



WASHINGTON STATE
THE PERFECT CLIMATE FOR WINE™

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Media Contact:

Regan O'Leary

206-667-9463, ext. 217

roleary@washingtonwine.org

Washington State Challenges World's Premier Wine Regions

Robert Parker's Wine Advocate Awards Washington First "Perfect" 100-point Wine Scores

SEATTLE – April 26, 2006 – The current issue of legendary wine critic Robert M. Parker Jr.'s *Wine Advocate* features a record-breaking review of Washington state's wine industry, including the first 100-point scores in the state's history. The April 24 review, written by Parker associate Pierre-Antoine Rovani, rated 86 Washington wines 90-points ("outstanding") or higher, underscoring that Washington state has the ability to meet or exceed quality standards established by the finest wine regions in the world.

Making industry history, Quilceda Creek of Snohomish, Wash. secured 100-points for both its 2002 and 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon. Only 15 other U.S. wines have received 100-point ratings from the *Wine Advocate*, and only five 100-point ratings have been awarded to consecutive vintages by the publication since its inception in 1978.

"Receiving not one, but two 'perfect' 100-point scores is a tremendous achievement and demonstrates the quality vineyards and wines of Washington state," said Robin Pollard, Executive Director of the Washington Wine Commission. "We're extremely proud of Quilceda Creek's historic recognition, as it reinforces our assertion that Washington is the 'perfect climate for wine' and can compete with the finest wine producing regions in the world."

In the *Wine Advocate* report, Rovani delivers praise for Washington's vineyards and wine producers, stating that "Washington state's Columbia Valley, long described as having great potential, has fulfilled many expectations and its future is as bright today as any viticultural region's on Earth." Rovani also asserts that "the future is indeed bright for Washington's wine industry!"

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“This outstanding review is further proof that Washington state is now one of the premier wine regions in the world,” said Jeff Gordon, owner of Gordon Brothers Family Vineyards and chairman of the Washington Wine Commission. “We know this is just the first of more great accolades to come, and expect to see similar recognition for other Washington wineries soon.”

Rovani also affirms the Washington wine industry’s newly-launched brand positioning, *Washington State – the Perfect Climate for Wine™*, calling out Washington’s inexpensive and plentiful land, ideal weather and “top-flight” knowledge base as key advantages for the region. He adds that during the ten years he has reviewed the Washington wine industry, “winemaking knowledge has been honed, and lessons learned, so that today Washington is home to some of the most astute winemakers in the world.”

“The *Wine Advocate* report is a testament to the talented winemakers and world-class vineyards in Washington state,” said Ted Baseler, president and CEO of Ste. Michelle Wine Estates and a member of the Washington Wine Commission. “These are historic scores for a wine region that is making history.”

Washington state is the second largest producer of wine in the nation, contributing \$3 billion annually to the state economy and employing 14,000 people.

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About The Washington Wine Commission

The Washington Wine Commission is responsible for the promotion and development of the Washington wine industry, representing the state’s more than 400 wineries, 350 wine grape growers and 30,000 vineyard acres. For more information about Washington wines, touring, and tasting opportunities, visit www.washingtonwine.org or e-mail info@washingtonwine.org.