


# Top 10 unusual places to go wine tasting in the US

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Think wine in the US only comes from the west coast? Intrepid and weather-defying vintners are beating the odds and producing wines across this diverse land, from the bucolic shores of Vermont's Lake Champlain to the volcano-filled Hawaiian islands. Even cactus-country Arizona, home to the Grand Canyon, grows wine-producing vines. Here are ten states deserving your supping scrutiny.

## Hawaii

 Vineyards with a volcanic view at Maui's Winery. Image courtesy of Maui's Winery

Vineyards with a volcanic view at Maui's Winery. Image courtesy of Maui's Winery

Wine tasting in a tropical paradise? Aloha to that! The Big Island's Volcano Winery ([volcanowinery.com](http://volcanowinery.com)), sitting on lava-rich land near Volcano National Park, blends traditional grapes with locally grown products, yielding concoctions like Guava Grape and Macadamia Nut Honey Wine. And Maui's Winery ([mauiwine.com](http://mauiwine.com)) pours tastes of unique creations like Hula O-Maui, a pineapple sparkling wine from Maui-sourced fruit, from a bar made from a single mango tree. Fun fact: Local artists create all their wine-bottle labels.

## Montana

Embrace Big Sky Country with a taste or three at the family-run Mission Mountain Winery ([missionmountainwinery.com](http://missionmountainwinery.com)) situated directly on Flathead Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi. With a six-month growing season and -20°F (-28°C) winter temperatures, only hardy varietals like Pinot gris and Chardonnay can hack it in this climate; additional grapes come from their Washington vineyards. Try Sundown, a light berry rosé or the non-oaked Laughing Horse Chardonnay. And the Cocoa Vin, a chocolate port, is a must for sweet-tooths.

## Vermont

Vermont's first winery, Shelburne Vineyard ([shelburnevineyard.com](http://shelburnevineyard.com)) sits close to the shores of pristine Lake Champlain 30 minutes south of Burlington. Try the Cayuga, a Chardonnay-Riesling blend or the Vidal Blanc Late Harvest, a balanced dessert wine. Over in Central Vermont, the Neshobe River Winery ([neshoberiverwinery.com](http://neshoberiverwinery.com)) offers common varietals like their popular red blend, the Purple Haze, plus a handful of black currant wines, iced cider and mead – a honey wine considered to be the ancestor to all fermented drinks.

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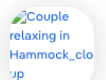
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 Harvesting grapes at Shelburne Vineyard. Image courtesy of Shelburne Vineyard


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## Texas

Texan wine rarely makes it outside the state. Why? Texans are a proud lot and they consume most of it. Pull up to ranches that double as wineries and the guy pouring will likely sport a cowboy hat and Texan boots. Wines here are big and bold, just like the state. And while many wineries source grapes from afar, Perisso Vineyards ([perissosvineyards.com](http://perissosvineyards.com)) in the Texas Hill country uses only 100% Texan grapes. Taste their Malbec while perched at a picnic table in view of the local castle.

## Alaska

Sample berry-infused wines like Shirazberry (Shiraz grapes with raspberry) at Bear Creek Winery ([bearcreekwinery.com](http://bearcreekwinery.com)) while taking in the view of Kachemak Bay. Don't want to leave? The winery also boasts luxury lodging; guests can also access an on-site cedar hot tub (while drinking their wine, of course). Alternatively, try small batch wines made from Alaskan berries and wildflowers at Alaskan Wilderness Wines ([alaskawildwine.com](http://alaskawildwine.com)). We're intrigued by their Salmonberry wine, a blend of cinnamon, clove, vanilla and wild Salmonberry, a native Alaskan berry resembling raspberries, but bigger and milder.

 Sip with a view of Kachemak Bay, Alaska. Image by Brian / CC BY 2.0

Sip on the banks of Kachemak Bay, Alaska. Image by Brian / CC BY 2.0

## Kansas

Grace Hill Winery ([gracehillwinery.com](http://gracehillwinery.com)) is another place eschewing traditional wine names: try their dry Beach Day rosé or Leaning Shed red while relaxing on the wide patio overlooking the vines. Meanwhile, the newest Kansas kid on the block, Crooked Post Winery ([crookedpostwinery.com](http://crookedpostwinery.com)), opened in 2014 and offers a small selection of varietals, including a spicy Valvin muscat and a semi-sweet Traminette. During harvest season (August through September), both wineries welcome volunteers to join the fun and help pick grapes (registration required, check their respective websites for schedules).

## Florida

The Sunshine State goes beyond oranges and palm trees at San Sebastian Winery ([sansebastianwinery.com](http://sansebastianwinery.com)), which offers tastes in their historic East Coast railway building in historic St Augustine. Note: you'll probably want to linger with a bottle at their on-site wine bar and jazz club, The Cellar Upstairs. Or try Dakotah Winery's ([dakotahwinery.com](http://dakotahwinery.com)) bestselling favorite, the semi-sweet red Noble, before checking out their Zen-like koi carp pond and the resident wood ducks.

## Arizona

Arizona wines pack a punch because they work hard to grow in this drier-than-dry desert climate. The Village of Elgin Winery ([elginwines.com](http://elginwines.com)) still stomps grapes by foot, and wines boast playful names like Tombstone Showdown, a dry white with Sauvignon blanc and Colombard grapes. Located half an hour from Tuscon, the Charron Vineyards ([charronvineyards.com](http://charronvineyards.com)) sit 4200ft above sea level at the edge of the Santa Rita Mountains. They say their Rincon Red, a blend of Merlot and Chancellor grapes, goes well with anything from barbeque to chocolate cake. The only way to decide if you agree is to taste, taste, taste... we know, it's a tough life.

Vineyards in the foothills of the Santa Rita Mountains, Arizona. Image courtesy of Charron Vineyards.

Vineyards in the foothills of the Santa Rita Mountains, Arizona. Image courtesy of Charron Vineyards

## Nevada

Nevada's oldest winery, Pahrump Valley Winery ([pahrupwinery.com](http://pahrupwinery.com)), beat the odds and produces sensational wines right in the middle of the Mojave Desert. Visiting in October? Don't miss their annual grape stomp (register online to secure a spot as a stomper, it's a guaranteed laugh). Or grab dinner at the on-site restaurant, Symphony, named after their award-winning white. Oh, and it's only an hour away from the Vegas strip.

## Kentucky

Equus Run Vineyards ([equusunvineyards.com](http://equusunvineyards.com)) pours its wines in a former farm tool shed, rebuilt with stone producing today's rustic tasting room. Even the vineyards had previous lives as cattle and tobacco fields, and all of it lies in the middle of Kentucky's bluegrass region surrounded by horse farms. Local musicians perform summer concerts in their outdoor stone amphitheater and the grounds are a joy to roam – check out their life-sized horse sculptures dotted about.

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