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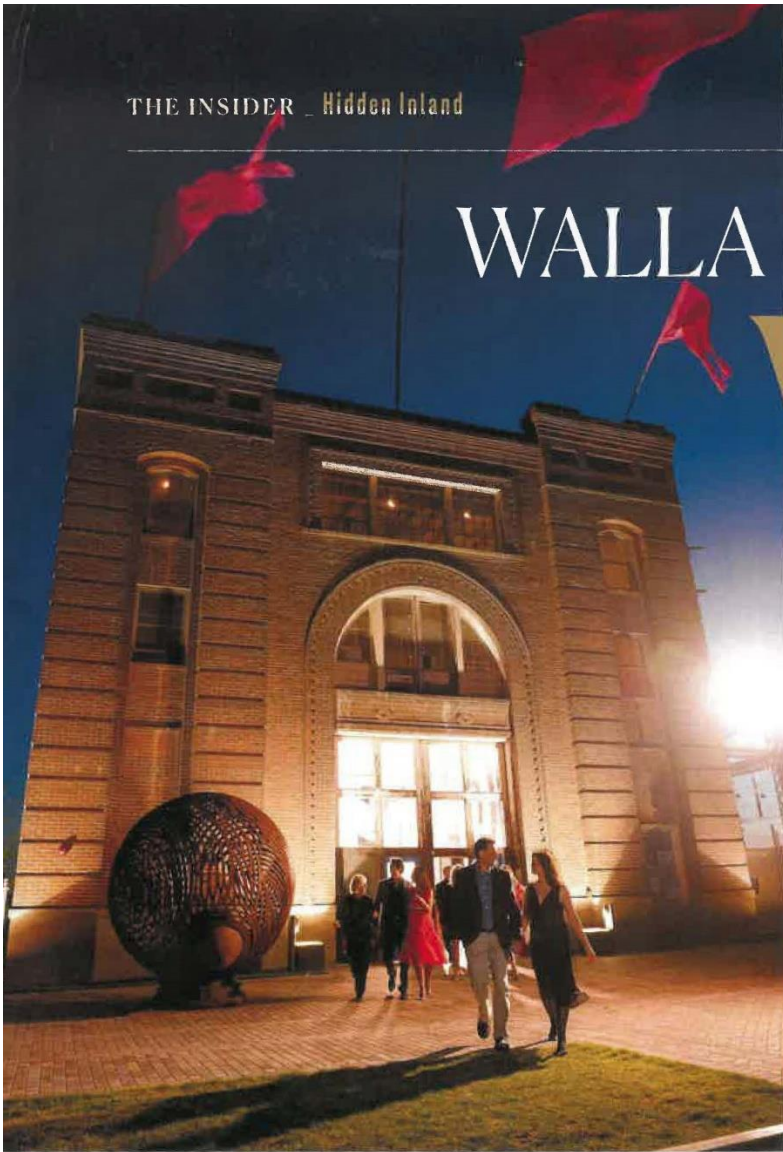
DISPLAY UNTIL 1/7/20



WALLA WALLA

BY BILL PANOFF

WOW



SET A COURSE
INLAND FOR
WASHINGTON STATE

The bustling summertime port city of Seattle offers an incredible range of sights and sounds, but if you're set to sample the feast of Alaska cruising and looking for a pre-cruise appetizer or a post-cruise dessert, place your order for the off-the-menu town of Walla Walla, Washington.

It's no secret to locals, but this under-the-radar destination has everything that one could hope for in leisure decompression. The name "Walla Walla" comes from the local Native American language and translates to "place of many waters." However, in contrast to describing the infamous liquid sunshine of Seattle, the double moniker refers to the areas abundant rivers and streams. Located in the southeast corner of the state and situated on the dry side of the Cascade Mountains, it is annually blessed with 260 days of sunshine, making it the perfect venue for outdoor activities in pristine surroundings.

