

101 Best Wineries in America for 2015

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Editor

Identifying what we believe to be the 101 best wineries in the United States was an extremely challenging mission. The sheer quantity and variety of good and great wine being made in this country has grown exponentially in the past two or three decades. Wine is now produced in all 50 states — though admittedly Alaska's offerings are mostly made from fruits and berries, plus grape juice imported from more temperate climates — and almost every state has at least a few, if not a carload, of examples well worth drinking.

[101 Best Wineries in America \(Slideshow\)](#)

This ranking isn't a beauty contest, giving points for attractive settings or handsome architecture, or a guide to fine winery dining. Elsewhere, we've included some American wineries in our lists of [Wineries Worth Visiting](#) and [Best Winery Restaurants](#), and identified [Napa Valley's Best Wineries for a View](#), but here — while some of the places listed do indeed offer visual or gustatory attractions — we're concerned with what gets put into the bottle and poured into our glass.

More on Wine

The wineries on our list were nominated by experts in the field — sommeliers, wine writers, chefs, and restaurateurs, along with wine-savvy editors at The Daily Meal. These included (some respondents prefer to remain anonymous) regular wine writers for The Daily Meal like [Roger Morris](#), [Gabe Sasso](#), and [Andrew Chalk](#); John Tilson of [The Underground Wine Letter](#); wine writer and wine bar proprietor [Keith Beavers](#); chef–restaurateur [Daniel Boulud](#) and Daniel Johannes, corporate wine director for Boulud's [Dinex Group](#); chef–restaurateur and Daily Meal contributor [Norman Van Aken](#); sommelier, wine educator, and wine blogger [Elizabeth Schneider](#); [Cathy Mantuano](#), wine director at the Chicago Art Institute's [Terzo Piano](#); and Julian Mayor, head sommelier at Bourbon Steak in the Washington, D.C., [Four Seasons Hotel](#).

Where possible, we factored in our own tasting notes of recent vintages; we also consulted the leading wine publications and newsletters and considered recent awards from prestigious competitions.

We considered not just individual wines, though, but the overall place of each winery in the American wine scene. Is it a dependable veteran, tried and true? An audacious innovator? Does it specialize in just one or two grape varieties, or do a sterling job with 20? Is it representative of its corner of the wine country? Does it help, in one way or another, enhance the reputation of its region, and/or of American wine in general?

Slideshow: [101 Best Wineries in America Slideshow](#)

We also factored in quality-to-price ratio. While this wasn't our principal criterion, we did feel that value should be considered in our ranking strategy. Value doesn't necessarily mean low price, of course, so there are some producers of pricey wines represented here. But our consideration of value accounts in part for the absence from our list of some of famous "trophy wines" from the Napa Valley and elsewhere, wines priced at many hundreds of dollars on release and bought more often (we're pretty sure) as status symbols rather than as delicious things to savor — though it is also worth noting that our panel didn't vote for some of the most famous names at all. In the nomination process, we asked our panel to consider not just the



obvious places — California, the Pacific Northwest, New York State — but the entire country.

In the nomination process, we asked our panel to consider not just the obvious places — California, the Pacific Northwest, New York State — but the entire country. The vast majority of our choices, about two-thirds of the wineries listed, did turn out to be Californian; as noted, plenty of other places are doing a good job with wine, but the Golden State is still by far the largest producing state and still boasts the largest number of great wineries. The Pacific Northwest (Idaho included) is well-represented too, though, and you'll find wineries from New York (both the Finger Lakes and Long Island), Virginia, Texas, Maryland, Colorado, New Mexico, Michigan, and Pennsylvania among our top 101.

We've included wineries from less prominent wine regions for two reasons: first, because we want to encourage the production of fine wine anywhere it can be managed (which, it turns out, is apparently in a whole lot of places); but also because producers who have to use their imaginations a little more than usual, to deal with the growing conditions unique to their regions, often come up with wines that are quite delicious but don't taste quite like anybody else's. [Va La Vineyards](#) (No. 85) in Pennsylvania, for instance, produces small batches of critically acclaimed wines from unusual blends of grapes “chosen by the soil.” [Inwood Estates Vineyards](#) (No. 75), just north of Austin, Texas, has led that state's winemakers in discovering that Spain's essential tempranillo grape makes superb wines, neither Spanish nor Californian in character, in the Lone Star State. Northern Virginia's [Linden Vineyards](#) (No. 15) uses French varieties both well-known and less so, and French-American hybrids, to makes wines of great originality. Of course, many of the big names from California and the Pacific Northwest are represented here, too — [Robert Mondavi Winery](#) (No. 69), [The Eyrie Vineyards](#) (No. 38), [Heitz Cellars](#) (No. 7), and so on — as are small but increasingly important producers from those places, like [Saxum Vineyards](#) (No. 51) from Paso Robles, and [Andrew Will Winery](#) (No. 22) from Vashon, Washington. We want to represent many parts of the country in this list, but we also need to acknowledge that the vast majority of America's best wines come from the West Coast.

