

The 10 Best Kept Secrets of BC Wine Country

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The 10 Best Kept Secrets of BC Wine Country

This is the Fifth edition of “The Best Kept Secrets of BC Wine Country.”

Limiting the eBook to only 10 out of the 300-plus wineries in British Columbia was difficult, but grab a red, white or rose, sit back and enjoy!

Most Dog-friendly Winery



When we first came to Kelowna, we ran into [See Ya Later Ranch](#) wine at most of the restaurants where we dined. It was not until I started to do some research that I discovered SYL Ranch was one of the Constellation brands known globally for wines such as Kim Crawford, Robert Mondavi and Clos du Bois, not to mention my go-to summer beers **Corona** and **Negro Modelo**.

The windy drive up Hawthorne Mountain to reach the vineyard in Okanagan Falls leads to a stunning view and wines of excellent value.

The dog-friendly grounds are a great way to taste some wine and avoid putting your dog in boarding for the day. Their policy of donating a portion of each sale to the SPCA is a bonus.

If you are into touring wineries, this is one you should visit.

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Most Exotic Theme

Just as we arrived at the [Dirty Laundry winery](#), they shut down the patio wine-tasting bar. They were six deep at the wine bar inside, flashbacks to ugly memories of holiday weekends at the Napa wineries trying to belly up to the bar. Not being a shrinking violet, I successfully maneuvered into an opening as the patrons in front of us hurried to rejoin the bus tour.

Tastings are \$6 per person to taste five wines and are available during our opening hours, so no wonder the winery was full!



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The story is well known. In the late 1800s, in the village of Summerland, there was a laundry service owned by Sam Suey, a young entrepreneur tired of working on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Sam decided to start a laundry service, but when he noticed the other needs of the local railway workers, fur traders, cattlemen and miners were not being met, he built a second story to house a gambling hall and bordello.

“Woo woo” was the password to obtain entrance to the house of ill repute, and the patron could also make use of the downstairs laundry while they had fun upstairs. This is how the winery arrived as the “Dirty Laundry” theme. Today, the “lovely ladies” mean “wines,” and the whole double entendre is fun for everyone.

Best Picnic Area



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There is nothing quite like a spur-of-the-moment winery lunch when you live in wine country. It was a cloudy day, but this didn't stop our enthusiasm for a wine tasting at [Arrowleaf Cellars](#).

The Lake Country winery is situated in a picturesque spot with stunning grounds designed for summer picnics and a most amazing view of the vineyards leading down to Lake Okanagan.

Arrowleaf gets its name from the yellow-blossomed Okanagan sunflower. Ninety percent of the winery's grapes are sourced from Lake Country. The Arrowleaf is a symbol of the winery's commitment to producing

terroir-driven wines.



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Here is a picture from a perfect summer day when we had a family picnic at Arrowleaf Cellars.



Best Winery to listen to Jazz



[Ancient Hill Winery](#) is located on a hillside just east of and above Kelowna International Airport. Check out their event page to see when the Jazz ensemble will be playing there.

While you are enjoying the Jazz, you must take the opportunity to try their Baco Noir. The only other BC wineries selling 100% Baco Noir is [Summerhill Pyramid Winery](#).

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The Ancient Hill 2019 Baco Noir is a superb vintage. The wine is a gorgeous bold red and has ripe flavours of blueberry and plum with a hint of mocha and a spicy sweetness on the otherwise dry finish.

Golden Mile Winery with World Class Accommodation and Wine Cellar

We were fortunate to visit the [Hester Creek Estate Winery](#) in the early spring and stay at the Villas and dine at the Terrafina restaurant. Just the perfect location to relax and kick back in the centre of Okanagan Wine Country.



Six Mediterranean-style suites provide elegant accommodation high on the hill with unsurpassed vineyard and orchard views. What impresses you first about the Villas is driving through the Hester Creek vineyards to reach your destination.

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Hester Creek produces a wide portfolio of BC wines. One of my favourites is the 2024 release of the award-winning GSM (Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre). *The GSM is a deep, ruby-red colour. It has a graceful aroma of plum, cherries, and chocolate. Elegantly and perfectly balanced, the medium-bodied wine reveals layers of ripe raspberry, plum, and cherry flavours with fine tannins, floral notes, and a hint of pepper. The finish is very long and harmonious. It's a very sophisticated wine that can be cellared for 7+ years. 93 points.*

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If you visit the winery, make sure you take in the wine cellar tour where you can discover what wines are being aged and see how the back vintages of “The Judge” are doing.

