



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

WHAT'S NEW IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

WINTER 2021–2022

New Openings and Story Ideas in Oregon's Willamette Valley Region

Winter is a peaceful and well-deserved time in Willamette Valley wine country. It comes after the buzz of harvest, with the industry retiring to its warm and cozy cellars and tasting rooms for some reflection and introspection, glass in hand. This year, there's a lot to be grateful for, from an outstanding 2021 vintage to tremendous community efforts by the area wine scene. And maybe, just maybe, we're getting back towards some kind of normalcy.

That said, the pandemic still looms and the Valley is committed to public safety. Please visit www.willamettewines.com for updates on protocol, tasting room hours, events info and more throughout the winter.

NEW OPENINGS, EXPANSIONS AND MORE

WELCOMING A NEW NESTED WILLAMETTE VALLEY AVA: THE LOWER LONG TOM AVA

In effect December 10, 2021, the [Lower Long Tom](#) is the Willamette Valley's newest America Viticultural Area (AVA), bringing the total number in the region to ten. Statewide, Oregon is now home to 22 AVAs. Set near Eugene, and the first nested AVA in the southern Willamette Valley, the 25,000-acre region folds around the Lower Long Tom River. Distinguishing features of the AVA include Bellpine soils and rolling hills that protect the area vineyards from any dramatic marine influence. Lower Long Tom is home to a dozen producers, including [Antiquum Farm](#), [Benton-Lane](#), [Walnut Ridge Vineyard](#), [Brigadoon](#) and more.

| page 1 of 9 |



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

New Openings, continued

SOLÉNA UPGRADES CELLAR

For decades, [Soléna Estate](#) has been quietly adding the latest vintages to its cave-style wine cellar. The Yamhill winery has completed a tasteful redesign of the Old-World cellar just in time for winter, and welcomes small groups to explore its many nuances. The new-and-improved library tastings feature not only a chic new backdrop but specially-prepared bites and wines, all in the company of the winery's impressive collection of older bottles.

COOPER MOUNTAIN GROWS

One of the Valley's long-standing producers, [Cooper Mountain Vineyards](#), is expanding. The winery, established in 1978, has acquired Chehalem Mountain Vineyards as well as ArborBrook Vineyard and its tasting room. The latter site is home to some of the oldest Pinot noir in the state, planted in 1969 by Dick Erath. Cooper Mountain now boasts 325 acres of vineyard land and will convert the newest sites so that they adhere to the label's longstanding commitment to biodynamic and organic agriculture. Moreover, they are renovating their current ArborBrook tasting room, with a grand opening scheduled for summer 2022.

CHO WINES

A Korean-American winery, [Cho Wines](#), is in the works in the Chehalem Mountains AVA of the Willamette Valley. Husband-and-wife team Dave and Lois Cho recently bought close to 80 acres near Bald Peak and plan to plant a vineyard in the near future. A tasting room is expected to be unveiled sometime in 2023. The Cho label is already on the market, having launched in May of 2021, showcasing six different takes on the region's famed Pinot noir. The new project will allow the budding label to work with additional varieties such as Syrah and Chardonnay.



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

New Openings, continued

ANDANTE VINEYARD

Set to open in January 2022, the new [Andante](#) tasting room will soon welcome guests for tastings and occasional gatherings, many of which feature live music. The new establishment will be set up with a commercial kitchen, allowing winery staff to pair food with wines as well as host special events. The Dallas winery, set in the iconic Van Duzer Corridor, specializes in Sauvignon blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot noir. The 15-acre estate even features plantings of Gamay noir and Aligoté.

BLEND LIKE A VINTNER

One of the newest experiences the Willamette Valley has to offer allows guests to put on their wine-making caps. [Willamette Valley Vineyards](#) is now home to a special piece of equipment dubbed the Willamette Barrel Blending System. Guests are encouraged to try their hand at the system, which looks like a stack of barrels and is set up with various controls. Nearly a decade in the making, the system allows for a genuine blending experience one can efficiently enjoy in the glass. Blending is largely considered one of the most crucial and fascinating steps in the vinification process, but it is typically done behind closed doors.

NFL QUARTERBACK ENTERS THE OREGON SCENE

Former NFL Quarterback Drew Bledsoe is no stranger to wine, especially in his native Washington state. Now, the three-time Pro Bowler and his winemaking partner Josh McDaniels own an 80-acre vineyard in the Eola-Amity Hills. Bledsoe has publicly expressed his adoration for Willamette Valley Pinot noir and the newest venture along his Pacific Northwest wine journey will allow him to focus on it, from a genuine estate standpoint. Bledsoe joins a growing cast of big names entering the Willamette Valley wine circuit, from NBA stars like CJ McCollum to iconic French wine houses like Louis Jadot.



