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The Grape Escape

February is the month of amour, and one of the most romantic of overnight stay amid beautiful scenery at a destination winery.

By: Christina Kelly

February is the month of amour, and one of the most romantic of indulgences is an overnight stay amid beautiful scenery at a destination winery.



Washington wineries off the beaten path are creating sites where people can come, taste wine and stay the night without having to worry about driving home - no designated drivers, no schlepping from winery to winery and no rushing to tasting rooms before they close. Here are some to consider:

- Cave B Estate Winery's location, on a property called SageCliffe, is stunning - 700 acres carved into the landscape above the Columbia River near the town of George and the Gorge Amphitheater. Tucked in the middle of vineyards sit 30 guest rooms, including 15 individual "cliff houses" poised 900 feet above the river. Within a stone's throw is a cozy restaurant, Tendrils, serving Northwest cuisine.



A converted carriage house sits c century farmstead near Walla Wa Reynolds)

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SageCliffe hosts the dreams of Vincent and Carol Bryant, who planted vir made wine under the name Champs de Brionne. Vincent is a retired neur make wines in the style of what he and Carol had tasted during their mar

"We told our architect to study the property and determine how to work design of our buildings," says Vincent. "We told him the land is his client and listen."

The Bryants studied the soils to determine where certain grape varieties completed their project with a restaurant serving local organic foods. Cav



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meticulously crafted entirely from grapes grown on the property by winemaker Freddy Arredondo. The restaurant serves only Cave B wines that are thoughtfully paired with the menu.

"The power of this place can energize you and soothe you at the same time," says Carol.

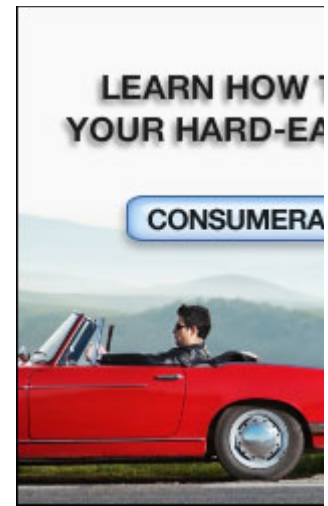
Besides wine tasting, guests can tour the wine caves built into the land, hike the surrounding property down to the river, bicycle, bird-watch and stargaze (the night sky is unpolluted by city lights and smog). To enhance Cave B as a destination site, the Bryants plan to build art studios and dormitory-style in-residence program and to put in a golf course.

- In Walla Walla, Basel Cellars Estate Winery offers 87 acres of beautiful property complete with swimming pool, hot tub and sauna. Greg and Becky new winemaker, son Justin Basel, offer plenty of amenities, including cat and even fishing trips around the region. The catch for this destination is Basel Cellars Wine Club and commit to purchasing a certain amount of w

The main building's seven bedrooms and one master suite can accommodate lodge-style, and there's an additional room in the poolside cabana. The one between Mount Hood's Timberline Lodge and the behemoth Ponderosa lo Basel Cellars makes a great getaway for several couples or an appealing companies.

"We want this to be a destination for people," says Becky Basel, who owns years before she and her husband purchased the mansion. "There are many Walla, but at Basel Cellars, you never have to leave."

- Another Walla Walla destination winery is Abeja, a turn-of-the-century cottages and 22 acres of gardens. Winemaker John Abbott produces some Sauvignon in the region, in small quantities that sell out quickly. The Abe March to mid-December.



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