

Woodinville Wine Loop

By Teri Citterman



CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE

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JUST A SHORT DRIVE east of Seattle lands you right in the heart of Woodinville's wine country. Woodinville, where less than one percent of the state's grapes are grown, is part of the Puget Sound American Viticulture Area (AVA), the state's only AVA west of the Cascade Mountains. Though vineyards are far and few, you will find more than 30 wineries—up from just a couple of handfuls less than five years ago. The wineries offer a variety of wines—from Washington's signature Bordeaux-style blends to late harvest Syrah, Riesling, and Viognier. Many offer daily tastings; a few are open only on weekends, by appointment, or for wine country or special release events only. Make sure to check websites before you go.

Woodinville's convenient location less than 30 miles from downtown Seattle makes for an easy day trip. But if you're considering staying late into the evening, you won't be disappointed by the fantastic cuisine of the Purple Café and Wine

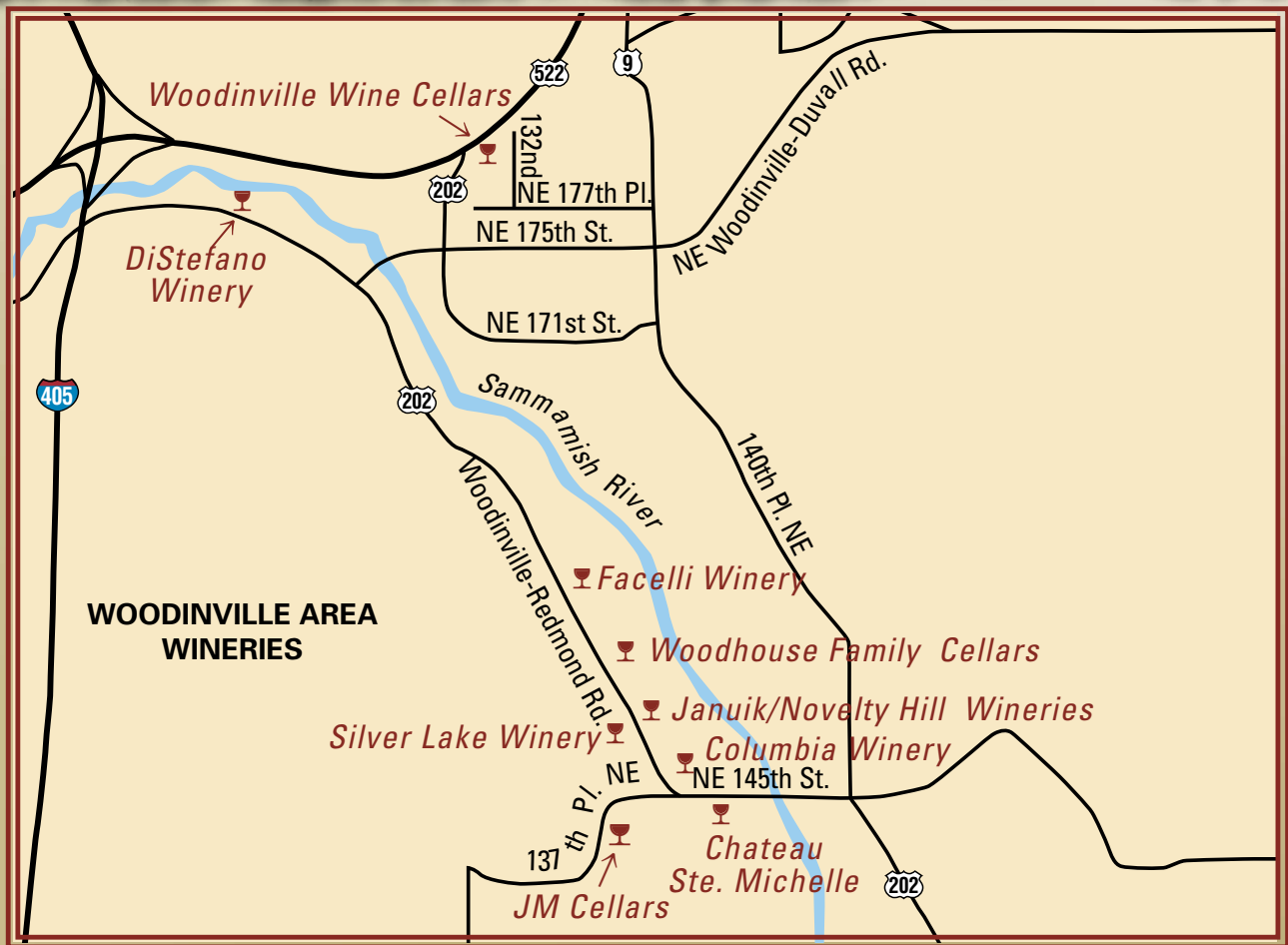
Bar, the Barking Frog at Willows Lodge, or the internationally acclaimed Herb Farm. Reservations are recommended and dinner at the Herb Farm usually must be arranged well in advance.