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

New Openings, continued

CORVALLIS TO THE SEA

A half-century in the works, the [Corvallis to the Sea](#) trail is finally a reality. As the name suggests, the trail extends from the mid-Valley town of Corvallis 62 miles to the Pacific Ocean, terminating just south of Newport. It's yet another scenic attraction in the Valley, one that begins right near the heart of wine country. Those who venture out to the trail will enjoy old-growth rainforests and stunning Coast Range views. The idea for the trail began back in the early 1970s via students at Oregon State University.

DOS MUNDOS EXPANDS

Beloved Newberg restaurant [Dos Mundos](#) has expanded, adding another food cart to the fleet. While the original cart rests just inside of city limits as you enter from Portland, the latest cart is set within charming downtown Newberg. The new joint will focus on dinner, spotlighting Chef Jesus Hernandez's delectable Mexican cuisine. Look forward to dishes like slow-roasted pork belly tacos or Chile ancho-cruste Skuna Bay salmon.

THE PEARL LUXURY RENTAL

Newberg's newest lodging destination is [The Pearl](#), a four-bedroom abode that sleeps nine comfortably in the heart of town. The luxury rental touts a professional kitchen, and is pet-friendly and set a short stroll from all the town has to offer, from boutiques and tasting rooms to exceptional restaurants. The craftsman home, built in the 1920s, is 3,700 square feet and the ideal home base for a long weekend or week exploring Willamette Valley wine country.

FULLERTON BRINGS ON CHEF

Urban winery [Fullerton Wines](#) has brought on an acclaimed chef in Rob Grisham. The chef has been hard at work orchestrating a menu that accompanies Fullerton's appellation-focused wines, one that will include house-made pasta, among other refined dishes. The winery, set in northwest Portland, will create weekly pairing menus each Thursday. Grisham has quite the resume, having recently worked at The French Laundry, a Napa Valley restaurant many think is among the best on the planet.

| page 4 of 9 |



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | *503.550.8161*

New Openings, continued

JOHAN VINEYARDS PURCHASED

[Johan Vineyards](#) has been sold to a group of investors, the same outfit that recently bought southern Oregon's Cowhorn Vineyards. The biodynamic vineyard in Rickreall is set on some of the most picturesque land in the Valley and has become synonymous with deftly-made wines and biodynamic growing principles. The acquisition could see the estate wines enjoy even more success, both here and abroad.

STORY IDEAS

A STELLAR 2021 HARVEST

With the [latest harvest](#) in the barrel and tank, all signs are pointing towards an impressive vintage. The 2021 growing season was a dramatic one, marked by some record heat early on, but ended up producing a gorgeous crop of Willamette Valley fruit. Many vintners in the area are calling it an instant classic, full of character and personality. Better, it follows a relatively sparse vintage in 2020, meaning it will help answer the growing demand for Oregon wine.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY IS PIZZA COUNTRY

Wine jumps to mind when you think of the Willamette Valley, but pizza is making a case to join that list. Wine country outposts like [Pizza Capo](#), [Nick's Italian Cafe](#), and [Honey Pie](#) and newly-opened 48 North Pizzeria in Newberg are creating savory pie fame as well. Meanwhile, nearby Portland has been named by several prominent food writers as the best place in the nation for pizza, home to outstanding outfits like [Lovely's Fifty-Fifty](#), [Pizza Jerk](#) and more. This is tremendous news for wine enthusiasts as pizza is one of the most wine-friendly dishes out there.



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

Story Ideas, continued

WILLAKENZIE AT 30

One of the Valley's most respected wineries turned 30 this year and continues to help define the landscape. [WillaKenzie](#), launched in 1991, was one of the first labels in the area to really stress appellation and clone variation and continues to do so today. The Yamhill-Carlton winery, named after the eponymous resident soil type, is led by vintner Erik Kramer and a bold vision to spotlight not just the incredible quality of Willamette Valley Pinot noir, but the inherent variation, nuance and reflection of place as well.

EUGENIA KEEGAN'S LEGACY CONTINUES

Just named Wine Enthusiast's Wine Executive of the Year, [Eugenia Keegan](#), the first woman to receive this accolade, continues to draw attention and acclaim towards Willamette Valley wine efforts. The General Manager and Vice President of Oregon Wine Operations and Business Development for Jackson Family Wines has tirelessly promoted the region through exceptional winemaking and ambassador-like outreach. Keegan oversees several prominent local brands including Gran Moraine, Zena Crown and Penner-Ash.

