



Southern Oregon Wineries

By Lee Juillerat

THREE DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT Southern Oregon rivers pulse through three distinctly different valleys, but they all have something in common: fertile soil and microclimates perfect for growing grapes for making rich, full-bodied wines.

The Rogue Valley, Applegate Valley, and Umpqua Valley are home to more than 40 wineries, each valley a designated American Viticulture Area, or AVA. The region stretches 125 miles south of Eugene to the California border and is 60

miles at its widest between the Cascades and Coast ranges. It continues to earn accolades for its boutique wineries and ever-expanding variety of offerings.

Southern Oregon is also home to the state's oldest winery, **Valley View**, which was established in 1852 by Peter Britt. While Britt is honored as the photographer whose images popularized Crater Lake, it's often forgotten that he was a skilled horticulturist and vintner. His legacy is remembered at the annual summer Britt Festival on his former estate in

Jacksonville, where local wines are part of the picnic atmosphere.

Britt was the first, but the region's winemaking took root in 1961 when Richard Sommers from the University of California at Davis launched Hillcrest Vineyards in the Umpqua Valley near Roseburg. Because the Umpqua Valley AVA is centered in Roseburg, let's start there, at southern Oregon's northern end, with a sampling of selected wineries. Like the other AVAs, the Umpqua is named for its river, a legendary trout-fishing stream.

Southwest of Roseburg is **Abacela Winery**, known for its full-bodied Spanish-style wines, including Tempranillo, Grenache, Dolcetto, Claret, and their own Vintner's Blend. The 2007 Viognier has earned high praise, with *The Oregonian* calling it a "benchmark wine." The name Abacela is derived from the Iberian language and translates as "to plant a grapevine." (541-679-6642; abacela.com)

Scenic backroads lead north to other wineries, including **Melrose Vineyards**, with a luscious selection of red and white wines. The vineyard wanders 2 miles along the South Umpqua River. Tastings are offered in a 100-year-old barn. I've especially favored their various Pinot Noirs and Pinot Gris, and also tried their high-end Equinox, a delicious blend. (541-672-6080; melrosevineyards.com)

North of where the South and North Umpqua rivers converge is **Henry Estate Winery**, one of Oregon's oldest. It's

Continued on page 42



HARVEST AT ROXY ANN WINERY

COURTESY ROXY ANN WINERY



The McCully House Inn, Jacksonville



Southern Oregon Wines...

The Lodge at Riverside, Grants Pass



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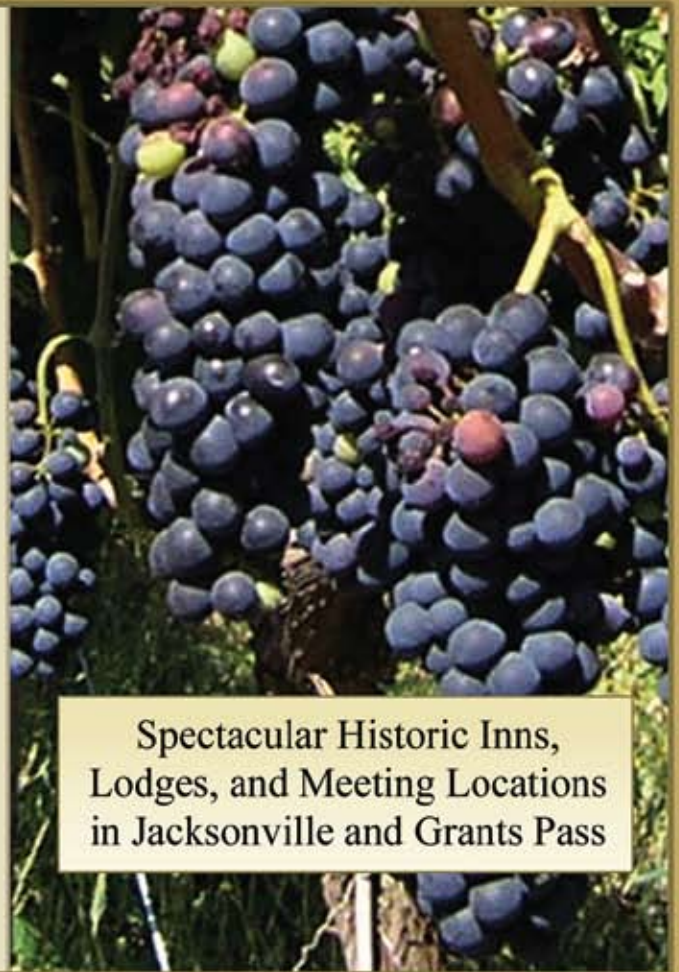
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August 23, 2008

