

Walla Walla Tasting Summary – September 2022

Vineyard	Wine	Exper	Purchases	Comments
Amavi	★★	★★	2021 Semillon	Amavi and Pepper Bridge are "sister" vineyards and share a winemaker. Amavi produces "funky" wines and is more experimental, while Pepper is more "traditional". The Tasting room and deck overlook the Valley. Reds are on the "light side" and a bit too crisp.
Pepper Bridge	★★½	★★½	2016 Merlot	We had an excellent lunch on their deck overlooking the Walla Walla valley. Reds were more substantive than Amavi, but expensive. We bought the best of the available reds.
Saviah	★★★★	★★★★	2021 Estate Viognier 2020 Barbera 2019 Cabernet 2019 Girl & the Goat 2019 Syrah 2018 Petite Verdot	This was arguably the best of the wineries we visited. They have a wide variety of wines from a wide variety of grapes. We tasted many of them and their entire lineup was fabulous. On top of this, their wines are relatively inexpensive. The temptation to join their wine club was irresistible and we didn't resist.
Woodward Canyon	★½	★	2019 Artist Series Cabernet	Woodward has a beautiful campus about 15 miles outside Walla Walla. Our server was quite busy, but managed to pour a significant number of different wines. He wasn't terribly knowledgeable, but did give us several restaurant recommendations that validated Susie's choices. Unfortunately, most of the wines weren't very good and/or overpriced.
Grammercy	★	★★	2013 Deuce Syrah	Grammercy may have been the biggest disappointment of the visit. They have solid reputation and have been treated well by the press and the reviewers. We found their wines to be "very light", but not elegant. Perhaps it was just what they were pouring on the day we were there. Our server poured an older vintage of their Syrah from their library that was quite good. They had a few bottles left so we bought one.
L'Ecole no. 41	★★½	★★★	2019 Estate Merlot 2019 Estate Syrah 2020 Estate GSM	You can find L'Ecole in many wine stores in the US. It was the largest of the wineries we visited. The tasting room occupies an old, and beautifully restored, schoolhouse just outside Walla Walla. We tasted a number of Estate wines that aren't available outside the tasting room. Several were quite good and reasonable priced. Overall, a very nice, albeit slow, tasting with knowledgeable staff and a really nice setting.

Wine - quality of the wines. **Food**: quality of the food. **Exper** - tasting experience including server, ambience, food, time taken, facilities.

Note: The scores are normalized (scaled 1 to 4) to further differentiate the results

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Long Shadows	★★	★½	2018 Chester-Kidder Cab/Syrah	By far, this was the most exotic tasting room we visited. It's uber modern with blown glass fixtures and artwork. It was made by Dale Chihuly, a famous artist out of Seattle who is friends of the owners. All the wines were the product of collaborations with famous winemakers from around the world. Many of the "recipes" were made many years ago and are now made by their chief winemaker with little or no input from the "collaborator(s)". To us, they were good but not great. Simply not worth the price.
Cougar Crest	★★★★	★★★★	2020 Estate Viognier 2020 Estate Riesling 2021 Albarino 2014 Determination Syrah 2014 Estate Merlot 2015 Estate Tempranillo 2015 Block 11 Syrah	CC was definitely the biggest surprise of the trip. The owner's story is similar to many others we've heard over the years. She was pharmacist and he was a veterinarian. They were wine tourists, found Walla Walla, bought some land, and planted some grapes. They made some wine and surprisingly won some awards. They decided to make a living at it, learned what they needed to, and made more great wine. Debra still is the winemaker, David still manages the planting and vineyards. And they make great wine at amazingly low prices. Almost everything we tasted was delicious, including both reds and whites. It was a no-brainer to join their club.
Dunham	★	★★½	2018 XXIV Cabernet	Dunham is located by the airport which was a training area for B-17 and B-24 bomber pilots during WWII. The tasting room is the last of the bomber hangers. It's a huge open space with all kinds of interesting artifacts. Sadly, that was the highlight of the visit as most of the wines were very tart and just not good.
Seven Hills	★★½	★	2018 Founding Cabernet	Several of the reds, including the Merlot, Pentad blend, and the Cabernet, were quite decent. Further, the winery was quite chic and is entirely within downtown Walla Walla. However, the overall experience was tarnished by a fly-by server.
Spring Valley	★★★	★★★★½	2016 Katherine Cab Franc 2016 Uriah Merlot 2012 Frederick Cabernet 2014 Nina Lee Syrah	Spring Valley is one of the oldest wineries in Walla Walla and has a long and interesting background story going back generations. The family grew wheat for nearly 100 years before planting grapes in the 90's as a hedge against a bad wheat harvest. They made some wine, got some good Wine Spectator ratings, and grew the business from there. The tasting room in downtown is small and unpretentious. However, like Saviah and Cougar Crest, everything we tasted was excellent and affordable. Once again, we showed no self-discipline and joined their wine club.

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Restaurant	Food	Exper	Cuisine	Comments
Bacon and Eggs (Breakfast)	★★★½	★★★½	Funky Gourmet American	B&E is located on Main Street and only open for breakfast and lunch. Their focus is on breakfast, but has a great lunch menu as well. Cool atmosphere and good service. Only cons are they're a bit pricey, they didn't come back with more coffee, and they don't toast the English muffins adequately. And yes, we're a tough group to please.
Maple Counter Café (Breakfast)	★★★★	★★★★	Funky Gourmet American	As good as B&E was, this place was a half-step up. It was just about perfect. They have wide variety of inventive and delicious breakfast dishes. The omelets and corned beef hash dishes are to die for. Great service, huge portions, and comfortable seating. It is not a cheap breakfast though.
Hattaways (Dinner)	★★★★	★★★★	Fusion American with a Southern US tilt	We dined in private room which also served as the wine cellar. The service and atmosphere were outstanding, but the highlight was the food. They don't have a huge menu but what they have is diverse, unique, and delicious. Not even a single nit-pick from our crowd.

Note: Restaurant scores are not normalized