



Watermark Beach Resort.

Spring Okanagan Wine Festival

By the barrel.

STORY: *Sara Harowitz*

For lovers of good food and even better wine, the Okanagan is a sunny playground. Continuously growing in notoriety and clout, British Columbia's wineries are again and again proving themselves not only on the national scale, but the global one, too. Any time is a good time to visit, but the region truly shines in the spring and summer months; and the Spring Okanagan Wine Festival adds even that much more, with over 125 wineries in a mere 100 miles offering special events, tastings, and menus.

The 2016 festival was no exception, taking place from April 28 to May 8 and helping the Okanagan Wine Festivals Society celebrate 22 years in existence. Of course, any trip to the Okanagan feels like a wine festival, and no matter the district, there is plenty worthy to sip.

Osoyoos

Though technically in Okanagan Falls, See Ya Later Ranch must be mentioned, especially for its hailed gewürztraminer (the property hosts an uncharacteristically large gewürztraminer vineyard) and fabulous patio with views of the Valley. In Osoyoos itself there is the important Nk'Mip Cellars, a joint partnership between the Osoyoos Indian Band and Constellation Brands. The 2014 Winemaker's Series Talon is smooth and fruity, an easy choice for every day, while the 2013 Mer'r'iym is a nice, big structured red. At Moon Curser the name of the game is unconventional, where lesser known red varieties including tannat, tempranillo, and touriga nacional run the show. Its 2009 Border Vines even picked up a prestigious UK Decanter World Wine Awards Trophy for Best Canadian Red Wine, and with an incredible tasting room view, it swallows all the better. Hats can be hung at the Watermark Beach Resort right in the heart of Osoyoos (near punchy espresso at Jojo's), where both pool and lake are ready for the taking.

In the Okanagan, regions and destinations flow in and out of each other like water. The resounding theme is that one does not have to travel far to travel well; there is incredible abundance and versatility right here in British Columbia. It is easy to spend days in each spot, and even easier to leave wanting more.