World of Wine Festival

541-855-2062 • delriovineyards.com

GRANTS PASS

September 20, 2008

Fall Wine Stroll

541-476-5773 • grantspasstownecenter.org

April 2009

Taste of the Rogue

541-479-5258 • tasteoftherogue.com

May 2009

Spring Wine Stroll

541-476-5773 • grantspasstownecenter.org

MEDFORD

August 30–31, 2008

Taste of Harry and David

541-864-2277

September 27–28, 2008

Harvest Fair/Bite of the Rogue Valley

Jackson County Expo

541-774-8270 • jcfairgrounds.com

OAKLAND

September 6, 2008

Umpqua Valley Wine, Art and Music Festival

541-459-1385 • visitroseburg.com

UMPQUA VALLEY

May 2009

Barrel Tasting Tour

541-672-5701 • umpquavalleywineries.org

VISITOR INFORMATION

MEDFORD VISITORS BUREAU

101 East 8th Street

800-469-6307; VisitMedford.org

ROSEBURG VCB

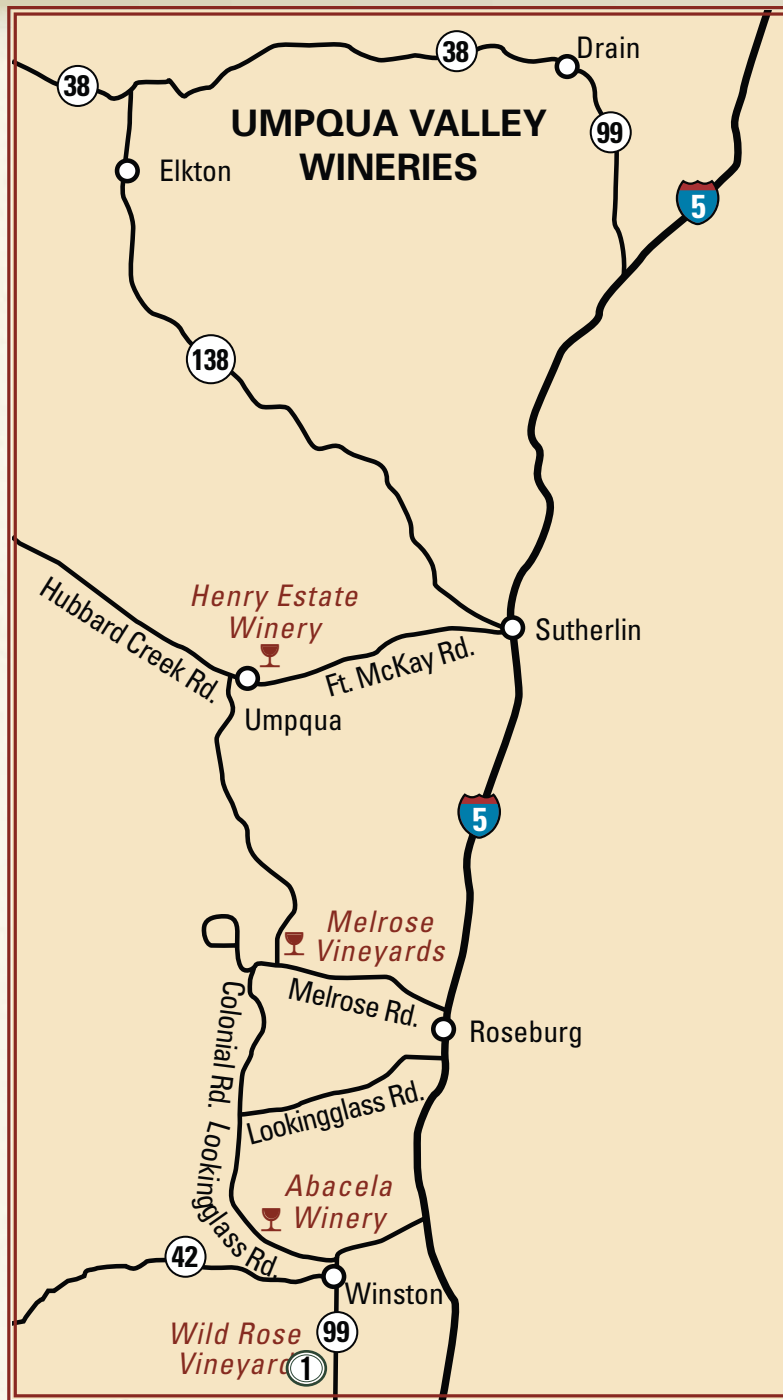
410 SE Spruce St, Roseburg

541-672-9731; 800-444-9584

visitroseburg.com

SOUTHERN OREGON VISITOR ASSOCIATION

800-448-4856; southernoregon.org



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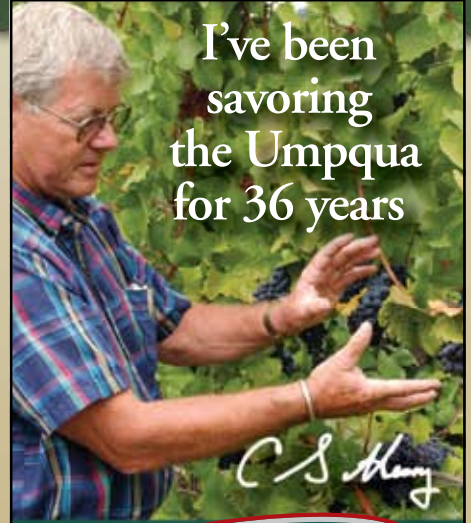
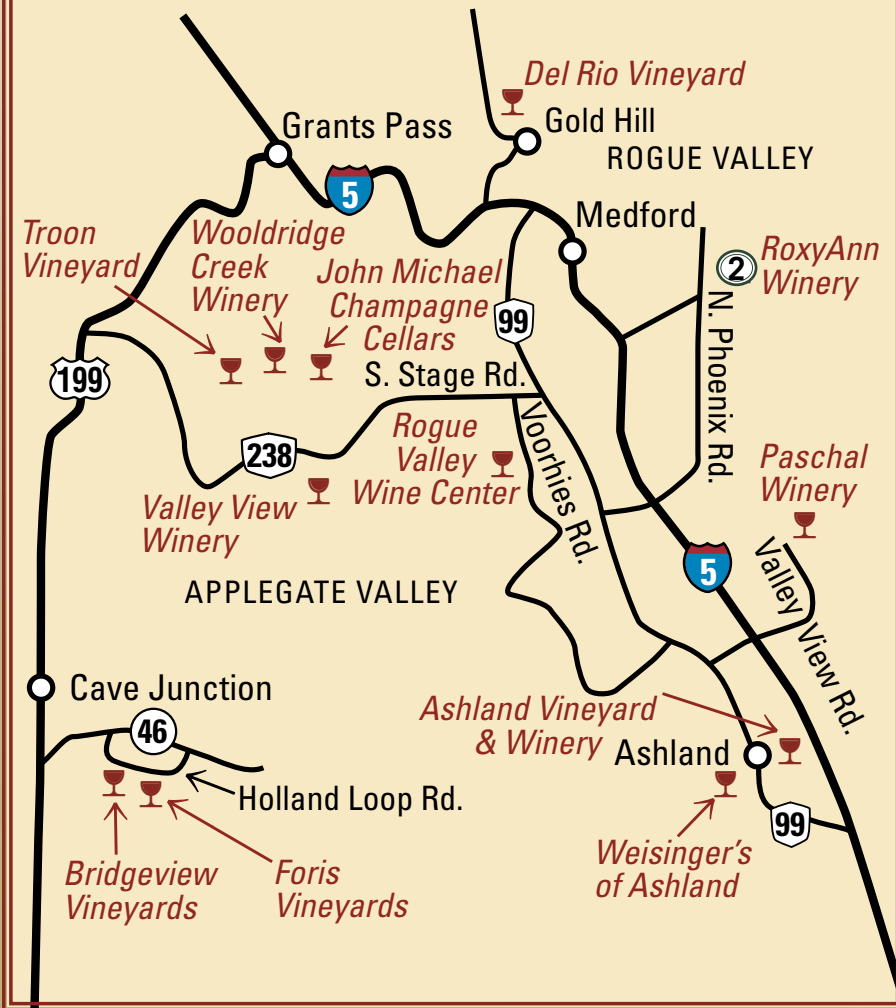
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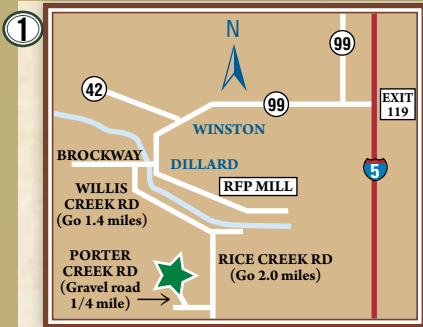
ROGUE & APPLGATE VALLEY WINERIES