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Where to see BC Wine Country Art

The opening of a \$30-million, Tuscany-inspired [Grizzli Winery](#) made quite a splashy addition to the West Side Wine in the summer of 2016. The 60,000-square-foot building is located at the corner of Boucherie and Hudson roads on a former apple orchard in West Kelowna. Grizzli joined the other established members of the [Westside Wine trail](#) – Ciao Bella Winery, Beaumont Family Estate Winery, Kalala Organic Estate Winery, Little Straw Vineyards, Off the Grid Organic Winery, Mt. Boucherie Estate Winery, Mission Hill Family Estate, Quails' Gate Estate Winery, Rollingdale Winery, the Hatch and Volcanic Hills Estate Winery.

The new wine tour destination in West Kelowna has increased the number of tourists coming to the Okanagan.

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The Grizzli Winery experience extends beyond wine and aims to showcase another passion - ART! The Grizzli Gallery is located inside their wine shop, which boasts one of Canada's largest and most elegant tasting rooms. The Art Gallery specializes in Okanagan works in a series of changing exhibitions that will rotate seasonally.

The first exhibit for Fall 2020 featured local Okanagan artist Randall Young's: 'Layers of Time,' an exploration of the world around us through oil and acrylic painting, an evolution of themes and styles over his career.

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Cutest goat at an Organic Winery



The [Off the Grid Organic Winery](#) is nestled between the two houses of the Paynter brothers in Westbank. As a “net metered” winery, they have a unique experience to offer, from solar panels to the straw-bale wine shop. They are organically minimizing their footprint with each bottle produced.

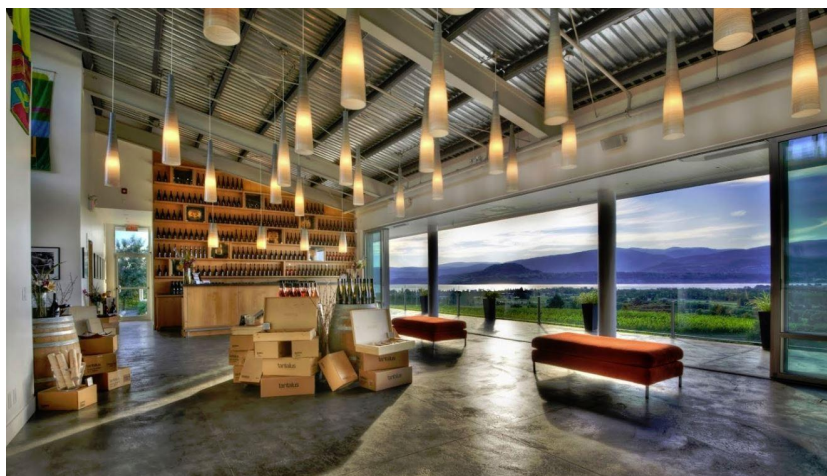
There is also a small farm on the winery property, where they raise chickens, turkeys, and goats currently.

They moved some of the goats to a new pen by the tasting room, with a ramp to the green roof.

Guests love the opportunity to see the animals and interact with them. They are excited about sharing them with the

community and providing some interest for families who vacation with their kids. They are also looking to have miniature sheep to help with the weeds in the Vineyard.

Best place for Old Vine Riesling



This one is a tie. Both wineries are only a few miles apart in East Kelowna and rely on Old Vines planted 45 years ago. The [Tantalus Vineyards](#) and tasting room overlooks mountains, terraced vines and Lake Okanagan.

The winery in East Kelowna is an authentic estate producer, using grapes only from its contiguous vineyards. The anchor vineyard

here is Pioneer Vineyards, which has been farmed with vines since 1927. It is just two years younger than

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the Sperling family's Pioneer Ranch, which is nearby and which is the oldest vineyard in the Okanagan, farmed continuously by the same family.

[Sperling Vineyards](#) includes 1.67 acres of Old Vines Riesling planted in 1978 on a southwest-facing ridge with limestone. The winery's first vintage was in 2008, and the current annual production is around 7,500 cases.

Sperling Old Vines Riesling- A fruity, off-dry style Riesling, pale gold. An aroma of peach, orange and lemon with a hint of floral rose. On the palate, green apple, Mandarin orange and peach with well-balanced acid and minerality. Only about 200 cases of this old vine wine are produced annually.

Best Place to Relax in a Vineyard Labyrinth

The [Sperling Vineyards](#) Labyrinth has a garden feel about it, with the licensed winetasting tent at the core. The tent is perfect for a hot summer day as it traps the coolness of the earth.

The vines are planted in a circle, so you can take a glass of wine from the tent and wander through the rows of grapes at a relaxing pace.

The Labyrinth should not be compared with a maze that can cause "confusion and anxiety." Yes, I remember well chasing the grandkids through the local Corn Maze!



