



Guests Create Their Own Wine at BLEND by Chateau Ste. Michelle on Holland America Line's ms Koningsdam

September 29, 2015

New venue allows guests to be winemakers and blend their own label

Seattle, Wash., Sept. 29, 2015 – Wine connoisseurs and novices alike can experience the art of winemaking at BLEND aboard Holland America Line's new *ms Koningsdam* when the ship debuts in April 2016. In collaboration with Chateau Ste. Michelle, Washington State's oldest and most acclaimed winery, the intimate venue will enable guests to blend their own wine and enjoy it at dinner or in the privacy of their stateroom.

BLEND — the first of its kind for Holland America Line and the only purpose-built wine-blending venue at sea — will have a tasting table that accommodates 10 guests who can create their own blend from a selection of five barrels of single-vineyard red wine. In addition to participating in the blending process, guests also will learn about wine from the ship's wine expert, who leads the blending session.

"At the core of every Holland America Line cruise is our desire to offer unique, immersive and innovative experiences, and BLEND by Chateau Ste. Michelle is all of those things and more," said Orlando Ashford, president of Holland America Line. "The BLEND experience on *Koningsdam* is designed to appeal to everyone, and it will be exciting for our guests to create an exclusive wine tailored to their personal taste that they can enjoy onboard with our exceptional cuisine."

After viewing a welcome video by Bob Bertheau, Chateau Ste. Michelle's winemaker, guests will learn interesting information about the history of Washington wines and winemaking, examine soil samples, and see how different vineyard sites impact the flavors and style of the wine. The Cellar Master also will instruct guests on what characteristics, flavors and nuances to look for in the wine from each barrel.

Guests then sample the five unique wines, featuring such varietals as Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot from the winery's Cold Creek and Canoe Ridge Estate vineyards, and make tasting notes on what they like about each. The blending begins in a graduated cylinder, with guests determining how much of each wine to include in their personal bottle.

After the personalized wine blend is put into the bottle with a stopper, guests will be able to create their own label to add a personalized touch. The wine will then be sent to The Dining Room or another restaurant, where it will be waiting for the guests to enjoy with their evening meal. Alternatively guests can take the wine blend to their stateroom to enjoy at their leisure.

The wine blending sessions will be held daily for a fee, and reservations are required.

About Chateau Ste. Michelle

Founded in 1934, Chateau Ste. Michelle pioneered vinifera growing in Washington State and has been producing classic European varietal wines under the Ste. Michelle label since 1967. The winery combines an ongoing dedication to research with a commitment to classic winemaking traditions. The winery owns 3,500 acres of vineyards in the Columbia Valley of eastern Washington, including Canoe Ridge Estate and Cold Creek, which are LIVE and Salmon Safe certified as environmentally sustainable. Chateau Ste. Michelle enjoys winemaking partnerships with two of the world's most distinguished vintners — Col Solare is an alliance with Tuscany's Piero Antinori and Eroica Riesling is a partnership with the Mosel's Ernst Loosen.

For more information about Holland America Line and *Koningsdam*, consult a travel professional,

call 1-877-SAIL HAL (877-724-5425) or visit hollandamerica.com.

Editor's note: Renderings are available at <https://www.cruiseimagelibrary.com/c/xyl8chbs>.

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About Holland America Line [a division of Carnival Corporation and plc (NYSE: CCL and CUK)]

Holland America Line's fleet of 15 ships offers more than 500 cruises to 415 ports in 98 countries, territories or dependencies. One- to 110-day itineraries visit all seven continents and highlights include Antarctica, South America, Australia/New Zealand and Asia voyages; four annual Grand Voyages; and popular sailings to ports in the Caribbean, Alaska, Mexico, Canada/New England, Europe and the Panama Canal. The line currently has a new 2,650-guest ship, *ms Koningsdam*, on order for delivery in April 2016 from Fincantieri shipyard, as well as a second Pinnacle Class ship due for delivery in November 2018.

Fleetwide, the company features Signature of Excellence enhancements, a commitment totaling more than \$500 million, that showcase the Culinary Arts Center presented by Food & Wine magazine — a state-of-the-art onboard show kitchen where more than 60 celebrated guest chefs and culinary experts provide cooking demonstrations and classes — Explorations Café powered by The New York Times, Digital Workshop powered by Windows, teens-only activity areas and all-new stateroom amenities highlighted by flat-panel TVs and plush Euro-Top Mariner's Dream Beds.

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