

SNOQUALMIE™

Joy Andersen, winemaker

Joy Andersen is a true pioneer of the modern-day Washington wine industry. More than 25 years ago, when Joy began her career, there were only 24 winemakers in Washington state and even fewer women in the winemaking industry. Today, the state boasts over 460 wineries and Joy leads the way as head winemaker of Snoqualmie Vineyards. Under her leadership, Snoqualmie's reputation for releasing approachable, food-friendly wines has been recognized across the country by critics and consumers alike.

Like a master chef, Joy's approach to winemaking begins with cultivating and choosing the finest ingredients. Throughout the growing season, she can be found in the vineyards assessing vine and fruit development, and working with the grower to optimize pruning techniques and irrigation regimes. Come harvest, Joy is so intimately familiar with each varietal's flavor profile that she already knows how she will showcase those flavors in the finished wine. Her winemaking philosophy is to "keep it simple" — there is often elegance in simplicity. Besides, it is difficult to improve on what Mother Nature offers us naturally.

This simple yet elegant style is what keeps consumers coming back for Snoqualmie wines. There is a romantic notion that you must be overly educated about wine to enjoy wine, and to Joy, that's not the case. She uses the big, bright, bold up-front fruit flavors and essences characteristic of Washington state, and does not mask them with too many winemaking tools. "I think trying to let the fruit come through in the wine without doing extra magic or processing is the best way to showcase each varietal," she says. Joy knows she's reached her goal when she's made a wine of exceptional quality, at affordable prices; a bottle of wine most people can buy and enjoy.

Joy particularly enjoys the technical side of winemaking, whether it's experimenting with yeast strains or different sources of oak barrels, or crafting a blend. She likes the challenge of anticipating how these ingredients will shape and support her wines as they evolve over time. Using over two decades of knowledge and techniques, Joy has learned to make wines that often surpass even her expectations.

Joy earned a chemistry degree from the University of Washington. Prior to joining the wine industry, she was a fruit researcher for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She began her winemaking career at Chateau Ste. Michelle in 1981. She joined Columbia Crest Winery in 1984 before assuming the role of Snoqualmie Vineyards winemaker in 1991.



“Great wines are about understanding when to relinquish control to Mother Nature; we can do little to improve her bounty.”

Joy Andersen
WINEMAKER