

Wine Travelogue

酒遊隨筆

Exploring the Charms of
the Okanagan Valley

探索奧卡那根山谷的魅力



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Why this travelogue? 為何撰寫這本遊記？

Why? Simply because the Okanagan and its wines deserve more coverage.

It's true. Canada's wine production ranks 30th in the world, representing only 0.3% of the world's wine, and its reputation largely revolves around icewine. That's why most wine study textbooks don't cover Canada, let alone the Okanagan, and icewine is the focus of those that do.

I enjoyed a 4-day wine trip to the Okanagan, touring the region from north to south and tasting wines at twelve wineries. Interesting enough, I did not taste any icewine at any of the wineries I visited! Rather, I found many surprises and excitement in their red, white, rosé, and sparkling wines. The total experience was a revelation, which has driven me to provide some coverage of this understated wine region.

It is paradoxical that few preconceptions about the region from previous studies have led to more surprises and excitement. First-hand experiences and knowledge gained from visiting vineyards and wineries, speaking with grape growers and winemakers, and tasting their wines means much more than studying wine in a book! My trip has convinced me that the best way to discover and truly enjoy a wine region is to travel there. So I won't write an A-Z travel guidebook about this wine region, leaving you to explore it for yourself. Here, my goal is to share my experiences and wine interpretations, happy moments, informative conversations with wine people, and photos taken during my trip to the Okanagan to give you a sense of discovery and appreciation.

為什麼？因為奧卡那根谷和它的葡萄酒絕對值得更多的關注，就是這麼簡單。

事實如此，加拿大的葡萄酒產量在世界上排名第30位，僅佔全球的0.3%，它的聲譽主要圍繞著冰酒。這就是為什麼大多數葡萄酒課程教材都不涉及加拿大，更不用說奧卡那根谷了，而且那些有提及的也只集中在冰酒上。

我在奧卡那根享受了一次為期四天的葡萄酒之旅，從北到南遊覽了該地區，並在十二家酒莊品鑒了葡萄酒。有趣的是，在我參觀的酒莊中並沒有品嚐到任何冰酒！然而，他們的葡萄酒，無論紅、白、玫瑰酒和起泡酒都給我許多驚喜。整個體驗是一個啟示，這促使我動筆為這個低調的葡萄酒產區作多一點報導。

有趣的是，之前對這個地區的較少的研究便少了預設觀念，這反而帶來了更多的驚喜。親身經歷和踏足一個個的葡萄園和酒莊、與酒農和釀酒師交談以及品嚐他們的葡萄酒，從中獲得的知識遠比在書本中學習葡萄酒更有體會！這趟旅行使我相信，要了解 and 真正享受一個葡萄酒產區的最佳方式是親身前往。因此，我不打算寫一本有關這個葡萄酒產區由 A 到 Z 的旅遊指南，還留些空間讓您自行探索。這遊記，我的目標是分享我在奧卡那根谷之行中的經歷和對這區葡萄酒的理解、當中的一些快樂時刻、與葡萄酒人的豐富對話，以及我在旅行中的照片，好讓您領略一下我探索和欣賞的感知。



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The enchanted trip

It was my first visit to the Okanagan Valley, and I was thrilled to experience the region's stunning landscapes, warm weather, and vibrant culture. However, I was surprised by the long, sunny days - it was still bright at 9 pm! With numerous outdoor festivals and events throughout the region, it was not what I expected from a place located at the 50th parallel, the same latitude as Champagne in France and the Rheingau in Germany.

The adventure commenced with a swift one-hour flight from Vancouver to Kelowna, arriving at dawn on that memorable 2 August 2022. Stepping out of the airport, the crisp, invigorating air with a tantalising hint of pine instantly awakened my senses. I was bewitched by the magnificent vistas that stretched before me under the sun's natural lighting. The weather was perfectly comfortable, with ample sunshine and cool

breezes, at around 27°C with a humidity of about 60%. We were glad we brought our sunglasses!

The airport is just a short drive from downtown Kelowna, making exploring the city's world-class wineries, stunning lakes, and recreational opportunities easy. Unlike Vancouver, Kelowna is a smaller city with a relaxed and laid-back vibe. Despite its size, it has a lively downtown area with many shops, restaurants, and cultural attractions. The city also boasts several parks and beaches, including City Park, a popular destination for swimming, picnicking, and outdoor concerts. We visited a few wineries on the lake's west and east shores around Kelowna. This section of the Northern Okanagan has a cooler climate, making it ideal for earlier ripening grape varieties such as Riesling, Chardonnay, and Pinot Noir, as well as sparkling and rosé wines.

On the second day afternoon, we headed south towards Naramata, where the flora and fauna became more diverse. The trees were taller and thicker, and we spotted some of the region's famous fruit trees, like cherry, apple, and peach, as well as vineyards under the backdrop of mountains. The warm earth and wildflower scents filled the car as we rolled down the windows. We visited two more wineries in Naramata, which is in the Central Okanagan section of the valley. This area has a moderate climate, making it well suited to grape varieties such as Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, and Merlot.

