

washin women & wwi



Written by Richard Carroll
Photography by Laura Weston

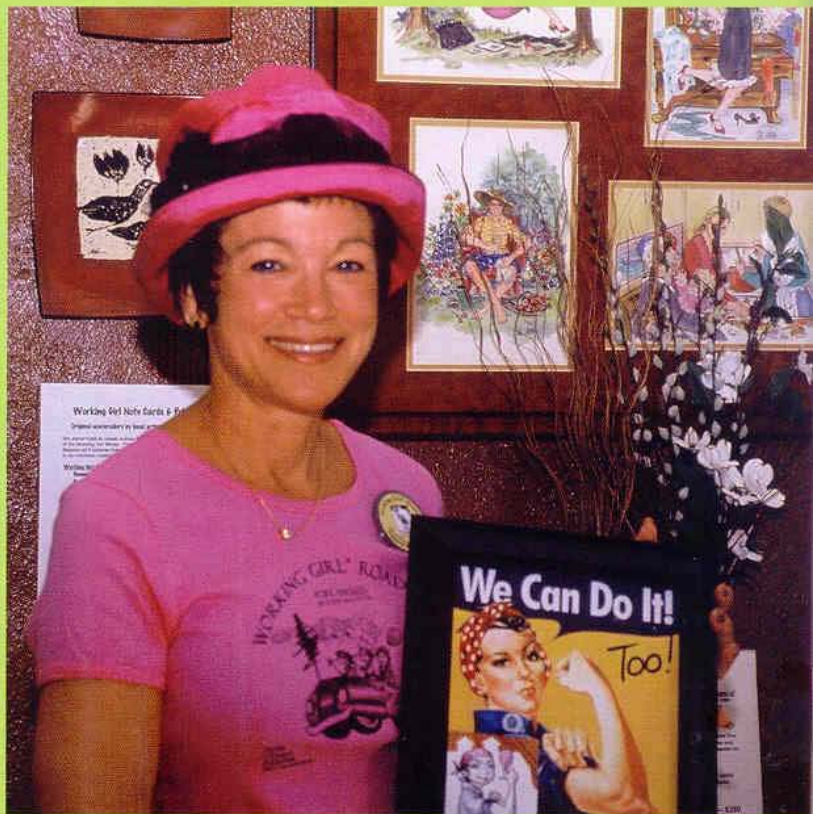
Kathy Charlton, Owner/Manager, Olympic Cellars Winery, Port Angeles

The fabled Olympic Peninsula is a cherished national treasure — and it was just the right setting for creative women on a mission led by spirited Kathy Charlton when they opened the glamorous and captivating Olympic Cellars Winery — a.k.a. the Working Girl Boutique Winery — in 2001, the first of its kind on the Peninsula.

We found the Working Girls themselves, Kathy Charlton, Sara Gagnon, and Molly Rivard — each with enough personal charisma and allure to dominate a room from a footstool — in an enchantingly restored 1890 barn, the oldest in Clallam County, on State Highway 101 between Port Angeles and Sequim. Their dynamic women-owned and operated winery has made its mark with the highly acclaimed La Dolce Vida labels and the Working Girl Wine labels, which include Rosé the Riveter, Working Girl White and Go Girl Red. As for La Dolce Vida, these women — and their wines — express that phrase “Live the Sweet Life” with absolute style and immense pleasure. A fourth member of this vineyard vixen squad, Libby Sweetser, recently joined the team and the “girl power” continues.

Bubbly Kathy Charlton, who acts as if she has never experienced a bad day and has more energy than a humming bird on a honeysuckle high, explains, “The Working Girl series is a salute to working women everywhere, but we were repeatedly told by men in the tasting room that they can’t quite bring themselves to order Go Girl Red in a bar. So we created a fourth wine in the series, Handyman Red, named for our only rooster in the hen house, Benoit Murat. Benoit (from Toulouse, France) is our only male winemaker at Olympic Cellars. Handyman Red was released in early 2005 for all those guys who love Working Girl Wines but can’t quite bring themselves to order Go Girl Red in a bar.”

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Kathy says, “In the beginning we talked about having a fun label, and we were three working girls. The label was founded on love, not a marketing ploy to sell wine. We first had to put good juice in the bottles. We love blends, and we have won a number of awards including some in a San Francisco competition, but we are women doing what we know best, and it’s not just about the wine and the medals; it’s the power to turn a gunny sack into a piece of velvet.”

She continues, “We’re about women who take the time out to live, and to find those moments to hold hands, and to enjoy events that celebrate family, women and life. Our local charity of choice is the Gynocare Program, for low-income women on the Olympic Peninsula who are at risk for ovarian cancer, and other illnesses not covered by government funding.” With such life-sustaining stamina and heartfelt compassion, it’s easy to see why Rosie the Riveter’s “We Can Do It Too” motto has become their mantra, and it’s easy to believe that they can — and will — do it too!