

1D Guide



A Taste of Idaho's Harvest: Tour Sunnyslope's Wine Trail

WORDS BY TAMMY DE WEERD, SPOKEN WINES



LEFT: FRESH APPLES AT LAKEVIEW FRUIT.

RIGHT: PHOTO COURTESY OF
DUNNING ESTATES.

By late morning, the valley smells like earth and apple skins. Beyond the vines, a tractor hums and bees find every sweet edge of the harvest's grape juice. This one-day loop gives a beautiful overview of fall colors and the diversity of wines offered along the trail. Experience these estate wineries and the treasures they hold—and return home with a trunk full of fall.

11:15 — Lakeview Fruit (provisions stop)

Start with a quick wander through Lakeview Fruit for produce and farm snacks for a light picnic: crisp apples, late-season corn, crooked-neck squash—anything that looks like October in a basket. Open weekdays 10 am – 6 pm, Saturdays/Sundays 10 am – 5 pm.

12:00 — Dunning Estates (views, comfort, “mineral-driven white”)

Perched on a 60-acre farm with wide Snake River Valley views, Dunning feels like harvest—coppery light on the hills, the outline of Lizard Butte, a remodeled-barn tasting room, and an easy, unhurried welcome. Enjoy their Colt Steel Chardonnay, a stainless, mineral-driven white: bright acidity, with layers of golden pear and citrus blossom. Equally amazing, reach for the Malbec—a guest favorite and gold-medal winner at the Idaho Wine & Cider Competition. “Our Malbec is the heavy hitter—tobacco, leather, that western feel. It kind of captures who Dunning is in a glass,” said Owner Heather Dunning. Food is simple and satisfying—charcuterie boards or a local sourdough bread plate with whipped garlic butter, olive oil, and balsamic. Open Friday-Sunday, 12 pm - 6 pm.



1:45 — Huston Vineyards (firsts, bubbly, and fall reds)

On Chicken Dinner Road, Huston displays Sunnyslope into a tidy tasting flight—grapes grown here, wine made here—poured by a team that loves harvest as much as you do. Begin with the Estate Grüner Veltliner; Huston was the first to plant it in Idaho, and it shows off the valley’s lifted, mouth-watering side. If available, try the sparkling Grüner as well—bright green apple and stone fruit, the kind of bubbly made for the porch. For sweater weather, two reds stand out: a 50/50 Cabernet Sauvignon—Petite Sirah with sturdy frame and spice, and the Malbec, a tasting-room darling with a faint flinty finish. Insider tip: a bite of blue cheese and a sip of Malbec is decadent and balanced; beef and lamb love it, too. The tasting room offers nibbles; outside food is welcome, so your farm-stand finds can become a picnic. Daily, 12 pm – 5 pm.

4:00 — Sawtooth Winery (golden hour, balance in the glass)

As the light turns honey-gold, Sawtooth’s patio is an exhale. This year’s vintage is reading balanced: harvest started roughly a week early without long 100°F+ stretches to stress the vines, and lower yields mean more energy in fewer clusters—focus you can taste. The 2024 ‘Classic Fly Series’ Albariño is zesty and mouth-watering—winner of Best Albariño (Gold Medal) at the 2024 Idaho Wine & Cider Competition. On the cozy side, the GSM (Grenache/Syrah/Mourvèdre) leans into supple fruit and savory spice—Fall in a glass. Sawtooth offers delicious charcuterie boards, perfectly paired to elevate your tasting experience—linger and watch the rows fade to evening. Daily 11 am – 5 pm.

“This one-day loop gives a beautiful overview of fall colors and the diversity of wines offered along the trail.”

How to taste like a local

Hydrate: bring a refillable bottle and drink water between pours.

Be curious: ask the tasting-room team about a vineyard detail, a cellar choice, or a pairing idea—come home with stories, not just bottles.

Pack lightly: layers and a three-bottle tote; check hours and consider reservations, especially on harvest weekends.

Create a fall ‘wine flight’ to bring home

From this Sunnyslope wine loop, build a simple season set: Dunning’s Colt Steel Chardonnay for holiday turkey and salty starters; Huston’s Malbec for blue cheese and grilled beef; Sawtooth’s GSM for roasted vegetables and everything-pork. Three bottles, one valley—a taste of Sunnyslope’s autumn.



A Sunnyslope Guide for the Curious

Meredith Smith has been shaping Snake River Valley wines since 2009, starting at Sawtooth and, since 2016, also leading winemaking at Ste. Chapelle, one of Idaho's legacy producers—bringing Walla Walla training to Idaho fruit.

Smith's Fall Playbook: Build a three-bottle Sunnyslope Snapshot

Albariño for the grazing board—bright citrus, saline snap (Sawtooth's 2024 Albariño recently won Best Albariño (Gold Medal) at the Idaho Wine & Cider Competition).

GSM for roast-season dinners—supple fruit, savory spice, easy table fit.

A cellar-minded Syrah or Tempranillo to carry into the holidays. Then ask the tasting-room team what they're most excited about during your visit—that's where each winery's stories live.

How Smith Describes Sunnyslope

High-desert sun at elevation and big day-night swings give Sunnyslope lift and clarity: whites stay vivid and mouth-watering; reds keep their shape without heaviness. Volcanic, well-drained soils over ancient Lake Idaho sediments add a clean mineral line beneath orchard and stone-fruit notes. You can taste it in Albariño and Riesling on the bright side; and feel it in Syrah, Tempranillo, and blends when the weather turns to roasts and sweaters. 🍷



MEREDITH SMITH,
PHOTO COURTESY OF
WINEMAKER.