



Washington's Wine Country

By Tamara Muldoon and Ron Engeldinger

The rolling hills and rich farm land of south-central and south-east Washington are the home to many of Washington's finest vineyards and orchards. Offering first-rate food and drink, a variety of group activities and plenty of outstanding meeting venues, the region is an excellent choice for a conference or retreat. Here we describe what three of the regions destinations, Walla Walla, Yakima and the Tri-Cities have to offer.

SWEET WALLA WALLA

Small-Town Charm and World-Class Wine as Walla Walla Pours Out a Warm Welcome

Steeped in history and located at the heart of a celebrated wine region, Walla Walla, Wash., offers all the amenities you would expect to find in

larger cities. At the same time, it retains a friendly, welcoming character. "Walla Walla has been named one of the friendliest small towns in North America," says Marcus Carney, group tour sales manager for Tourism Walla Walla. A large conference center and several unique venues provide plenty of options for meetings and events.

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

The elegant Marcus Whitman Hotel and Conference Center is located in the center of the city. Austin Blaylock, director of marketing, says, "You can get the full experience of what Walla Walla is about at the Marcus Whitman. We have four wine tasting rooms in our lobby, and there are 20 more within walking distance of the hotel." The historic Explorer Ballroom is the cornerstone of the Conference Center. "Additional ballrooms, board rooms and flexible meeting spaces serve groups of all sizes," explains Blaylock. With a European Renaissance inspired décor and equipped with all the modern amenities and technology, the Marcus Whitman offers flexible, functional space with a sophisticated ambience.

Local hotels provide additional meeting options. The Courtyard by Marriott can accommodate various size groups in several meeting spaces. The Best Western Plus Walla Wall Suites Inn has on-site meeting capacity for small groups, and Hampton Inn & Suites offers additional meeting spaces. Small boutique hotels and bed & breakfast inns throughout the city present more lodging alternatives.

For a unique event, planners can choose one of the region's fine wineries. Canoe Ridge Vineyard and Tasting Room serves groups for a banquet or event in the red-brick charm of a historic building. A remodeled airplane hangar is home to Dunham Cellars and Hangar Lounge. Modern art and distinctive wines combine to create a contemporary, urban feel for events at Foundry Vineyards.

The Gesa Power House Theatre is a versatile space for meetings, receptions, lectures or performances. Located in a 120-year old building that once supplied power to Walla Walla, the theater is a renowned performing arts theater and can also host meetings or events. Its central location provides easy access to all downtown Walla Walla's dining and lodging.

Modern Cordiner Hall, the auditorium at Whitman College is perfect for a large presentation or training. The Young Ballroom, located in the Reid Campus Center, is a multi-purpose space that can accommodate a large banquet or reception.

Smaller groups may want to consider BLDG 270. Once part of the Army Air Base, it is now a multi-function space with a warm, inviting feel for a small meeting or banquet.





© Visit Walla Walla

WINING AND DINING

A variety of dining options abound as Walla Walla has gained fame as a small-town foodie haven. “Whether you want a casual meal or award-winning sophistication, Walla Walla has it,” explains Carney. Downtown eateries feature classic French and Italian cuisine as well as Northwest Regional cuisine. Many chefs feature fresh farm-to-table menus.

Of course, with more than 130 wineries in the area, wine is often the centerpiece of the meal. Many local establishments feature extensive lists of local wines to accompany the meal. Visitors can sample wines at one of downtown tasting rooms or take a wine tour of local vineyards.

MORE TO DO

Even though it is small, Walla Walla provides plenty of options for after-event activities. Downtown Walla Walla has boutique and vintage shopping in a relaxed environment. A thriving arts and culture scene features art galleries, interesting museums, and year-round symphony and stage performances. With a mild and dry climate, Walla Walla offers a variety of outdoor activities. Several highly-regarded golf courses challenge golfers of any level. Casual cyclers can meander through the bike paths and rural roads past wheat fields and vineyards. The nearby Blue Mountains have a more challenging cycling environment. During the winter,

Walla Walla makes a great base camp for skiing, snowboarding, and other winter adventures.

Located in the heart of the Northwest, Walla Walla is easy to reach. Drive times on major highways are nearly equal from Seattle, Portland, and Boise. Alaska Airlines provides three direct flights a day to Walla Walla from Seattle. The Tri-cities airport, about a 50-minute drive from Walla Walla, offers connections to a variety of major U.S. cities.



