

August
2017

FASHION

GIGI
GORGEIOUS

“
Being
transgender
is
about
what's
inside
your
soul
”

HOT
Summer
NIGHTS

*Boundary Breaking
Style + Fringe
Fashion*

Genderless
MAKEUP
For Beauty
REBELS

Free
LOVE

EXPLORE

EXPERIENCE, TRAVEL, TASTE, DISCOVER

Water *into* Wine

In British Columbia's Southern Interior, where lake country meets wine country, the food is fresh and the refreshment twofold.

By Joy Pecknold

The waterslide at Watermark Beach Resort is obviously meant for children, but that doesn't stop me. Its slow, serpentine turns, which end with me going headlong into the drink, metaphorically forecast the rest of the weekend: I've come to wind my way through some of the Okanagan, British Columbia's largest playground for oenophiles.

Snaking north to south, rivers and lakes form the valley's spine from which hillside vineyards and more than 170 wineries radiate. Just four kilometres from the U.S. border, Osoyoos—which boasts the warmest freshwater lake in Canada—is where I stay in one of Watermark's beachfront townhomes. Nearly everything I do at the resort involves Osoyoos Lake: I wake up to it, take a yoga class in front of it, stand-up paddleboard on it and even see it before and after sliding into the pool. A beach-to-bed itinerary makes for enough of a holiday, but the Okanagan's fertile soil means farm-to-table fare is also on the menu. »

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ISTOCK

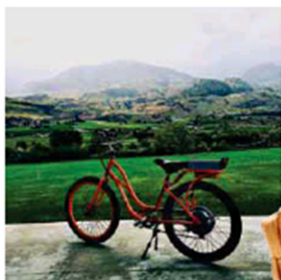
explore OKANAGAN

On a plateau above the Okanagan River, 30 kilometres north in Oliver, Covert Farms Family Estate and Secret Organics do winemaking and food-growing in tandem. After a glass of Covert's

sparkling Zinfandel, everyone jumps in the back of a cherry red '52 Mercury pickup truck for a tour of the fields and vineyards, stopping along the way to pick (then promptly consume) strawberries before returning to taste a portfolio of crisp whites paired with cheese and charcuterie. Full up and a tad tipsy, I regret not jumping on the estate's giant in-ground trampoline before digging in.

The fruit grown between Oliver and Osoyoos benefits from some of summer's longest, hottest days, and on the eastern Black Sage Bench, grapes get all the afternoon sun, as do I on Heatstroke Cycle's four-hour guided wine-and-dine tour. To get between wineries, we hop on bright orange electric bikes. The electric power is meant for inclines, should one run out of energy to pedal, but with a top speed of 45 kilometres an hour, it's too fun to use sparingly. Knowing someone else will pick up the cases I bought at Bartier Bros. and Stoneboat wineries, I don't bother limiting my bottle count. A windblown ride back to the hotel in the company's convertible Cadillac Eldorado caps it off.

A number of wineries within the Black Sage and adjacent Golden Mile benches offer dining on a grand scale—Tinhorn Creek's Miradoro and Burrowing Owl's Sonora Room being notable ones—but since leaving the latter restaurant, chef Chris Van Hooydonk has opted for an intimate and interactive experience for guests. Out of his renovated 1929 farmhouse, he hosts 20-person multi-course dinners, with many of the ingredients coming from the surrounding two acres of land he's cultivated with his wife, Mikkil, and so they've called it Backyard Farm. Naturally, we have wine with every course. □



FROM TOP: A GORGEOUS VIEW OF OSOYOOS LAKE FROM WATERMARK BEACH RESORT; HEATSTROKE CYCLE'S SIGNATURE ORANGE BIKE; A SAMPLING OF THE REGION'S LIBATIONS



LEFT: COVERT FARMS'S SWEET RIDE, SEEN THROUGH ROWS OF VINES; ABOVE: LUNCH ON THE PATIO AT BURROWING OWL ESTATE WINERY



SIP, CYCLE, REPEAT

Beyond Osoyoos's Black Sage and Golden Mile benches are more than 200 kilometres of wine country best enjoyed by

SIMILKAMEEN VALLEY

Stop for cherries. A 25-kilometre stretch of the Crowsnest Highway has been dubbed the Fruit Stand Capital of Canada.

LEVEL: Intermediate
DON'T MISS: Orofino, Seven Stones



OKANAGAN FALLS'S CORKSCREW DRIVE

This 23-kilometre route weaves up the hillsides north of Vaseux Lake and along Skaha Lake.

LEVEL: Intermediate
DON'T MISS: Blue Mountain, Meyer Family



SUMMERLAND'S BOTTLENECK DRIVE

Roughly 17 kilometres of highway separate the first and the last wineries. There are also craft cideries to check out.

LEVEL: Intermediate
DON'T MISS: Okanagan Crush Pad, TH Wines



NARAMATA BENCH

A portion of the 14-kilometre bench between Penticton and Naramata can be done off-road along the Kettle Valley Rail Trail.

LEVEL: Beginner
DON'T MISS: Poplar Grove, JoieFarm



PHOTOGRAPHY: WATERMARK BEACH RESORT BY @SOULFULINDULGENCE; HEATSTROKE CYCLE BY TWYLA CAMPBELL; BURROWING OWL BY RAMAN CHADHA; CHERRIES BY ISTOCK; WINERY AND TRAIL BY GETTY