We're proud of the following list, and grateful to the experts who helped us compile it. We're also excited to hear your feedback: Did your favorite American winery make the cut? Let us know which winery on our list is your favorite — or if we missed one that you love — by tweeting us [@TheDailyMeal](#) using the hashtag [#101BestWineries](#).

#101 Trione Vineyards and Winery, Geyserville, Calif.



Trione Vineyards & Winery / Facebook

The Trione family have long been grape growers in Sonoma County, but about a dozen years ago they hired winemaker Scot Covington, who had learned his craft under two legendary California winemakers, Merry Edwards and Bill Bonetti, and started their own winery. Covington chooses his grapes from the hundreds of acres of the Triones' farm in the Alexander and Russian River valleys (what he doesn't want is sold to other producers). The **Trione** portfolio (sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, pinot noir, syrah, and cabernet sauvignon) is outstanding, says wine writer and blogger **Gabe Sasso**, "deep on quality, breadth of flavors, and plain old deliciousness." Trione may be a young winery, but Sasso says it's "an up-and-coming powerhouse to keep an eye on."

#100 Dolin Malibu Estate Vineyards, Malibu, Calif.



Dolin Estate Vineyard

Last summer, the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau awarded AVA, or American Viticultural Area, status to the region called Malibu Coast, which extends up from the coastline high into the Santa Monica Mountains. Elliott **Dolin** was one of the leaders of the movement to recognize the area, which now boasts more than 50 mostly small-scale producers. (There's even an annual **Malibu Food and Wine Festival**.) A onetime musician turned real estate investor, Dolin makes juicy, earthy pinot noirs from Central Coast grapes, but his masterpiece is his estate-grown chardonnay, full of fruit and only lightly touched with oak. Dolin's production is tiny, but he's a serious winemaker, and a poster boy for the possibilities of this corner of California, where the first grapes were planted in the early 1800s.

[Read More About America's 101 Best Wineries](#)

[# 101 Trione Vineyards and Winery, Geyserville, Calif.](#)

[# 100 Dolin Malibu Estate Vineyard, Malibu, Calif.](#)

[# 99 Hope Family Wines, Paso Robles, Calif.](#)

[# 98 Ste. Chapelle Winery, Caldwell, Idaho](#)

[# 97 Broc Cellars, Berkeley, Calif.](#)

- # 96 Cornerstone Cellars, Yountville, Calif.
- # 95 Gruet Winery, Albuquerque, New Mexico
- # 94 MacPhaill Family Wines, Healdsburg, Calif.
- # 93 Shinn Estate Vineyard and Farmhouse, Mattituck, N.Y.
- # 92 Bokisch Vineyards, Lodi, Calif.
- # 91 Allis Ranch Winery, Sedalia, Colorado
- # 90 Seven Hills Winery, Walla Walla, Wash.
- # 89 Frick Winery, Geyserville, Calif.
- # 88 Hermann J. Wiemer Winery, Dundee, N.Y.
- # 87 Neyers Vineyards, St. Helena, Calif.
- # 86 The Ojai Vineyard , Oak View, Calif.
- # 85 Va La Vineyards, Avondale, Pennsylvania
- # 84 Stony Hill Vineyard, St Helena, Calif.
- # 83 McPherson Cellars Winery, Lubbock, Texas
- # 82 Favia Wines, Napa, Calif.
- # 81 Keplinger Wines, Napa, Calif.
- # 80 Gramercy Cellars, Walla Walla, Wash.
- # 79 Freemark Abbey Winery, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 78 Peay, Cloverdale, Calif.
- # 77 Balletto Vineyards & Winery, Santa Rosa, Calif.
- # 76 Channing Daughters Winery, Bridgehampton, N.Y.
- # 75 Inwood Estates Vineyards, Florence, Texas
- # 74 Chehalem Winery, Newberg, Ore.
- # 73 Pedroncelli, Geyserville, Calif.
- # 72 Bergström Winery, Newberg, Ore.
- # 71 Truchard Vineyards, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 70 Sandhi Wines, Santa Barbara, Calif.
- # 69 Robert Mondavi, Napa, Calif.
- # 68 Iron Horse Vineyards, Sebastopol, Calif.

