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Wine Trail Traveler Newsletter

During 2008, Wine Trail Traveler visited 145 winery/vineyard tasting rooms in Oregon, Washington, Colorado, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and Ontario. Frequently we are asked to talk about our favorite. This is a difficult task. Each tasting room is unique and has a story. We have met winemakers and owners whose interest in wine has been passed down through multiple generations. Others whose interest was sparked from a magazine article read on a flight or a stroll through the garden section of Kmart. We capture the story in our articles. However we do have wineries and vineyards that stand out. This edition of the newsletter will point out some of our favorite wineries and vineyards that we visited in 2008.

Favorite Scenic Views

Strolling through a vineyard conjures romantic images. Set a vineyard amid a scenic backdrop and you will have numerous photo opportunities and may find it difficult to leave. Many of the winery and vineyards in Palisade, Colorado offer the Bookcliffs as a backdrop. Our favorite spot was Canyon Wind Cellars. The views of the vineyards and Colorado River were stunning. A few miles away Garfield Estates vineyards have a backdrop of Mount Garfield. At Pheasant Valley Winery in Hood River, Oregon, Mount Hood rises in the distance. The snow capped mountain offers a contrast to the colors of the vineyard.

Vineyards on rolling hills also offer a breathtaking site. The gentle rolling hills at Kramer Vineyards in Gaston, Oregon offer a photogenic spot of tranquility. This serenity can also be viewed at Sokol Blosser in Dayton, Oregon. Gentle rolling hills of vineyards are separated by a tree line. Upon closer inspection you'll notice some vines covered with moss at the top of their trunks. Perhaps the closest



The Bookcliffs and Colorado River provide a stunning backdrop to vineyards at Canyon Wind Cellars.

comparison to Tuscany was at Raffaldini Vineyards and Winery in Ronda, North Carolina. The rolling hills of vineyards give way to the Tuscan styled tasting room.

Bodies of water also provide a beautiful

backdrop for the vineyards. Chateau Chantal on Old Mission Peninsula in Michigan has vineyards sloping down to Grand Traverse Bay. The tasting room sits on the highest elevation of the property and a semi-circular seating area has windows that overlook the vineyards.

T.S.



Gentle rolling hills of grapevines await the coming season. Sokol Blosser in Oregon is reminiscent of Tuscany.

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Environmental Sustainability

More and more winery construction as well as vineyard practices are leading the way to green environmental practices. Our favorite "green" wineries and vineyards for 2008 were Southbrook Vineyards in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Black Ankle Vineyards in Mt. Airy, Maryland and Jack Rabbit Hill in Hotchkiss, Colorado. Wineries and tasting rooms may receive LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. Southbrook Vineyards opened a facility that includes a tasting room that sits lightly on the land. This gold LEED certified building features a floating roof resting on glass walls. Natural light floods the transparent building space and it is possible to see from one end of the long building to the other. The building features many environmental friendly practices as does the tasting room facility at Black Ankle Vineyards. This Mt. Airy facility uses bales of straw for insulation and much of the lumber in the building was harvested from the land. The tasting room features a living roof.

Not only are tasting rooms going green but sustainable practices are also evident in vineyards. Jack Rabbit Hill features organic and biodynamic techniques. The vineyard was certified organic in 2000 and received biodynamic certification from Demeter USA in 2008. Some of the vineyard practices include on-site composting, use of herb teas and compost rather than synthetic fertilizers, livestock for manure and creating a diverse habitat of insects and microorganisms to balance pests.

T.S.



A living roof is one of the many environmental friendly practices at Black Ankle Vineyards.

Favorite Winery Restaurants

Ten percent of the winery/vineyard tasting rooms visited in 2008 had restaurants. Our favorites were Creekside Cellars in Evergreen, Colorado, Ferrante Winery in Geneva, Ohio and Château Morrisette in Floyd, Virginia. At Creekside we enjoyed a lunch tasting wines with an Antipasto Platter. An array of colors and flavors was eye catching and flavorful. The imported cheeses, olives, meats and vegetables were served with fresh focaccia and dipping oil. Dessert wines were served with a dessert platter. Two of our favorites were the cinnamon brownie and Tiramisu. We had dinner at Ferrante Winery and Ristorante. It was a cool evening and Kathy ordered lasagna and paired it with a spiced wine served hot. Terry had a penne in garlic sauce and vegetables matched with a Riesling. Château Morrisette has a lovely restaurant that blends in well with the Blue Ridge Parkway. The food was excellent and paired well with Château Morrisette wines. Although another business, restaurants in wineries offer visitors an opportunity to taste wines with food, an enhanced experience.

T.S.



Creekside Cellars Antipasto Platter offers something for everyone and pairs with many Creekside Cellars wines.