Woodinville itself is a suburban mix of strip malls, industrial parks, and farmland. But tucked away where you'd least expect to find it, you may very well come upon a number of memorable wines and make some new discoveries along the way. As you arrive in Woodinville, swing by **Woodinville Wine Cellars** on 132nd Avenue NE (425-481-8860; woodinvillewinecellars.com); then proceed to Hwy 202 and Woodinville Drive. A couple of quick rights will land you at the award-winning **DiStefano Winery** (425-487-1648; distefanowinery.com) tucked into an industrial park. DiStefano has received countless awards and recognition for both its reds and whites and this winery is the perfect place to kick off your Woodinville winery loop.

Heading south on Woodinville-Redmond Road, you'll pass a plethora of warehouses, and tucked within, you'll find a couple of hidden tasting room treasures: **Facelli Winery** (425-488-1020; facelliwinery.com) and **Woodhouse Family Cellars** (425-527-0608; woodhousefamilycellars.com). Facelli is family-run, open regularly, and among the smallest tasting rooms in the valley. They specialize in reds, and also offer a variety of white varietals and late harvests. Woodhouse is located down the way. Upon entrance, it seems like another generic warehouse, but once inside, visitors are magically transported to a loft-like studio with low-lighting from a dozen-or-so crystal chandeliers, a candle-lit tasting bar, and a gourmet kitchen where professional cooking instruction takes place. The wines are all named for family and close friends, including Kennedy Shah, a series of reds named for the owners' daughter.

Farther south down the road you'll find **Silver Lake Winery** (425-485-2437; silverlakewinery.com), jointly owned by more than 1,200 wine enthusiasts. **Januik** (425-481-5502; januikwinery.com) and **Novelty Hill** (425-481-5502; noveltyhillwines.com) are both projects of winemaker Mike Januik and share a joint tasting room and production facility that is as much a work of art as are the award-winning wines produced there. Relax with a glass of wine while you enjoy the fountains and gardens on the multiple terraces. And just a bit farther





down the road, hang a left onto NE 145th Street/Woodinville Valley Trail and you'll soon come upon the state's cornerstone wineries **Chateau Ste Michelle** (425-415-3300; ste-michelle.com) and **Columbia Winery** (425-482-7490; columbiawinery.com). These are two of the state's largest wineries with their tasting rooms housed right in Woodinville. Each is a must-see for visitors, offering large tasting rooms stocked with wine-themed "must-haves" and light food supplies. Stroll the Chateau's tranquil grounds and pick the perfect place for an impromptu picnic.

A detour up the hill lands you at **JM Cellars** (206-321-0052; jmcellars.com), which is tucked on the hillside called **Bramble Bump** (137 Place NE). The winery specializes in red varietals and features its namesake Bramble Bump Red. 🍷

Woodinville

EVENTS

CHEHALIS VALLEY

May 2009

Chehalis Valley Wine Tour

360-623-1106 • washingtonwine.org

NORTH OLYMPIC PENINSULA & ISLANDS

November 8–9, 2008

Passport to Autumn Wine Tour

800-785-5495 • northsoundwineries.org

PUYALLUP

June 2009

Northwest Corks & Crush

253-697-2832 • nwcorksandcrush.com

SAN JUAN ISLANDS

July 31–August 3, 2008

Northwest Wine Tour Cruise

425-605-0721 • starsailcruises.com

VANCOUVER

August 22–24, 2008

Wine & Jazz Festival

360-906-0441 • vancouverwinejazz.com

WOODINVILLE

August 14–16, 2008

Auction of Washington Wines

206-326-5747

auctionofwashingtonwines.org

December 6–7, 2008

Saint Nicholas Day Open House

425-424-2902

woodinvillewinecountry.com

May 2009

Washington Wine Highway

206-568-3963

washingtonwinehighway.com

CONTACT INFORMATION

GREATER WOODINVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

425-481-8300

woodinvillechamber.org

WOODINVILLE WINE COUNTRY

woodinvillewinecountry.com