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THREE CITIES – ONE COMMUNITY
Tri-Cities Fills the Bill for All Types of Events with Its Diverse Venues

With three large event facilities and numerous hotels with meeting space, the cities of Kennewick, Pasco and Richland form one versatile meeting destination. Collectively known as the Tri-Cities, the community makes it easy to hold an event there.

Kris Watkins, president and CEO of Visit Tri-Cities explains, “Visit Tri-Cities staff will assist planners in finding the perfect venue to host their event, saving them both time and energy, and will assist with planning every step of the way. Our housing system, Meeting Max, is available to make booking guestrooms convenient for attendees and to help meeting planners accurately track and manage room blocks.”

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Kennewick’s twelve-year-old Three Rivers Convention Center looks brand new. It easily accommodates large events. A Great Hall with additional breakout rooms plus a large atrium equals one incredibly flexible facility. Next door, the Toyota Center offers arena-style seating for large groups as well as a separate banquet room.

“We do everything in-house,” says Corey Pearson, executive director at the Three Rivers Campus. “We don’t outsource AV, security or food. It’s all us. When you talk to us, it’s truly a one-stop shop.”

Connected to the Convention Center, Springhill Suites has an on-site restaurant and coffee shop. The adjacent Hilton Garden Inn provides additional rooms. Altogether, there are approximately 700 hotel rooms located within one mile of the Three Rivers Campus.

Pasco’s TRAC Center was designed to facilitate trade, recreation and agriculture-related events. Its central atrium houses three modern meeting rooms plus lots of pre-function space. A connecting exposition hall is perfect for trade shows. On the other side, a similarly-sized, dirt-floored arena welcomes events such as home-and-garden shows and rodeos. An indoor ice rink completes this budget-friendly facility. Nearby hotels supply a

CONNECT

Walla Walla

- More than 1,000 guest rooms
- Walla Walla Regional Airport is 3 miles from downtown

Tourism Walla Walla

877-998-4748
Wallawalla.org
info@wallawalla.org

Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center

- 133 guest rooms
 - 13,000 square feet of meeting space
 - 9 flexible meeting spaces
 - 450 capacity in largest meeting room
- 866-826-9422
marcuswhitmanhotel.com
info@marcuswhitmanhotel.com

Courtyard by Marriott

- 120 guest rooms
 - 5,500 square feet of meeting space
 - 4 meeting rooms
 - 200 capacity in largest space
- 509-876-8100
marriott.com/alwcy
akrise@cymwallawalla.com

Best Western Plus Walla Walla Suites Inn

- 77 guest rooms
 - 926 square feet of meeting space
 - 75 capacity of largest meeting room
- 509-525-4700
bestwestern.com
sales@bwpwallawalla.com

Whitman College

- Large variety of meeting rooms
- 1,383 capacity in largest event space

509-527-5366
whitman.edu/conferences-events-and-scheduling
depontke@whitman.edu

Hampton Inn & Suites

- 102 guest rooms
 - 500 square feet of meeting space
 - 45 capacity in largest meeting room
- 509-525-1398
hampton.com
veronica.elliott@hilton.com

Canoe Ridge Vineyard and Tasting Room

509-525-1843
canoeridgevineyard.com
info@canoeridgevineyard.com

Dunham Cellars and Hangar Lounge

509-529-4685
dunhamcellars.com
wine@dunhamcellars.com

Foundry Vineyards

509-529-0736
foundryvineyards.com
info@foundryvineyards.com

Gesa Power House Theatre

- 400 capacity
- 509-529-6500
phtwww.com
events@phtwww.com

BLDG 270

- 50 capacity
- 509-529-5443
bldg270.com
sarah@bldg270.com

variety of guest rooms within walking distance.

Smaller groups are well-served in the Tri-Cities by Red Lion Hotels, with several properties to choose from. This Northwest chain's hotels are characterized by oversized guest rooms, ample event space, quality food service and lodge-style ambiance. On-site dining

CONNECT

Tri-Cities

3,800 guest rooms
Pasco Airport is 7 to 10 miles from the center of the cities

Visit Tri-Cities

509-735-8486
visittricity.com
info@visittricity.com

Three Rivers Convention Center

- 75,000 square feet of meeting space
- 12 flexible event rooms
- 1,400 capacity in largest meeting space

509-735-9400
threeriversconventioncenter.com
sales@3riverscampus.com

Toyota Center

- 7,200 capacity arena
- 250 capacity of event room

509-737-3700
yourtoyotacenter.com
cpearson@3riverscampus.com

TRAC Center

- 51,000 square feet of event space
- 5 event spaces
- 1,800 capacity in largest event space

