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Walla Walla Valley wine recommendations

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Walla Walla makes its mark

Most Walla Walla wines are too young and too new to be well known. Following are some of the more available.

2005 Amavi Cellars Walla Walla Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. Aromas of rye bread, red cherry, espresso grounds and tobacco adorn red cherry fruit. In the mouth there is a gentle herbal quality and a suave texture. About \$30 at Colorado Wine Co., Eagle Rock, (323) 478-1985, www.cowineco.com; and Twenty Twenty Wine Merchants, West Los Angeles, (310) 447-2020, www.2020wines.com.

2005 Cayuse Vineyards Cailloux Vineyard Syrah. This deep red-purple wine has concentrated aromas of gingerbread, smoke and tobacco leaf when first poured. Soon the core of blackberry fruit emerges, wrapped in a shroud of smoke and herbs, with a deeply mineral finish. About \$75 at Red Carpet Wine, Glendale, (800) 339-0609, www.redcarpetwine.com.

2005 K Vintners Walla Walla Valley Morrison Lane Syrah. It's all jam-jar at first, with generous aromas of mulberries and plum. On the palate, however, the fruit is balanced by deep spice -- pink peppercorn, spiced cherries, carob. About \$45 at Twenty Twenty Wine Merchants.

2005 L'Ecole No. 41 Walla Walla Valley Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard Bordeaux Style Red Blend. Made of equal parts Cabernet and Merlot with hints of Malbec and Cabernet Franc, it is redolent of black cherries macerated with a pinch of tobacco. Flavors are concentrated, supporting a dark plum component and a resolute finish. About \$50 at Wally's Wine & Spirits, Los Angeles, (310) 475-0606, www.wallywine.com; and Woodland Hills Wine Co., Woodland Hills, (818) 222-1111, www.whwc.com.

2005 L'Ecole No. 41 Walla Walla Valley Perigee Seven Hills Vineyard Estate Bordeaux Style Red Blend. This blend of Cabernet, Merlot and Cab Franc is brighter and more expressive upon release than its sister blend (above). It has a spiced plum scent lined by leather and smoke; flavors are like a compote of black cherry and tea-smoked plum. \$50 at Wally's Wine & Spirits; Wine House, West Los Angeles, (310) 479-3731, www.winehouse.com; and Woodland Hills Wine Co.

2005 Leonetti Cellar Walla Walla Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. Aromas of ripe black cherry and smoked tomato are accompanied by a finely wrought oak presence. Flavors are lively, a dark persistent black cherry fruit and firm but restrained tannins. About \$95 at Colorado Wine Co.; Flask Fine Wines, Studio City, (818) 761-5373; www.flaskfinewines.com; John & Pete's Fine Wines, West Hollywood, (310) 657-3080, www.johnandpetes.com.



2005 Pepper Bridge Walla Walla Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. This powerful Cabernet has a warm brown spice scent and sweet red fruit is supported by a firm oak core. There's plenty of structure for drinking with roast beef or steak. About \$55 at Bristol Farms, West Hollywood, (310) 248-2804 and other locations, www.bristolfarms.com.

2005 Va Piano Vineyards Walla Walla Syrah. This estate wine leads with scents of bacon and leather to accompany dark blueberry and cassis fruit. On the palate, the wine is rich and suave at once. The fruit is like smoked plum jam, the textures irresistible. About \$50 at the Wine House and Flask Fine Wines.

-- Patrick Comiskey

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