I've been savoring the Umpqua for 36 years



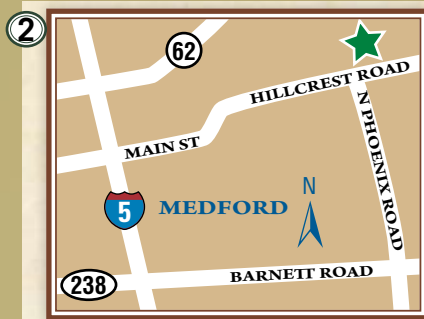
We asked Scott Henry, founder of Henry Estate Winery to tell us about his Umpqua: I planted my first vineyard on my family farm in 1972. Now, I'm just one of 18 award-winning wineries in the region that love showing off our award-winning wines to visitors. Of course, there's a lot more to do in the Roseburg area than just tour wineries. For touring maps and more great reasons to savor our land, send for our guide, go online, or stop by our Roseburg Visitors Center.



Wild Rose Vineyard

FROM A VINEYARD established in 1995, Denise and Carlos Figueroa produce 100% organic wines with practices that have been certified "salmon safe." Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Tasting room open daily 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

375 Porter Creek Rd., Winston, OR 97496
541-679-2043 • wildrosevineyard.com



Roxy Ann Winery

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From on page 38 tended by a third generation of Henrys. Their selections include Pinot Noir, Gewürztraminer, Muller-Thurgau, and Pinot Gris. Along with their wines served in gracious surroundings, the vineyard is fabled for its internationally famous

Scott Henry Trellis System, a two-tiered fruit-growing system that increases yield and Brix (concentration of sugar), and decreases acidity. (541-459-5120; henryestate.com)

The Applegate Valley lies south of Roseburg, nestled in a valley between Grants Pass and Jacksonville. The Applegate River, unlike the more boisterous Umpqua and Rogue rivers, is a gentle stream that meanders through the bucolic valley. Set along a south-facing hillside is the small, family-owned **Wooldridge Creek Winery**. Sustainable viticultural practices are emphasized in growing its 12 varietals, which include Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, Sangiovese, Zinfandel, and Tempranillo. (541-846-6364; wcwinery.com)

Nearby you'll find **Troon Vineyard**, where an elegant tasting room features copper gutters, Spanish tile roofs, and hickory floors. Adjacent is an outdoor event area and a full commercial kitchen facility where

local and celebrity chefs often use freshly picked vegetables from the organic garden. The award-winning wines, made from grapes grown without herbicides or pesticides, include Cabernet, Zinfandel, Port, Chardonnay, and unique blends, including the popular *Druid's Fluid*. (541-846-9900; troonvineyard.com)

For a totally different tasting experience, a favorite is **John Michael Champagne Cellars**. The focus is on limited, estate bottle premiums made in the French "methode champenoise" style, with 11 distinct champagnes, including private label champagnes for weddings and other special events. (541-846-0810; explorer.oregonwine.org)

Near the Applegate's southern end is **Valley View Winery**, named after Peter Britt's historic winery. The Anna Maria label represents the finest wines, while the Valley View label features such premium wines as Merlot, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah. The new Valley



EMILY KOLKEVIC



NATURE OR NURTURE?

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www.southernoregon.org/wines

It's an age-old question. What makes us who we are – nature or nurture? The wonder of Southern Oregon is that you can enjoy both. Whether you long to taste great wines, savor regional cuisine, experience genuine small town hospitality or simply share the magnificence of Crater Lake, wonders never cease in Southern Oregon. Let our wine partners show you the best of our expanding wine world:

■ **Southern Oregon Winery Association** – Southern Oregon is one of the most diverse wine growing regions in the world. The cooler areas produce wonderful Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Gewürztraminer. The warmer and more arid regions ripen big reds such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo and Syrah. Many other unique varieties such as Albarino, Pinot Blanc, Gruner Veltliner, Marsanne, Roussanne, Mourvedre, Semillon, Petite Sirah and Viognier are also being grown and attracting national attention. www.sorwa.org

■ **Applegate Valley Wine Trail** – One of our least known (and newest) of Oregon's appellations is the Applegate Valley, which runs for 50 miles from the California border to the Rogue River. The valley offers the perfect climate for Chardonnay, Syrah and Bordeaux red varieties. www.applegatewinetrail.com

■ **Umpqua Valley Winegrowers Association** – The modern era of grape growing in Oregon began here. Today, family owned artisan wineries are creating wines of distinctive character. The Umpqua Valley is Oregon's most complex grape growing region. The "Hundred Valleys of the Umpqua" serve up Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, and Riesling, plus Merlot, Cabernet, Syrah, Tempranillo and Grenache. www.umpquavalleywineries.org

If this all sounds too good to be true, you need to visit us online and order your own color guide to the wonders of Southern Oregon.



