



WILLAMETTE VALLEY WINE

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WINE COUNTRY THANKSGIVING: IN CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY, CULTURE, AND GIVING

A Willamette Valley Tradition Turns 35

Portland, Ore. (October 25, 2017) -- The most anticipated weekend event in Willamette Valley wine country, [Wine Country Thanksgiving](#), turns 35 this year. In a testament to a flourishing industry and a lasting tradition, more than 150 wineries and tasting rooms open their doors for tastings, barrel samples, and harvest-themed activities November 24-26. The long holiday weekend, sponsored by the [Willamette Valley Wineries Association](#) (WVWA), comes as winemakers conclude a promising 2017 vintage in a region lauded for its world-class Pinot noir.

Behind the wines are the famously friendly faces of the Willamette Valley wine industry, on full display this holiday weekend. There are many reasons to ring in the 35th anniversary of Wine Country Thanksgiving:

- A good number of wineries are **only open for a couple weekends a year**. Producers like *Lingua Franca*, *Privé*, and *Tendril Wine Cellars* welcome visitors to gain access to hard to find wines.
- Taste the work of a second-generation winemakers at some of the Valley's **pioneering producers**. Properties like *Eyrie*, *Erath*, *Adelsheim*, *Ponzi* and *Sokol Blosser* have been involved in this festive holiday weekend since it first launched in 1982.
- The charitable spirit is on full display through the WVWA's **Willamette Cares Food Share** program. Scores of member wineries assist in the collection of foods for the Oregon Food Bank network, which helps combat regional hunger via nutritional education and emergency food distribution.

| page 1 of 2 |



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- *Thanksgiving marks the festive cap to harvest, a celebratory time of putting one more vintage to barrel. Many wineries share in the enthusiastic mood with tastings of the young vintage and vintners on hand to explain the past growing season. Labels like Archer, Penner-Ash, and DePonte Cellars offer a unique **glimpse into the winemaking process**.*
- *The best way to understand the importance of vintage is through a **vertical tasting**. Drop by A Blooming Hill, Domaine Roy, Iota Cellars, or Le Cadeau to taste the difference a year can make.*
- **Taste close to Portland.** *Those unable to make it much beyond the city limits don't have to sacrifice a memorable holiday weekend in wine country. Places like Raptor Ridge, Cooper Mountain and Ponzi's historic estate all reside about a half-hour's drive from the city proper.*

Variety is a hallmark of this year's event, transforming itself into a celebration of wine and culture. "A visitor can spend the day touring wineries' private art galleries, toasting anniversaries with the wine-makers themselves, while enjoying a quiet cave tour at the next," said WVWA Executive Director Morgen McLaughlin. "Also, as always, visitors to this event will be able to see first-hand many of the Willamette Valley's small, family-owned wineries only open at these select times of year. The familial feel of the holiday weekend is what makes our wine region most unique."

Visit willamettewines.com for a list of events and a map. Hours and tasting fees vary.

About the Willamette Valley Wineries Association

The WVWA is a non-profit industry association dedicated to achieving recognition for Oregon's acclaimed Willamette Valley as a premier Pinot noir-producing region. The WVWA has more than 230 members representing wineries, tasting rooms, and vineyards throughout the Willamette Valley. Memorial Weekend in the Wine Country and Wine Country Thanksgiving are the two oldest WVWA-sponsored touring events in Oregon. The organization also hosts Willamette: the Pinot Noir Auction, an annual, trade-only auction in May. Visit willamettewines.com for more information.