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WINE TRAIL TRAVELER NEWSLETTER

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Virginia Wines Go to London

by Kathy Sullivan

What do Virginia wine and England have in common? History and today's interest in pursuing quality wine.

This year is the 400th Anniversary of the founding of Jamestown by the English. Several events have been planned to commemorate the founding of Jamestown in 1607. One of the events planned will be the tasting of Virginia wines at Vinopolis in London. The theme is "Virginia's First in Wine." "First in Wine" refers to the quality of Virginia wines and to the established fact that Virginia was the first place in the new world for the English to attempt the cultivation of grapes and winemaking.

In February, a number of Virginia wines were judged at White Hall Vineyards in a wine tasting event. The purpose was to choose wines to go to England for a tasting. On April 30th Virginia wines will be tasted at Hampden House, UK and on May 2nd the Virginia wines will be tasted at Vinopolis in London. Will the Mother Country be impressed?

Will Thomas Jefferson's dream of producing fine wines in Virginia be met? After all an attempt was made to grow grapevines very early in the 1600's. By 1619 the House of Burgesses required each adult male to plant grapevines. Resulting wines were disappointing as the wine



produced was bitter and did not travel well. By the late 1700's, Thomas Jefferson had visited grape growing areas of France and fully believed that Virginia could grow grapes and produce wine as good as any other country. "We could, in the United States,

Vinopolis, London

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make as great a variety of wines as are made in Europe, not exactly the same kinds, but doubtless as good." Jefferson tried growing his own vineyards and took part in a vineyard planting next to Monticello. The vineyards did not survive. Despite Jefferson's firm belief that Virginia could grow grapes and produce fine wine, he was unable to make one bottle of wine before he died. George Washington also tried growing grapes but the vineyards were not productive and the area was developed into orchards.

Today, after Prohibition, Virginia is making much progress towards becoming a well known area for growing grapes and producing fine wine. To prove this point, 65 wines from 28 Virginia wineries have been chosen to provide wine for the wine tasting at Vinopolis in London. Vinopolis is a wine museum, tasting facility and restaurant all rolled into one building. Wines from all around the world are available for tasting at Vinopolis. However until now only wines from California have been represented of wines produced in the United States.

If you have the opportunity to visit London on May 2nd, stop by Vinopolis and check out the Virginia wines. To learn more about Vinopolis read the Wine Trail Traveler [article](#).



We look forward to hearing about the reception of Virginia wines in England. Watch for our May newsletter for updated information.

How will Virginia wines fare at Vinopolis? On our recent visit to Vinopolis we shared a bottle of Pearmund Cellars Ameritage with Tom Forrest, the Tour Development Manager. He shared the bottle with other tasters and had the following comment, "I retasted the Pearmund Ameritage last night. It seemed to have really developed after opening. It was full of rich fruit cake aromas and flavours. Still smooth and soft, the spicyness of the Malbec element shone through the red and black forest fruit flavours. It impressed the members of the tasting team. So I look forward to tasting the wines in May." Anyone who has visited wineries in Virginia and talked to the winemakers knows that Virginia wineries are intent upon making fine wine from the best grapes available. England, here we come.

VIRGINIA WINES AT VINOPOLIS MAY 2, 2007

Barboursville Vineyards

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Octagon (Meritage style blend) | 2001 |
| Malvaxia (vin santo-style Malvasia) | 2002 |

Blenheim Vineyards

| | |
|----------|------|
| Viognier | 2005 |
|----------|------|

Breaux Vineyards, Ltd.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Viognier | 2005 |
| Merlot Reserve | 2002 |
| Cabernet Sauvignon | 2001 |
| Alexis (late harvest Vidal Blanc) | 2004 |

Cardinal Point Vineyard & Winery

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| A6 (Viognier/Chardonnay) | 2002 |
| Cabernet Franc Reserve | 2005 |

Chateau Morrisette

| | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Star Dog (methode champenoise) | 2003 |
| Chardonnay | 2004 |