- # 67 Jaffurs Wine Cellars, Santa Barbara, Calif.
- # 66 Beckmen Vineyards, Los Olivos, Calif.
- # 65 Keuka Lake Vineyards, Hammondsport, N.Y.
- # 64 Thomas Fogarty Winery and Vineyards, Woodside, Calif.
- # 63 Black Ankle Vineyards, Mount Airy, Maryland
- # 62 Rochioli Vineyards and Winery, Healdsburg, Calif.
- # 61 Foxen Winery, Santa Ynez Valley, Calif.
- # 60 Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars, Hammondsport, N.Y.
- # 59 Andrew Murray Vineyards, Los Olivos, Calif.
- # 58 Swanson Vineyards, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 57 Abeja, Walla Walla, Wash.
- # 56 Red Newt Cellars, Hector, N.Y.
- # 55 Tensley Wines, Santa Barbara County, Calif.
- # 54 Mount Eden, Saratoga, Calif.
- # 53 Barbourville Vineyards, Barboursville, Virginia
- # 52 Charles Smith Wines, Walla Walla, Wash.
- # 51 Saxum , Paso Robles, Calif.
- # 50 Chateau Grand Traverse, Traverse City, Michigan
- # 49 Ken Wright Cellars, Carlton, Ore.
- # 48 Peachy Canyon Winery, Paso Robles, Calif.
- # 47 Boundary Breaks Vineyard, Lodi, N.Y.
- # 46 St. Supery Vineyards and Winery, Rutherford, Calif.
- # 45 Soliste, Petaluma, Calif.
- # 44 Quilceda Creek, Snohomish, Wash.
- # 43 Evening Land Vineyards , Dundee, Ore.
- # 42 SpottsWoode Winery, St Helena, Calif.
- # 41 Elk Cove Vineyards, Willamette Valley, Ore.
- # 40 Hanzell Vineyards, Sonoma, Calif.
- # 39 Wind Gap Wines, Sebastopol, Calif.

- # 38 The Eyrie Vineyards, McMinnville, Ore.
- # 37 Arnot-Roberts, Healdsburg, Calif.
- # 36 Hirsch Vineyard, Cazadero, Calif.
- # 35 Acorn Winery, Healdsburg, Calif.
- # 34 Diamond Creek Vineyards, Calistoga, Calif.
- # 33 Domaine de la Cote, Lompoc, Calif.
- # 32 DeLille Cellars, Woodinville, Wash.
- # 31 Talley Vineyards, Arroyo Grande, Calif.
- # 30 Patz & Hall, Sonoma, Calif.
- # 29 Ponzi Vineyards, Sherwood, Ore.
- # 28 Copain Wines, Healdsburg, Calif.
- # 27 Qupé Winery, Los Olivos, Calif.
- # 26 Navarro Vineyards and Winery, Philo, Calif.
- # 25 Whetstone Wine Cellars, Napa, Calif.
- # 24 Mayacamas Vineyards, Mount Veeder, Calif.
- # 23 Massican Winery, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 22 Andrew Will Winery, Vashon, Wash.
- # 21 Chateau Montelena Winery, Calistoga, Calif.
- # 20 Schramsberg Vineyards, Calistoga, Calif.
- # 19 Duckhorn Vineyards, St Helena, Calif.
- # 18 Bonny Doon Vineyard, Santa Cruz, Calif.
- # 17 Corison Winery, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 16 Shafer Vineyards, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 15 Linden Vineyards, Linden, Virginia
- # 14 Domaine Drouhin Oregon, Dayton, Ore.
- # 13 Matthiasson Winery, Napa Valley, Calif.
- # 12 Caymus Vineyards, Rutherford, Calif.
- # 11 Littorai, Sebastopol, Calif.
- # 10 Robert Sinskey Vineyards, Napa, Calif.

9 Leonetti Cellar, Walla Walla, Wash.

8 Smith-Madrone Vineyards and Winery, St. Helena, Calif.

7 Heitz Cellars, St Helena, Calif.

6 Dunn Vineyards, Angwin, Calif.

5 Woodward Canyon Winery, Lowden, Wash.

4 Calera Wine, Mt Harlan, Calif.

3 Au Bon Climat Winery, Santa Barbara, Calif.

2 Ridge Vineyards, Cupertino, Calif.

1 Tablas Creek Vineyard, Paso Robles, Calif.