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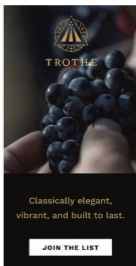
A Family Winery Captures the Character of Washington's Horse Heaven Hills AVA

With Trothe, the Andrews family draws on four generations of farming expertise to produce world-class cabernet sauvignon.

By ROBB REPORT STUDIO



Courtesy of Cameron Karsten Photography



When it comes to making wine, there's no substitute for deep-rooted knowledge of the land where the grapevines are planted. It was that acute understanding of their property, located in the expansive (570,000 acres) but remote and relatively little-known Horse Heaven Hills AVA of Washington State, that prompted the Andrews family to produce and bottle Trothe wines in 2018. Since the 1940s, four generations of the Andrews family had been growing grapes and other crops, and they have provided fruit for award-winning wines from larger renowned wineries since the 1980s. Finally, the opportunity to have their own high-end, small-volume label proved irresistible.



Courtesy of Cameron Karsten Photography

"Our family history is inextricably tied to the Horse Heaven Hills," says proprietor Jeff Andrews, adding that the magic of the Trothe project stems from "accepting what Mother Nature hands us each vintage, rather than trying to force an expression from our site. Cabernet has the unique ability to capture the nuances of a site and tell the story of each vintage, and it's our job as farmers and winemakers to accept and embrace what we're given."

He notes that the region's long sunny days contribute to an ideal balance between ripe fruit and vibrant acidity, while the wind not only reduces canopy size and toughens the grape skins but also creates a unique tannic profile. Coupled with the AVA's wide draws and rugged canyons, the nearby Columbia River plays a role in moderating climate conditions, reducing the risk of spring frost. All these conditions pointed to planting cabernet sauvignon, and that's what the Andrews family initially focused on. Over time, they added syrah and sauvignon blanc to the mix, with a few other grape varieties planted as well.



Courtesy of Cameron Karsten Photography

To make the wine, the Andrews family called on cabernet sauvignon aficionado Ray McKee, whose experience in Washington spans three decades. "Cabernet sauvignon is defined by its tannins," says McKee. "In Horse Heaven Hills, the tannins have a firm grip and intense structure, which coat the mouth to add complexity and concentration, the long finish softened by the generous fruit profile. Trothe is everything I love about cabernet in general, but this expression could only come from this place."

Comparative tastings with wines from Napa and Bordeaux place the Trothe vintages between the two, appealing to fans of those wines but expressing an identity of their own.

From the beginning, Trothe has been recognized for the quality of its grapes, and the cabernet sauvignon vintages from 2019 and 2020 have notably garnered stellar ratings by publications and websites like *Wine Advocate* and *Jeb Dunnuck*. The winery team has also continued to improve the vines and advance the state's wine industry with cutting-edge technology (next-generation soil-moisture analysis and multispectral imagery to fine-tune watering) and making use of the winery's latest equipment.



Courtesy of Cameron Karsten Photography

As for the Horse Heaven Hills AVA, the first plantings made in 1972 are now reaching maturity, and the area has become home to prominent vineyards that have played pivotal roles in building the state's reputation as a globally recognized and acclaimed wine region.

According to Andrews, the Trothe project has "been an adventure that's taken us out of our comfort zone—both daunting and thrilling but ultimately rewarding, as it's deepened our connection to our land. That's what our wines are meant to do: transport the drinker to the windswept ridges and sagebrush-covered canyons of the Horse Heaven Hills."

Trothe wines are in limited production and available by allocation only. To gain access to the current release, available now through the end of October, [join the member list](#).

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