



Quails' Gate Estate Winery photo

TRIP IDEAS

KELOWNA WINE REGION

The Thompson Okanagan's Kelowna wine region is centred on the artsy city of Kelowna, where vineyards stretch across the hills on either side of Okanagan Lake. Here it's easy to combine artistic pursuits and outdoor adventure with wine touring – go wine tasting, visit a museum or gallery, cycle the nearby mountains, and still have time for a round of golf before a world-class dinner at a local winery.

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Kelowna Wineries & Highlights

In Kelowna, visit Summerhill Pyramid Winery to sample rosé bubbly and see the mystical pyramid where wines are aged. CedarCreek Estate Winery offers big-bodied, award-winning reds, which pair beautifully with the chevre produced by the goats up the road at Carmelis Goat Cheese Artisan.

Drop by Tantalus Vineyards to try the Riesling – the winery is also known for its green design. At Okanagan Lavender Herb Farm stop and smell the flowers, and at Okanagan Grocery Artisan Breads be sure to sample the fresh-baked goodies. And don't forget to visit the charming boutiques of lakeside Pandosy Village for one-of-a-kind housewares and vintage accessories. In downtown Kelowna, the BC Wine Museum is a great place to learn about the history of British Columbia wine production and pick up a bottle – or a case! – of wine from more than 94 local wineries.

Across the bridge is the suburb of West Kelowna, where a distinctive bell tower guides visitors to Mission Hill Family Estate Winery. Be sure to taste the Legacy Series of high-end wines. Just minutes away, Quails' Gate is known for terrific Pinot Noir and dark, old-vines Marechal Foch – watch for the funny little birds that like to run along the road, giving the winery its name.

Kelowna Dining

Kelowna's chefs pair Okanagan vintages with local, flavourful produce and foods. At Wild Apple Restaurant & Lounge try the BC artisan charcuterie platter, which features local cheese from Salmon Arm, Naramata and more. Or enjoy the hearty

steaks, ribs and made-in-house pasta at Cabana Bar and Grille. RauDZ Regional Table does a gourmet take on comfort classics, such as a grilled salmon "BLT." Visit one of the winery restaurants, like Terrace at Mission Hill, for fantastic views of the valley along with gourmet lunchtime fare.

Okanagan Wine Festivals

Visit during an Okanagan wine festival to get the most out of a wine-tasting vacation. Each year, four wine fests (one for each season) draw thousands of visitors to tastings, dinners, seminars and parties. The big one is the Okanagan Fall Wine Festival (October), which features more than 125 events throughout the valley.

Kelowna Accommodation

Stay at a hotel in the heart of Kelowna, or choose accommodation just steps from the shores of Okanagan Lake. Lake Okanagan Resort, a sprawling waterfront getaway, offers an onsite 9-hole golf course, tennis courts, a day spa, a marina and more. In West Kelowna, stay at the Cove Lakeside Resort with luxurious suites and the option of swimming in Okanagan Lake or the outdoor swimming pools, complete with slides and hot tubs.

Kelowna Transportation

Kelowna is about an hour-long flight from Vancouver, Seattle, Calgary or Edmonton. Many visitors prefer to drive, as a vehicle is best for reaching the wineries (car rentals are available). It's a scenic 4.5-hour drive from Vancouver, eight from Calgary or 6.5 from Seattle. For those not driving, wine tour operators can provide transportation among wineries.