Favorite Winemakers

This year we have enjoyed meeting many winemakers and here are just a few of the many we enjoyed visiting. Their enthusiasm for producing quality wine was phenomenal. At Graystone Vineyards we met Barbara Maurer who moved from Alaska to Palisade, Colorado. Searching for a product added value for her property she discovered her niche in creating port wines. On the East Coast we met Jim Law, winemaker, viticulturalist and owner of Linden Vineyards in Virginia. Jim is a winemaker and knows that the quality of his wines is dependent upon the quality of the grapes from his vineyard. He continually experiments in his vineyards to discover the best grapes to grow. At Meadery of the Rockies in Colorado, Glenn Foster is excited about wines that can be produced in the Western Slope region of Colorado. Glen and his wife acquired St. Kathryn Cellars, Confre Cellars and Meadery of the Rockies in 2008. He learned winemaking working for his father, founder of Ravenswood Winery in California.

K.S.

Favorite Wineries with Events

Barrel Oak Winery located in Virginia is easy to reach off an interstate road. Barrel Oak Winery has set a trend by offering weekly events. With a great tour, good wines and events to attend this winery qualifies as an Event Destination site. In Washington State, Maryhill Winery is one of the few wineries we visited in 2008 with its very own amphitheatre. Guests will enjoy views of the Columbia River Gorge and Mt. Hood. Enjoy live music between May and October. Visit during the summer when concerts are scheduled for the amphitheater or plan on attending events located in the tasting room during the year.

Many of the wineries we visit offer small winemaker dinners or wine and pairing events. There is not enough space here to identify every one. You may want to check out a winery's website for events that will coincide with your visit dates. Be sure to ask about details for winemaker's dinners or ask to be added to the online newsletter subscriber list.

K.S.

Favorite Destinations

For us, a destination is a winery that offers more than a nice tasting room and good wine. In 2008, we discovered Black Star Farms a winery in Michigan with a tasting room, creamery, bed and breakfast, stable and walking trails. Nearby Chateau Chantal has a bed and breakfast, and offers cooking classes and wine seminars. In Canada, Cave Spring Cellars with the Inn on the Twenty and On the Twenty Restaurant is a delightful place to visit and spend a night or two.

K.S.



The Inn at Black Star Farms offers elegant rooms and a gourmet breakfast. Guests can taste wines, visit the winery, creamery and hike.

Favorite Family Oriented Wineries

With plenty of space to spread out along a small creek, Three Fox Vineyards in Virginia offers a lovely picnic site within several hundred feet of the tasting room. While an adult watches the children play, another adult can walk to the tasting room to purchase a bottle of wine to enjoy beside the creek. Balistreri Winery in Denver, Colorado is family friendly with outdoor seating arrangements. This winery is well known for its Little Feet wine that begins with the crushing of grapes by little feet – children ages 4 to 12. Experience a day of fun in the country at Puddicombe Estate Farms & Winery in Ontario, Canada. This popular destination site is a farm that combines a winery, tasting room, small petting farm area, 25-minute train ride and at the right time of season – pick your own fruit.

K.S.



Puddicombe is a great destination for a family to visit.

Favorite Wine Tasting

One of our favorite wine tastings took place at Inniskillin in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. The tasting included different Riedel stemware along with an ISO glass. One can compare the use of the two types of stemware. Wine glasses are placed on a placemat and all wines are served at the same time. This allows one to compare and contrast the different wines.

We also enjoyed the wine tasting at Duck Pond Cellars in Dundee, Oregon. Our tasting also included Riedel stemware and was accompanied by a light appetizer platter. This allows one to taste wine with food and judge which wines pair with different foods.

T.S.



A wine tasting at Inniskillin included different Riedel stemware and a traditional ISO glass.

Favorite Winery Tasting Rooms

We discover tasting rooms of all kinds and each offers a different experience. During 2009, we visited many wineries in the United States and in Ontario, Canada. These wineries offered tasting rooms of all styles and size. If you are looking for a great winery experience consider all of the tasting rooms. If you are looking for the glitzy tasting room, there are those as well as the small mom and pop tasting rooms that offer good wines, heartfelt stories and good times.

Looking for details, we notice the tasting counters, the layout of the room, seating arrangements, architecture and anything that might capture a visitor's eye. Needless to say, it was a very difficult task to try to choose favorite tasting rooms. Here are just a few of our favorite tasting rooms.

We made two trips to Colorado in 2008 and were delighted with the experiences. Two Rivers Winery & Chateau located in Grand Junction Colorado, offers two separate elegant tasting rooms. Walls display numerous wine related works of art. Chandeliers are made of antlers.