Cooper Vineyards

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| Viognier | 2005 |
| Coopertage Blanc (White Meritage) | 2005 |
| Norton | 2004 |
| Vidal | 2005 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Delfosse Vineyards & Winery | |
| Reserve d'Oriane (proprietary white vinifera blend) | 2005 |
| Cabernet Franc | 2005 |
| Fabbioli Cellars | |
| Raspberry Merlot | NV |
| First Colony Winery | |
| Tannat | 2005 |
| 1607 Red Dessert Wine | 2004 |
| Jefferson Vineyards | |
| Meritage | 2005 |
| Keswick Vineyards | |
| Viognier | 2005 |
| Norton | 2005 |
| Heritage Estate Reserve | 2004 |
| Kluge Estate Winery & Vineyard | |
| Kluge SP Blanc de Blancs | 2004 |
| Kluge SP Rose (methode champenoise) | 2004 |
| Kluge Estate New World Red | 2004 |
| Linden Vineyards | |
| Hardscrabble Vineyard Chardonnay | 1999 |
| Cabernet Franc | 2005 |
| Mediterranean Cellars | |
| Cabernet Sauvignon | 2004 |
| Naked Mountain Vineyard & Winery | |
| Merlot | 2005 |
| Oakencroft Vineyard & Winery | |
| Seyval Blanc | 2006 |
| Oasis Winery | |
| O'Rose Grand Reserve (methode champenoise) | 1988 |
| Pearmund Cellars | |
| Chardonnay | 2005 |
| Riesling | 2005 |
| Ameritage | 2004 |
| Petit Verdot | 2005 |
| Potomac Point Winery | |
| Pocahontas Reserve (Norton) | 2006 |
| Prince Michel | |
| Pinot Grigio | 2005 |
| Dry Rosé | 2005 |
| Symius (meritage-style blend) | 2003 |
| Rappahannock Cellars | |
| Chardonnay "wild ferment" | 2005 |
| Viognier Reserve | 2005 |
| Cabernet Franc Reserve | 2004 |
| Meritage | 2005 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Rockbridge Vineyard | |
| DeChiel Chardonnay | 2005 |
| White Riesling | 2006 |
| V d'Or (Cryo White blend) | 2005 |
| Veritas | |
| Petit Verdot | 2005 |
| Kenmar (Petit Manseng) | 2005 |
| White Hall Vineyards | |
| Chardonnay | 2005 |
| Viognier | 2005 |
| Cuvee des Champs (Meritage-style blend) | 2002 |
| Petit Verdot | 2004 |
| Williamsburg Winery | |
| Chardonnay Vintage Reserve | 2005 |
| Gabriel Archer Reserve (Meritage-style blend) | 1993 |
| Windham Winery | |
| Riesling | 2005 |
| Merlot | 2005 |
| Vintner's Reserve | 2002 |
| Winery at La Grange | |
| Fletcher's Chardonnay | 2005 |
| Viognier | 2005 |
| Meritage | 2005 |
| Snort (port-style wine) | 2005 |
| Wintergreen Winery | |
| Chardonnay | 2005 |
| Merlot | 2004 |



What's New on the Website

Recipes donated from wineries are now located on our website. This section will continue to grow as we post more recipes. Go to the Wine, Food and Art section of the website.

We visited eleven wineries in Virginia in March along the Monticello Wine Trail. We also visited a winery along the Blue Ridge Wine Way. Check out Virginia in the Wine Trail section of the website.

We had the opportunity to visit several wineries in England and one vineyard in Wales this spring. While in the United Kingdom we visited Vinopolis, a wine center in London.

To read the articles written on the wineries we visited, see the [Wine Trails](#) section of the website. To read an article about Vinopolis visit the Wine, Food and Art section of the website.

Welcome to a new writer for Wine Trail Traveler. Meghan Anne Sullivan currently a junior studying English and Physics visited Parva Farm Vineyards in Wales and wrote an article describing her visit. Meghan plans on adding more articles to the Wine Trail Traveler as time permits.

Wine Tip

Looking for a true English Wine?

Reading the Label on the bottle will tell you if the wine is a true English wine. If the label says the wine was produced in Britain, it is not truly English wine. If the wine is labeled English wine, the grapes and wine are specifically from England.

Buyers Beware British Wine or English Wine?

English wineries may not be well known throughout the world but they do exist. Check out the articles on Wine Trail Traveler about English wineries we have visited this spring. We even visited a small vineyard in Wales. We talked with winemakers and discovered that all wine created in the United Kingdom is not equal.

Become an aware consumer and you will increase your chances of purchasing a good wine.

English wine is wine which is produced in England from vineyards in England. You can expect to find very good English wines. British wines are wines produced in England but are made from a grape concentrate which may be from anywhere in the world. Water is added to the grape concentrate and it is fermented and bottled in the United Kingdom.

The winemakers we spoke to basically had nothing good to say about British wine. However, British wine is inexpensive and there is a market for it. The image of English or Welsh wine may be tainted by British wine. Hopefully the public will understand the difference between British wine and English wine. Do not assume that if a British wine isn't very good then English or Welsh wines won't be very good.

Which is better? Think of it this way. Is dried fruit as tasty as fresh fruit? At the grocery store, do you buy fresh or canned vegetables? Do you think fruits and vegetables are better from the garden or farmer's market?

Reader's Write

We love to hear from our readers. If you have a question or comment that will be of interest to our readers submit your question to kathy@winetrailtraveler.com.