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Urban Wine Hike

A guide to downtown wine tastings

BY WILLIAM KENNEDY

For lots of people, wine tasting means driving long distances to the countryside to bucolic wineries like King Estate or LaVelle Vineyards.

But in the center of Eugene's fermentation district is an artery of urban wineries and tasting rooms, connecting the Whiteaker neighborhood to downtown. And they're all within walking or biking distance from one another — an urban wine tour, if you will.

So *Eugene Weekly* sent an intrepid reporter out to hit the trail, taste wine and report on a fun afternoon spent in and around the heart of Eugene. Some assignments are worse than others, but we were up for the challenge.

Territorial Vineyards and Wine Company 907 WEST 3RD

Start at Territorial Vineyard and Wine Company in the heart of the Whiteaker — Eugene's first "urban winery." Territorial features live music and events, and be sure to try the "floral, urbane and highly poised" 2014 Equinox Pinot Gris. Or spoil yourself with the "highly saturated and utterly opulent" 2013 late harvest chardonnay called "Spoiled Rotten."

Eugene Wine Cellars 255 MADISON

At Eugene Wine Cellars, don't miss B2 Winery's dry malbec with notes of berry. Be sure to join their casual wine club, which the hostess says is "more of a mailing list." While there, doodle on your wine glass with Chalk-o-rama crayons — notice how your self-portrait changes after the second glass of not-too-sweet rosé.

Oregon Wine Lab

488 LINCOLN, DISTANCE FROM EUGENE WINE CELLARS: .5 MILES

Oregon Wine Lab, serving William Rosé Wines, has a cool, urban feel and a massive advantage over other locations: the excellent Da Nang Vietnamese food cart. Throughout spring and summer, Da Nang serves Sunday brunch — but get there early to beat crowds and also, drink the delicious Muller Thurgau with your breakfast Bon Mi sandwich.

Capitello Winery Tasting Room

540 CHARNELTON, DISTANCE FROM OREGON WINE LAB: .1 MILES

Founded by New Zealander Ray Walsh, Capitello offers an interesting Oregon vs. New Zealand wine flight, featuring two Sauvignon blancs — one from Oregon, one from New Zealand; notice how the local Savvy is fruity, while the New Zealand variety tastes of red pepper. Also, with The National and Joy Division on the speakers, Capitello wins in terms of ambience.

Sweet Cheeks Winery Tasting Room

248 WEST 5TH, STE. 25, DISTANCE FROM CAPITELLO WINERY: 341 FT., DISTANCE FROM TERRITORIAL: .7 MILES

Conclude at Sweet Cheeks Tasting Room at 5th Street Market, the most tourist-y stop of the tour. While there, try a flight of Willamette Valley reds featuring a tempranillo, syrah and merlot. Notice how Willamette reds are fruit-forward but not overwhelmingly sweet. Perhaps mix with some guests from the Inn at The 5th right next door and mention the rest of the delicious stops for wine lovers right in downtown Eugene. Walk, take a cab or let your designated driver wheel your wine-mellowed self home. ❖

MEMORIAL WEEKEND
— in the —
WINE COUNTRY



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MAY 27-29, 2017
WILLAMETTE VALLEY
OREGON

Oregon's Willamette Valley is known for its world class Pinot Noir. The valley is home to more than 500 wineries and tasting rooms. Request a copy of our touring map and guide at willamettewines.com. Remember... May is Oregon Wine Month!

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Unless it's
Awards



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