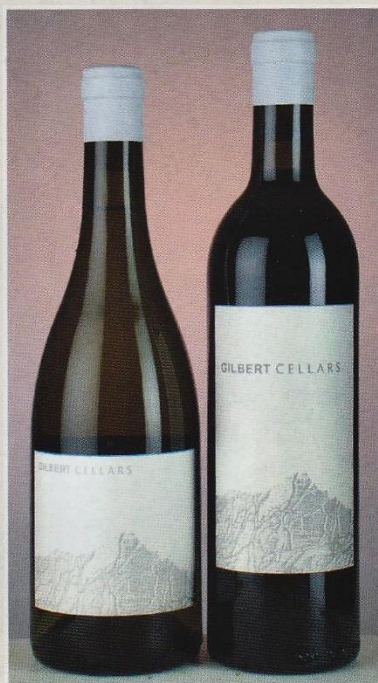


**JB Neufeld 2014
Two Blondes
Vineyard
Cabernet
Sauvignon, \$40**

Sophisticated and elegant, this single vineyard version is streaked with minerality on the open textured mouthfeel, complexly layered with cassis, blackberry, plum, violet and tobacco. Refined tannins glide along the ultra-focused finish.

**Gilbert
Cellars 2013
Doc Stewart
Chardonnay,
\$40**

Beautifully crafted and openly rich in texture, brimming with aromas and flavors of lemon tart, white peach and pie dough flecked with hints of pineapple and slivered almonds. Ends long, with clean minerality on the finish.



**Gilbert Cellars
2012 Reserve
No. 2, \$52**

This Bordeaux varietal blend is suave and nuanced, offering a rich, plush mouthfeel of dark plum, blackberry, red currant and vibrant acidity inlaid with crushed pebble, sage and rosemary. Posh, refined tannins stretch out on the finish.

three cuts of steak and a choice of three sauces. The wedge salad, lamb shanks, tamale cakes and sautéed radishes pair exceptionally well with JB Neufeld's Cabernet Sauvignon.

7PM HIKE Along the Greenway

Enjoy a sunset stroll on the Yakima Greenway, a 20-mile paved pathway that parallels two rivers, three parks and even several fishing ponds. Multiple entry points and plentiful parking make the Greenway an easy way to enjoy the outdoors. A scenic walk at dusk along the banks of the winding Yakima River bordering the city is the perfect end to a day of wine tasting. 🍷



Yakima's Greenway offers 20 miles of paved paths for pedestrians and bicyclists to connect with nature

Where to Stay in Yakima

Hotel Maison

Housed in a former Masonic temple, the Hotel Maison on East Yakima Avenue offers visitors elegance with modern convenience. Refurbished rooms are spacious. Daily breakfast included. Ph (509) 571-1900, www.thehotelmaison.com

Hilton Garden Inn

Comfort and convenience are part of the experience at this hotel. On East Yakima Avenue within walking distance of local wine tasting rooms, shopping, and the convention center. Amenities include a full-service restaurant, lounge, pool and fitness center. Ph (509) 454-1111 www.hiltongardeninn3.hilton.com

More Touring

For a comprehensive list of Yakima Valley wineries, eateries and things to do, visit www.visityakima.com