Take A Hike

The abundance of trails in the Umatilla National Forest supplies the agelessly active with opportunities to hike or bike. Leisure seekers will enjoy the city's over 600 acres of recreational bliss in 17 parks, home to over 300 species of birds. The area's rivers and streams are a natural magnet for anglers and the 52-acre Bennington Lake is perfect for a stand-up paddleboarding adventure. Walla Walla puts a check on golfers' wish lists as home to one of the state's best public courses, the Wine Valley Golf Club. And speaking of wine ...



WALLA WALLA (2)

Wine Me Up

Walla Walla straddles the very same latitude line that passes between the Burgundy and Bordeaux wine regions of France, so it's no wonder this is the unofficial capital of Washington wine country. With more than 120 wineries dotting the valley, a fun day partaking in wine tastings seems inevitable. Over 2,800 acres of grapes supply enthusiasts with highly respected cabernet sauvignons, Syrahs, and merlots.

Long Shadows Vintners has contributed significantly to the respect garnered by Washington wines. Recruiting some of the world's finest winemakers, providing them with the best grapes, and utilizing proven techniques has resulted in highly acclaimed vintages year after year.

Located just four miles east of Walla Walla in a fully restored, century-old farmstead, the Abeja Winery exudes the rich, historical charm of the region. While their cabernet sauvignon vintages have earned plaudits as some of the premier wines of the region, select merlots and chardonnays have also contributed to this winery's reputation. The historic farmhouse along with The Inn at Abeja offer private rooms, cottages, and suites, completing the concept of an enjoyable wine-country retreat.

Feed Me

Complementing the charm of wine-country tasting rooms is the city's robust dining scene. There's a bounty of locally sourced ingredients presented creatively at Walla Walla Steak Co., featuring the fruits of the local vines supplemented with craft beers from Cross-

buck Brewing. Beyond the food, the warm hospitality and character of staff amplify its esteemed status.

For an authentic take on home-style dining, Hathaway's On Alder introduces rural American cooking traditions to downtown Walla Walla. Inside the restaurant, the centrally positioned open kitchen stokes up the appetite for an inspired dining experience.

Here To Stay

With so much to see, eat, and do, it's essential to select a base of operations — and a stay at The Eritage Resort is the perfect solution. A world removed from the gentle buzz of the city but only minutes away from downtown, the property is tucked into a vineyard landscape and sequestered in serenity. Each suite offers private patio or deck views of rolling hills or neighboring Lake Sienna. The onsite Eritage Restaurant offers a foray into exceptional dining. As an adults-only property, there's plenty of romantic glamour; the fireplace, soaking tub, king-size bed with Garnier-Thiebaut linens all add something. After an active day in the great outdoors, a well-deserved in-room massage might be in order. After a peaceful night's rest, the Continental breakfast with freshly baked pastries and breads is a crowning moment. The sun terrace is popular for afternoon lounging, supplemented by the seasonal outdoor pool.

As if the acclaimed food-and-wine scene wasn't enough, the city tops off the destination's appeal with vibrant arts and entertainment events scheduled throughout the summer. In addition to concerts and theater, the popular Walla Walla Sweet Onion Festival



in July pays tribute to the famed state vegetable with cooking demos, competitions, and performances.

Countless treasures await discovery in downtown Walla Walla, where shops, boutiques, cafés, and coffee shops attract even those with a mild aversion to shopping. Whether it's chic clothing, funky finds of yesterday or simple gift items, there is plenty of everything to satisfy shopping cravings. Antique lovers will find an ever-evolving assortment of vintage items at the Antique Mall of Walla Walla. Saturday's Walla Walla Farmers Market is the perfect place for crafts, gifts, and wares throughout the summer.

An easy and scenic four-hour drive from Seattle, Boise, or Portland, Walla Walla can also be accessed via Alaska Airlines with direct flights from Seattle. Lewis and Clark, on their westward trek through the area documented the friendliness and welcoming attitude of the people, a factor that encouraged them to stop in the area once again on their return voyage. You too will likely yearn for a repeat visit after a delightful pre- or post-cruise stay in Walla Walla. ●



WALLA WALLA (2)