

THE
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SUMMER GETAWAYS



On the road
Mountain retreats
and romps to the rodeo

Around Colorado
7 chill hot springs
10 campgrounds with a view
15 spectacular summit hikes

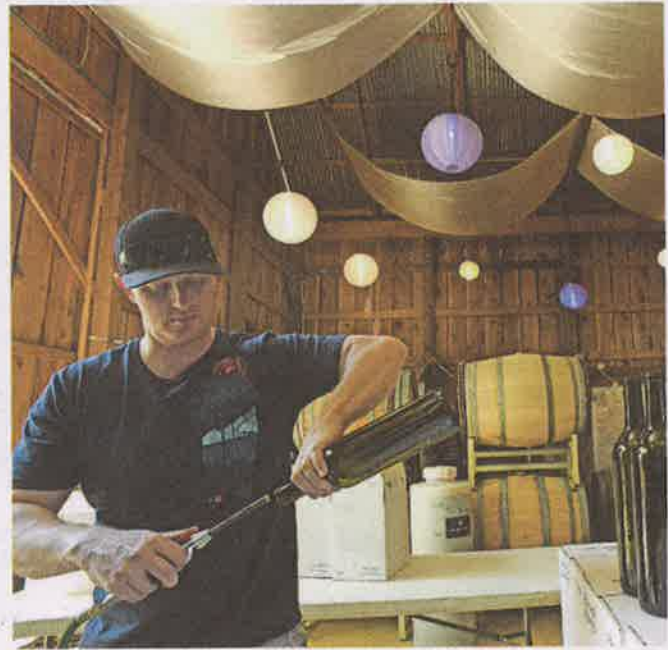
Trips not to miss
Festivals, bike tours, wineries, farm
dinners — and staycation ideas

Grape expectations

COLORADO WINERY TOURS SHOWCASE FRUIT OF THE VINE

By William Porter *The Denver Post*

When vineyards and wineries began popping up in Colorado in the 1990s, most Centennial State residents viewed it as a new thing, part of a general nationwide surge of interest in viticulture outside such traditional strongholds as California, New York and the Pacific Northwest. In fact, what was happening here was a revival of an industry that had thrived until the ruinous years of the Prohibition Era. As wine states go, Colorado is something of a comeback kid. While wine grapes are grown around the state, the heart of the action is on the Western Slope. Tucked into the desert mountains near Palisade and Grand Junction, microclimates conducive to growing good “juice” abound. And just like their counterparts in the Napa Valley and Russian River regions of California, winemakers have learned the value of offering winery tours. Here are five good ones where you can tour the vineyards, learn about production techniques from the pros, sample the finished product in tasting rooms and even buy bottles to take home.



Winemaker Corey Norsworthy puts CO₂ inside a bottle before filling them during the hand-bottling process at Maison La Belle Vie winery. *Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post*

1. Colterris Wines

One of the most physically striking settings for a Colorado winery, Colterris is known for its cabernet francs and cabernet sauvignons. These are robust, forward reds that pair beautifully with bolder foods, whether Colorado-centric dishes such as beef and chiles, or refined contemporary French fare.

The vines were planted more than 25 years ago. Owners Scott and Theresa High produce a rosé, the Colterris Coral, and

the property is also acclaimed for its large, juicy peaches.

The tasting room is open June–October, from 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (During the off-season you can make appointments to visit.)

3548 E. ½ Road, Palisade, 970-464-1150, colterris.com

2. Maison la Belle Vie

Owner John Barbier has put Maison la Belle Vie on the map in Palisade, thanks to a creative approach to a number of wines, including cabernet sauvignon, syrah, merlot, rosé and Muscat, the dessert wine popular in France's Loire Valley.

Small-batch reserves of merlot, syrah and petit verdot are also available, along with a vin de peche — a Barbier family recipe made with Muscat grapes and peaches that has been handed down since the late 1800s. Grapes are grown on a 4½-acre plot.

The tasting room is a mix of elegance and rusticity. It is open Sunday–Thursday from 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Friday–Saturday from 11 a.m.–6 p.m. On-site dinners for parties for groups can be arranged.

3575 G Road, Palisade, 970-361-6022, maisonlabellevie.com

3. Canyon Wind Cellars

The vines at this winery were planted in 1991, and within four years owner and former geologist Norman Christianson and his wife, Ellen, knew that they had the goods to bottle top-shelf wine. They consulted noted Napa winemaker Bob Pepi to create the facility, and in 1996 Canyon Wind Cellars had its first crush, producing a chardonnay, merlot and cabernet sauvignon. They produced the first \$100 bottle of wine grown in Colorado.

Head there early this summer if you're a fan: This spring, the Christiansons' son Jay, who had taken over the business, announced that Canyon Wind is closing. They'll be there through the end of July, though, and maybe longer. The tasting room is open daily 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

3907 N. River Road, Palisade, 970-464-0888, canyonwindcellars.com

PALISADE
ELEV 4,728 FT



Katie Welch, left, and her boyfriend Chris Blastos, right, pose for a portrait while enjoying a bottle of red wine on the outdoor patio at Maison La Belle Vie winery. *Helen H. Richardson, Denver Post file*

4. Garfield Estates Vineyard & Winery

The vines at Garfield Estates were planted in early 2000 by Jeff Carr, who eventually passed the winery over to Curt and Dee Barratt, Texans who brought in their oldest daughter, Allison, to be general manager.

All the grapes are Colorado grown. The winery is known for its viognier, fumé blanc, cabernet franc and syrah. But it has also had success with a vin de glace, a dessert wine done in the ice-wine style that is a late-harvest Riesling with notes of honey melon, apple and lemon.

During the summer growing season, the tasting room is open Sunday-Friday from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturdays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Guided tours are available with a few days advance notice.

3572 G Road, Palisade, 970-464-0941, garfieldestates.com

5. DeBeque Canyon

Another geologist who parlayed his knowledge of soil into a winemaking career, Bennett Price and his wife, Davy, bought a vineyard east of Grand Junction in 1982. They expanded the operation and established the first major parcel of merlot vines in Colorado.

Slowly building the volume of wine production at DeBeque Canyon Winery, the Prices have earned their renown for producing full-flavored red and white varietals. Their wines have won national awards, especially the Claret, a Bordeaux-style blend. They are also known for their barbera and Gewurztraminer.

From home winemaking to grape grower to winemaker, Bennett and Davy have gone full circle to pursue their dream.

The DeBeque Canyon winery and tasting room sits in downtown Palisade in a structure built by the Peach Growers Association about 1903 for packing fruit.

Summer tasting room hours run 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily.

144 Kluge Ave., Palisade, 970-464-0550, debequecanyonwinery.com

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Maison La Belle Vie is styled after the vineyards of owner John Barbier's native France.

Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post