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View Wine Pavilion offers sumptuous views of estate vineyards. (541-899-8468; valleyviewwinery.com.)

Bridgeview Vineyards has two tasting rooms, one in the Applegate Valley and another in the nearby Illinois Valley near Cave Junction. Bridgeview is best known for its Blue Moon Reisling, but excellent, too, are the Cabernet Merlot, Pinot Gris, and Early Muscat. The Illinois Valley tasting room is idyllic, with picnic tables in a beautifully landscaped setting that overlooks the European-style vineyards. (541-846-1039 [Applegate] and 541-592-4688 [Illinois]; bridgeviewwine.com)

Tucked in the fir-clad foothills of the Illinois Valley 6 miles from the Oregon-California border, **Foris Vineyards** is the Pacific Northwest's southernmost winery. Featured wines include Fly Over reds and whites, Cabernet Franc, Muscat, Gewürztraminer, and Pinot Blanc. (800-843-6747; foriswine.com)

The Rogue Valley AVA largely fol-

lows the Rogue River, with many wineries within close proximity of the river. North of Medford and Gold Hill is **Del Rio Vineyards**, southern Oregon's largest vineyard that grows grapes for 40 wineries, including Edgefield, Ken Wright, Cana's Feast Winery, Bethel Heights, Elk Cove, and Valley View. Tastings of nine different Del Rio wines—both reds and whites—are offered in the historic Rock Point Stage Stop. (541-855-2062; delriovineyards.com)

Set in the foothills near Medford, on the grounds of the former Hillcrest Orchards, you'll find **RoxyAnn Winery**. The first grapes were planted in 1997 but Bartlett, Bosc, and Comice pears are still grown. The tasting room is in a restored barn. Sample their award-winning Claret, Viognier, Pinot Gris, and Syrah. (541-776-2315; roxyann.com)

South of Medford is **Eden Valley Orchards**, home of the Rogue Valley Wine Center, the historic Voorhies Mansion, and a demonstration vineyard. The wine

tasting room features EdenVale and Griffin Creek wines, plus selections from 10 limited-release wineries that do not have their own tasting rooms. Sample, too, cider and mead made from locally grown grapes and apples. (541-512-2955; edenvalleyorchards.com)

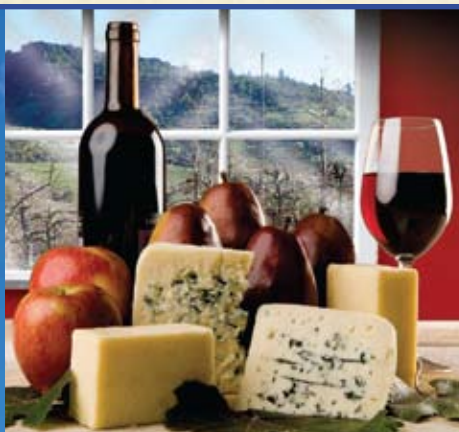
Pascal Winery is located off I-5 between Ashland and Medford. Its beautiful tasting room hosts a variety of community activities, including monthly classical music, arts events, wine dinners, grape stomps, and home winemaking seminars. Pascal's signature wine is Quartet, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Malbec. Other selections include Pinot Noir, Syrah, Pinot Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, and Pinot Gris. (541-535-7957; pascalwinery.com)

The **Ashland Vineyards and Winery**, 2 miles east of downtown Ashland, crafts its wines from grapes grown on its organically farmed vineyards. The tasting room features Shakespeare label wines, including All's Well That Ends Well Pinot Gris, Midsummer Night's Dream Sauvignon Blanc, As You Like It, Merlot, and Taming of the Shrew Cabernet Franc, as well as more upscale wines bottled under the Ashland Vineyards label. (541-488-0088; winenet.com)

The family-owned **Weisinger's Winery** is 4 miles south of downtown Ashland. Featured wines include Semillion-Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Claret, Syrah, and two blends, Petite Pompadour and Mescolare. Visitors can also watch bees produce the winery's estate honey. (800-551-9463; weisingers.com)

Southern Oregon relishes its many, mostly small wineries, but there are other enjoyments that can be sampled over a long weekend or several day visit. Along with tastings, the possibilities include Wildlife Safari near Roseburg, whitewater rafting on the Rogue near Grants Pass, explorations at Oregon Caves National Monument near Cave Junction, the Britt Festival in Jacksonville, and, of course, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, where a night at the theater proves that all's well that ends well. ■

taste
feel
experience



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