509-542-5927
traconline.com
sales@traconline.com

Springhill Suites by Marriott

- Connected to Convention Center
- 112 guest rooms

509-572-2176
marriott.com/kwch

Hilton Garden Inn

- Adjacent to Convention Center
- 120 guest rooms
- 3 meeting rooms
- 80 capacity of meeting space

509-735-4600
hgikennewick.com

Red Lion Hotel Columbia Center

- 162 guest rooms
- 10,000 square feet of meeting space
- 9 meeting rooms
- 500 capacity in largest meeting room

509-783-0611
redlion.com/columbia-center

Red Lion Hotel Pasco

- 279 guest rooms
- 17,420 square feet of meeting space
- 15 meeting rooms
- 1,600 capacity of largest meeting space

509-547-0701
redlion.com/pasco

Red Lion Hotel Richland Hanford House

- 149 guest rooms
- 10,000 square feet of meeting space
- 10 meeting spaces
- 400 capacity of largest meeting room

509-946-7611
redlion.com/richland

The Reach

509-943-4100
visitthereach.org

Lu Lu's Craft Bar + Kitchen

509-713-7880
lulucraftbar.com



outlets, in-room amenities like refrigerators and microwaves, plus complimentary airport shuttles make these properties a smart choice.

Conveniently located near shopping, restaurants and the Convention Center, the Red Lion Hotel Columbia Center – Kennewick offers a variety of flexible meeting spaces. Its Nomad Kitchen & Lounge overflows to a comfy outdoor patio with fire pit.

Red Lion Hotel Pasco, the Tri-Cities' largest conference hotel, includes several meeting spaces. Three dining facilities offer variety without leaving the premises.

For a retreat-like atmosphere, try the Red Lion Hotel Richland Hanford House, located along the Columbia River. Hanford House is ideal for smaller groups. Its unique horseshoe-shaped architecture encloses an inviting courtyard with outdoor swimming pool.

Let the REACH Museum "wow" your attendees. Exhibits educate visitors on the Mid-Columbia region's geology, Native culture, agricultural development and the nearby Hanford site—key to the

Manhattan Project. "The REACH provides a unique environment for group events, whether it is a wine tasting, dinner, training session or workshop," declares Lisa Toomey, the Museum's CEO. "Our main hall's floor-to-ceiling windows give a beautiful view of the Columbia River, and our outdoor spaces provide a large patio area plus an amphitheater."

WINING AND DINING

Chefs in the Tri-Cities source ingredients from throughout the fertile Columbia Basin, known for its agriculture, orchards, vineyards and ranches. For example, the beef and pork served at Lu Lu's Craft Bar + Kitchen is raised on the owner's family farm. More than 200 wineries are found within an hour's drive; many have event space.

MORE TO DO

Recreation and entertainment opportunities abound in the Tri-Cities. Play golf, enjoy water sports, hike riverside trails or watch team sports. How about a horseback ride through a vineyard, wine-tasting, shopping, or museum visit?

Driving time to Tri-Cities from major Northwest cities ranges from two to five hours. Several airlines offer direct flights to the Tri-Cities Airport from Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Denver and more.

EXPERIENCE YAKIMA'S ENTHUSIASTIC HOSPITALITY

Escape the Clouds and Crowds in Sunny Yakima Valley

Boasting more than 300 days of sunshine annually, a spacious and modern Convention Center, plus 900 hotel rooms within walking distance, Yakima offers distinct advantages as a meeting destination. "We're one of the most central locations in the state, and easily accessed. We're an affordable destination without a lot of packed-on costs or traffic issues that you might find in other towns," says John Cooper, CEO of Yakima Valley Tourism. "I will boast for our convention center. We get rave reviews from meeting planners about the service and amenities we provide."

GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

"Because Yakima is a smaller community

CONNECT

Yakima

- 900 guest rooms
- Yakima Air Terminal is 3 miles from downtown

Visit Yakima

800-221-0751
visityakima.com

Yakima Convention Center

- 41,000 square feet of space
 - 16 configurable meeting rooms
 - 2,250 capacity in largest meeting space
- 509-575-6062
yakimacenter.com
meetings@yakimacenter.com

Red Lion Hotel Yakima Center

- 156 guest rooms
 - 10,000 square feet of meeting space
 - 10 meeting rooms
 - 300 capacity of largest meeting room
- 509-248-5900
redlion.com/yakima

Holiday Inn Downtown Yakima

- 114 guest rooms
 - 1,550 square feet of meeting space
 - 150 capacity in largest meeting space
- 509-494-7000
holidayinn.com
1800meetings@ihg.com

Howard Johnson Plaza Yakima

- 172 guest rooms
 - 8,000 square feet of meeting space
 - 8 meeting rooms
 - 400 capacity of largest room
- 509-452-6511
wyndhamhotels.com/hojo

Hotel Maison

- 36 guest rooms
- 509-571-1900
thehotelmaison.com

Capitol Theatre

- 1,500 capacity
- 509-853-8000
capitoltheatre.org

Cowiche Canyon Kitchen & Icehouse Bar

509-457-2007
cowichecanyon.com

Carousel Restaurant & Bistro

509-248-6720
carouselfrenchcuisine.com

5North Metropolitan Kitchen & Lounge

509-248-9801
fivenorth.net

Los Hernandez Tamales

509-457-6003

AntoLin Cellars

509-961-8370
antolincellars.com

Gilbert Cellars Tasting Room

509-249-9049
gilbertcellars.com

Steps away, the Red Lion Hotel Yakima Center offers guest rooms with amenities such as refrigerators, microwaves and coffee makers, plus complimentary parking and Wi-Fi. In addition, the hotel has several event spaces. The atrium-style Garden Terrace room is perfect for social gatherings.

Also nearby are the Howard Johnson Plaza Yakima and the Holiday Inn Downtown with additional meeting space. A few blocks away, the boutique Hotel Maison pampers your VIP guests in a lovingly-restored historic building. A handful of other Downtown-area hotels stand ready to house delegates for city-wide conventions.

Need a large theater-style auditorium with professional lighting and sound capabilities? Or, perhaps a unique space for a social event? Yakima's Capitol Theatre is just the ticket. Its theater is used for everything from rock bands to symphonies, speaker series, Broadway shows and local dance recitals. Adorned in ornate 1920's-period décor, gilded woodwork and a masterful hand-painted ceiling mural, this venue is sure to make a lasting impression. With its seating half on the main floor and half in the balcony, large groups won't feel lost. Connected, but with a separate entrance, the 4th Street Theater is a flexible, "black-box" space accommodating performances or receptions and banquets. Both venues are supported by a state-of-the-art production center.

"Our theater provides that theatrical-style venue with more of an angle between seats, so that it's easier to see. It is not the all-flat floor space that you get at the Convention Center," says Charlie Robin, Capitol Theatre's CEO. "That's one of the great options that we have as a complement to what the Convention Center offers."

WINING AND DINING

Since the Yakima Valley grows the widest variety of crops in the State, restaurant menus naturally feature seasonal, farm-fresh food. Dining options in the city's charming historical district include Cowiche Canyon Kitchen & Icehouse Bar, Carousel Restaurant & Bistro and 5North Metropolitan Kitchen &

Lounge; all three have space for small groups. For authentic Mexican cuisine, seek out Los Hernandez Tamales, whose namesake product is in such demand that out-of-town customers order them by the dozen to take home.

Yakima's craft brewing industry is growing by leaps and bounds - the Yakima Valley produces more than 75 percent of the country's hops. With about 100 wineries and five designated AVA wine growing regions around Yakima, you can expect to find wine lists well-stocked with outstanding local vintages. Just a short walk from downtown hotels are the AntoLin Cellars and the Gilbert Cellars Tasting Room. Both tasting rooms offer unique space for private events.

MORE TO DO

There's plenty to do in Yakima, including shopping, cultural experiences and outdoor recreation. Browse the downtown shops and antique stores. Peruse art galleries and museums or take in a live performance. Golfing, hiking, cycling and world-class trout fishing are just a few options for outdoor fun.

Located in the center of Washington State, less than 200 miles from Seattle, Portland and Spokane, Yakima is an easy drive from major Northwest cities. Alaska Airlines serves Yakima's McAllister Field airport with four daily flights. **M**



compared to Seattle and Spokane, people just don't expect such a big, beautiful convention center. They are pleasantly surprised," states Connie Upton, general manager at Yakima Convention Center. This well-maintained facility features a large column-free event space on one level. Light-filled atrium pre-function areas, an outdoor plaza, complimentary parking and Wi-Fi, and a city-center location all add to its appeal and functionality.