

2024 Washington Wine Harvest: What to Expect from This Year's Vintage

by Peter Szymczak | Feb 5, 2025

Good news, wine lovers! Winemakers across Washington and Oregon are sharing positive reports about the 2024 wine grape harvest. This week, we dive into Washington's vintage—what growers and producers are saying about the season and what to expect in the bottle. Stay tuned next week as we turn our attention to Oregon.

Everyone loves a good comeback story. 2024 didn't start off so well, with spring coming on late, cool and wet. But by June, the weather in Eastern Washington, where the Red Mountain and Walla Walla Valley AVAs are located, had returned to its normal self, with ample balmy days, often verging on too hot, but reprieved by cool nights to strike a perfectly poised balance. All things considered, winemakers are verily stoked about the quality of the fruit for both red and white wine grapes they harvested this year.

"Expect powerful and ripe wines which retain a high degree of freshness," said Tyler Williams, third-generation winemaker at Kiona Vineyards in the Red Mountain AVA.



Abeja | Walla Walla Valley

Abeja winemakers Dan Wampfler and Amy Alvarez-Wampfler are two of Washington's finest. Dan began his career with Ste. Michelle Wine Estates; Amy at Columbia Crest, where the couple's professional and personal lives crossed. Since joining Abeja in January 2016, Dan and Amy have combined their winemaking talents and love for one another to create wines that exemplify meticulous viticultural practices and masterful blending. Located on a beautiful farmstead in the foothills of the Blue Mountains, the winery and luxury inn provide an idyllic setting for making great wine. (All photos were taken at Skysill Estate Vineyard, located a mile from the winery in the Mill Creek area on the east side of the Walla Walla Valley. Abeja planted the vineyard in 2016.)

***Sip:** What can people expect from your 2024 vintage, and why?*

Dan Wampfler: 2024 was another stellar vintage. It's early, but the whites are wonderfully aromatic with plenty of fresh, bright fruit characters. Reds are beautifully balanced, with ripe fruit flavors. We are very excited about these wines. I expect this to be a collector's year.

***Sip:** In general, was there anything special, notable or different about the 2024 harvest compared to past harvests — in terms of the weather, harvest crew, supply chain, your customer base, etc.?*

DW: An irregular ripening pattern kept us on our toes in 2024. In most years, there is an even progression to how and when varieties and vineyards ripen. We usually pick Connor Lee Chardonnay first, then Mill Creek Chardonnay, followed by Merlot, Syrah and so on. In 2024, the ripening sequence wasn't predictable, partly because 2023 winter damage impacted crop loads across the state, so Amy and I were out in the vineyards more frequently than usual, tasting fruit to make precise picking decisions.

Amy Alvarez-Wampfler: This is also the first year we didn't have to make a picking decision because of a weather event. Sometimes, you have to rush picking because rain is coming or a frost is on the way. That wasn't the case in 2024. We harvested every block precisely at the ideal moment, and the pacing was such that there were no logistical challenges on the crush pad.

***Sip:** What was the best/highest point of the harvest? Were there any low/bad times? Was there a special event or occasion that made this past harvest particularly memorable?*

AAW: Mother Nature cooperated across the board. Everything went smoothly. We have a seasoned crew that gets along great, puts safety first, and is dedicated to quality every step of the way. We couldn't have asked for anything better!