INSULATED OUTDOOR TASTING

Winter may spell bad weather in the Willamette Valley, but that doesn't mean you have to abandon the outdoor tasting experience. Many guests prefer it, whether it be for the fresh air and views or simply a slow re-entry as we emerge from the pandemic. Winery destinations like [Cana's Feast](#), [Alexana](#), [Winter's Hill](#), [Winderlea](#) and more have insulated outdoor wine tasting options that are both safe and enjoyable. No two experiences are alike and accommodations range from dome-like tasting spaces to outdoor fire pits and heated patios.



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

Story Ideas, continued

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRUNING

It's easy to overlook the activity of the winter, with its sleepier tasting rooms and dormant vines. But much is still going on that's crucial to the winemaking calendar, including the important rounds of pruning that generally unfold in January and February. Visitors can take in a lot of the action from vineyard-overlooking tasting rooms such as those at [Lange](#) or [Domaine Drouhin](#). Pruning marks the first major task of the new vintage, setting the vines up for future success and a healthy spring bloom.

GOING INTERNATIONAL

The Oregon Wine Board reports that despite a significant decrease in crop in 2020, international sales still rose a whopping 24 percent. It marks a continuing trend of international interest in Willamette Valley wine, buoyed by recent legislation like the European Union's official protection of the Valley itself. Increasingly, buyers abroad are drawn to the quality and craft inherent here at home.

EVENTS

CELLAR SEASON

January–March 2022

This is the time of year for intimate pourings, one-on-one chats with the winemaker, and special tastings in captivating barrel rooms and cellar spaces. This is the time of year for comfort food, soothing wines, wine country fireplaces and warm conversation with your best friends. Cellar Season in the Valley is all of this and more, stretching from the first of the year through the tail end of winter.

OREGON CHARDONNAY CELEBRATION

February 25–26, 2022

This annual event gets bigger and better every year, devoted to the noble Burgundian variety that's found an accommodating home here in the Willamette Valley. This year's gathering adds an extra day to celebrate sparkling Chardonnay, along with an educational seminar and a walk-around tasting that



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

Events, continued

includes some 50 wines from the area. It's all capped off by a grand tasting that includes wine-friendly bites and producers including [Belle Pente](#), [Domaine de Broglie](#) and [Fairsing Vineyard](#) all pouring their work.

NEWBERG TRUFFLE MONTH

February 2022

Taste Newberg is putting on Truffle Month once again next February, a month devoted to the Valley's tastiest and most wine-friendly fungus. Truffles take center stage at area restaurants, tasting rooms, shops and more, all built around the main event, the [Oregon Truffle Festival](#), which takes place over several days during the month (exact dates forthcoming). Festivities throughout the month include special truffle dinners at restaurants like JORY at The Allison, along with fitting menu items like truffle beer at Wolves & People Farmhouse Brewery and truffle fries at Ruddick/Wood. There are even dog-led truffle hunts for those who really want to embrace the truffle.

TRUFFLES ON THE GO!

Speaking of truffles, [Black Tie Tours](#), a long-adored Willamette Valley transportation company, is now offering truffle hunting tours on a limited basis. Explore the wilderness with Black Tie Tours' founder, Stefan Czarnecki (whose family owns the famous Willamette Valley restaurant The Joel Palmer House.) He and his dog will demonstrate how they work together to unearth the native Oregon truffle. Guests will learn truffle hunting dos and don'ts, and following the hunt, guests will enjoy a truffle-themed lunch while a local winemaker pours some of their favorite wines.

NATIONAL RIESLING DAY

March 13, 2022

A day devoted to Riesling is cause for celebration in the Willamette Valley, where the aromatic white thrives and continues to wow tasters. There continues to be a committed band of small producers celebrating the grape, from [Blakeslee](#) and [Coeur de Terre](#) to [Goodfellow Family Wines](#). Riesling is one of the most distinctive grapes in all of wine, with surprising versatility on the sweet-to-dry spectrum.

| page 8 of 9 |



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

CONTACT | *Emily Petterson*

EMAIL | *emily@ekpmedia.com*

PHONE | 503.550.8161

About the Willamette Valley Wineries Association (WVWA)

The WVWA is a nonprofit industry association dedicated to achieving recognition for Oregon's acclaimed Willamette Valley as a premium Pinot noir-producing region. The WVWA has more than 230 members representing wineries, tasting rooms and vineyards throughout the Willamette Valley. The organization also hosts Willamette: The Pinot Noir Auction, Oregon Pinot Camp, Pinot in the City, May in Wine Country, The Giving Season and the Cellar Season. Visit www.willamettewines.com for more info.

###