On the third day, we travelled further south to Skaha Bench, Okanagan Falls, and Oliver. The temperatures gradually rose from 27°C to 35°C during the day. As we approached Oliver, the landscape began to change. The trees became smaller, and the terrain became more arid. Cacti and scrub brush dotted the landscape, and the air was dry, with heat radiating off the ground. In the late afternoon, we reached Osoyoos, the southern tip of the region at the US border, and experienced the semi-arid climate

there. It was nearly 40°C in Osoyoos during the day, with very low humidity levels of around 25%. We made sure to stay hydrated and wear sunscreen. This warmer climate in the Southern Okanagan is suitable for late-ripening red grape varieties such as Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon.

It was a reminder that even in the midst of summer, the weather in Okanagan Valley can be pretty variable. Despite the warm daytime temperatures, the high diurnal range in Okanagan Valley meant that we often felt cooler breezes in the early mornings and evenings. These breezes provided a welcome relief from the heat and allowed us to enjoy the beautiful landscapes and winery visits with utmost comfort.

As a first-time visitor to the Okanagan Valley, I was energised by the region's natural beauty, vibrant cultural scene, and warm weather. As a wine enthusiast, a wine map (or a mind map) of the region immediately formed in my head, shown on page 9.

魅幻之旅

這是我第一次來到奧卡那根谷，這裏景色壯麗、景色溫暖、充滿活力，叫人興奮。然而，我對於這裡漫長的日照時間感到驚訝 — 每天晚上9點仍然很明亮！北緯50度，與法國的香檳區和德國的萊茵高相同，但這裡氣候和暖，造就許多戶外節慶和活動，超乎想像。

從溫哥華起短短一小時的航程，於2022年8月2日黎明，我們抵達了凱洛納。踏出機場，清新的空氣夾雜著松樹醒神的氣息，即時喚醒了我的感官，眼前無盡的壯麗景色，在太陽的自然打燈下，令我陶醉。天氣極度舒適，陽光充沛加清風送爽，溫度攝氏27度，濕度約60%。幸好我們都帶備了太陽眼鏡！

凱洛納機場距離市中心不遠，要探索這個城市的世界級葡萄酒莊、迷人的湖泊和休閒活動，非常便捷。與溫哥華不同，凱洛納是個小城市，氛圍輕鬆寫意。儘管規模較小，這裡的市中心區有著熱鬧的氛圍，商店、餐廳和文化景點，式式俱備。它還擁有幾座公園和海灘，包括城市公園，這是游泳、野餐和戶外音樂會的熱門目的地。在凱洛納，我們參觀了湖東西兩岸的幾家葡萄酒莊園。這區屬於奧卡那根北部，氣候較涼爽，非常適合早熟的葡萄品種，如雷司令、霞多麗和黑皮諾，以及氣泡酒和玫瑰酒。

第二天下午，我們向南前往納拉馬塔，這裡的動植物品種更豐富，樹木更高更茂密。除葡萄



園外，眼前所見是該地區著名的果樹，如櫻桃、蘋果和桃子，以雄偉山脈作背景。當我們打開車窗，溫暖的泥土和野花的氣息充滿著車內。在納拉馬塔，我們參觀了兩家葡萄酒莊。這個地區屬於奧卡那根中部，氣候溫和，非常適合霞多麗、灰皮諾、黑皮諾和梅洛等葡萄品種。

第三天，我們繼續向南前往薩卡山脊、奧卡那根瀑布和奧利弗。白天氣溫逐漸升高，從攝氏27度升至35度。當我們接近奧利弗時，景色開始改變。樹木變得矮小，地面明顯乾旱。仙人掌和灌木叢點綴著風景，空氣乾燥，地面散發著熱氣。傍晚時分，我們到達了奧索尤斯，是谷地的最南端，靠近美國邊境，體驗到半乾旱氣候。奧索尤斯白天氣溫接近攝氏40度，相對濕度極低，約25%。遊客要不時補充水分和防曬。奧卡那根南部這種較溫暖的氣候以晚熟的紅葡萄品種見青，如梅洛、品麗珠、西拉和赤霞珠等。

提醒一下，即使在炎熱夏天，奧卡那根谷的天氣也可能相當多變。儘管白天氣溫較高，奧卡那根谷的日夜溫差大，清晨和傍晚經常涼風送爽。然而，涼風為我們帶來消暑的舒適感，讓我們能夠輕鬆自在享受美麗景色和參觀葡萄酒莊。

作為首次造訪奧卡那根谷的遊客，我為這個地區的自然美景、充滿活力的文化和明媚的天氣所鼓舞。作為一位葡萄酒愛好者，我腦海中浮現出這個葡萄酒區的心智地圖。翻開下一頁看看吧！





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