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Most Tasting Rooms at one site – [District Wine Village](#)

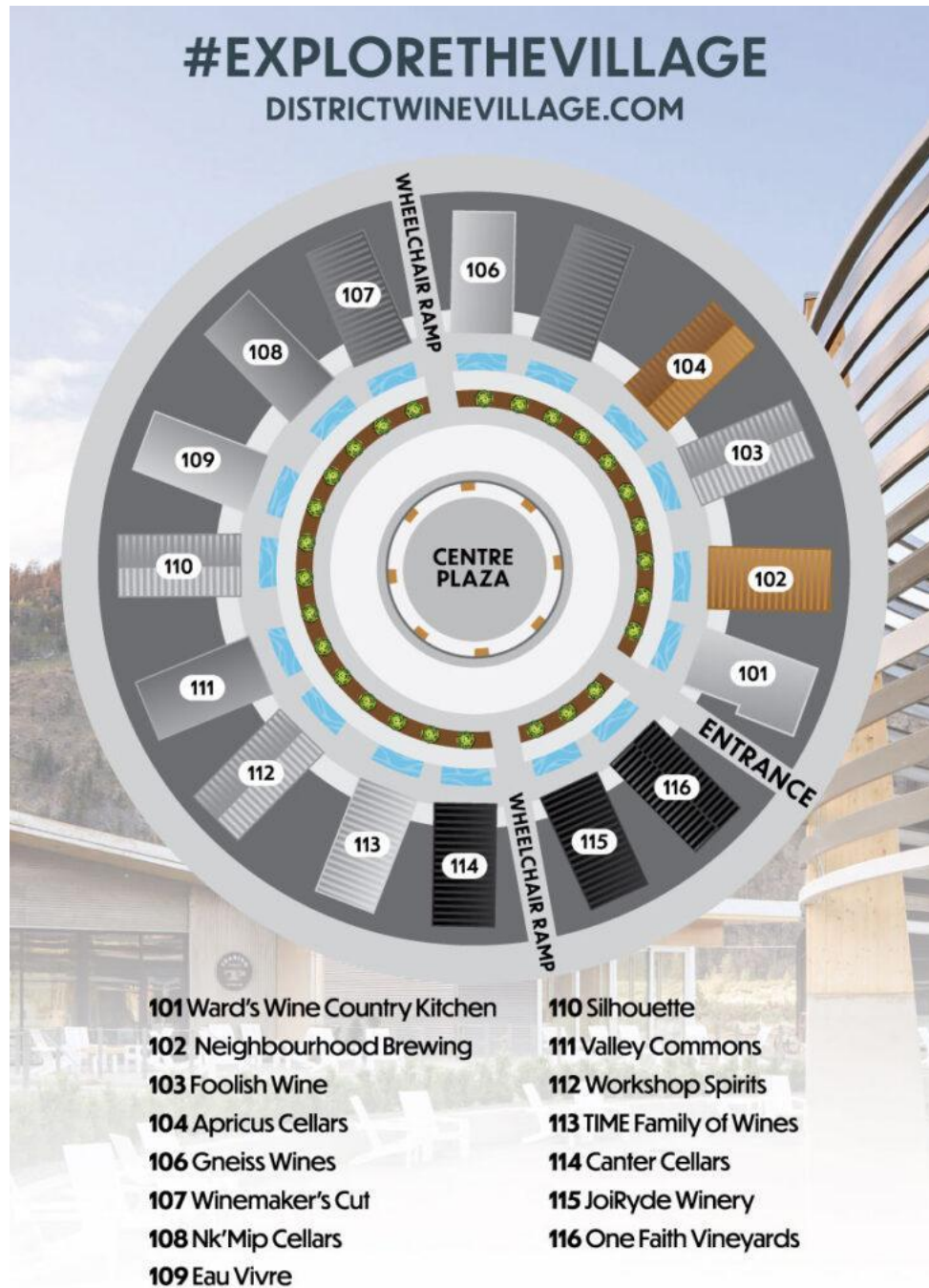


Nestled between the mountains and lakes in the heart of Okanagan Wine Country. The District Village is situated just south of McIntyre Bluff.

Visit Oliver and Osoyoos Wine Country and book your stay at one of the many great accommodations. Visit District Wine Village, walk the river channel (Hike and Bike) and explore [Oliver](#) and the beauty of the Okanagan Valley.

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The wineries represented are:



Bonus! Best winery for your favourite wine varietal

Go to the following link to check out which BC Wineries provide the best value for your favourite type of wine. <https://bcwinetrends.com/category/varietal-2/>