North East, PA has several wineries but perhaps the most unique was South Shore Wine Company. The tasting room is set in caverns built in 1864 and almost forgotten until the Mazza family purchased the property, renovated the caverns and opened the winery in 2007.

Shelton Vineyards in Yadkin Valley, North Carolina has a peninsula shaped tasting bar. The tasting room is bright and roomy. Childress Vineyards in North Carolina is the result of Richard Childress of NASCAR fame who was also interested in vineyards and a winery. Be sure to visit his elegant tasting room and winery not far from his NASCAR facility.

In Virginia, Chateau Morrisette is another not to be missed tasting room. The wood used in the tasting room is from a warehouse located on the waterfront in Seattle. It adds character to the room. Three Brothers Wineries and Estates in New York must be mentioned, as this is one vineyard with three wine tasting buildings and one beer tasting facility. Each tasting room offers different style wines. The styles of each tasting room greatly vary. Choose between serious wine tasting and casual. There is something for everyone.

In Maryland, Black Ankle offers an environmentally friendly tasting room. The counter top is made from crushed grapevines and the result is spectacular.

Brys Estate Vineyards and Winery on Michigan's Old Mission Peninsula offers an elegant experience with brick walls and mahogany woodwork. The mahogany woodwork highlights the wine bottles. Granite forms the top of the tasting counter. Chateau Chantel on Old Mission Peninsula has comfortable seating areas with stunning views of the vineyards and land. Black Star Farms on Leelanau Peninsula has a spacious tasting room that has a window so visitors may see the winery and the creamery. The curved tasting bar is in the center of the room underneath a transparent glass window with the black star logo outlined.

Wineries located in Ontario seem to try to outdo themselves



Shelton Vineyards tasting room is bright and can accommodate many people.

with their wineries and tasting rooms. Inniskillin Wines opened a new tasting room in 2008. To facilitate wine tastings the tasting room has four tasting counters. One of these tasting counters is for Icewine tastings. The tasting counter at Peller Estates is a large island in the center of the tasting room. Wines and wine accessories are displayed artistically. A reserve tasting room is available on the second floor. Sprucewood Shores Estate Winery on Lake Erie North Shore has a large tasting room with a second floor balcony. From the balcony, visitors can access decks with beautiful views of the vineyards and Lake Erie.

K.S.



Tasting counter at Chateau Morrisette.

Wine Trail Traveler Partners

Colorado



Balistreri Vineyards
1946 E. 66th Ave.
Denver, Colorado 80229



Garfield Estates Vineyard & Winery
3572 G Road
Palisade, Colorado 81526



Garlic Mike's
2674 Hwy 135
Gunnison, Colorado 81230
970-641-2493



Garlic Mike's
103 Rose Lane
Montrose, Colorado 81401
970-249-4381



Two Rivers Winery & Chateau
2087 Broadway
Grand Junction, Colorado 81503



The Wine Country Inn
777 Grande River Drive
Palisade, CO 81526
888.855.8330

Maryland



Dove Valley Vineyards and Winery
645 Harrington Road
Rising Sun, MD 21911



Fiore Winery
3026 Whiteford Road
Pylesville, MD 21132

Michigan



Black Star Farms
10844 E. Revold Rd.
Suttons Bay, Michigan 49682



Chateau Chantal
15900 Rue de Vin
Traverse City, MI 49686



Country Hermitage Bed & Breakfast
7710 US 31 N
Williamsburg, Michigan 49690
231-938-5930



The Inn at Black Star Farms
10844 E. Revold Rd.
Suttons Bay, Michigan 49682

New York



The Halsey House
2057 Trumansburg Road
Trumansburg, NY 14886
Phone: 800-387-5590



Masten Designs
2710 Astoria Blvd. Apt. 2C
Astoria NY 11102



Three Brothers Wineries & Estates
623 Lerch Road,
Geneva, NY 14456

North Carolina



Grove Winery and Vineyard
7360 Brooks Bridge Road
Gibsonville, NC 27249

Ohio



Ferrante Winery
5585 N River Road W (State Rt. 307)
Geneva, Ohio 44041



Ferrante Winery & Ristorante
5585 N River Road W (State Rt. 307)
Geneva, Ohio 44041



Grand River Cellars
5750 South Madison Rd. (Route 528)
Madison, Ohio 44057



Laurello Vineyards
4573 State Route 307 East,
Geneva, Ohio 44041



Winery at Versailles
6572 St Rt 47
Versailles, Ohio 45380

Oregon



Kramer Vineyards
26830 NW Olson Road
Gaston, OR 97119-8039



Redhawk Winery
2995 Michigan City Lane NW
Salem, Oregon 97304

Wine Trail Traveler Partners

Pennsylvania



Pickering Winery

Rt. 187 Between Wysox and Rome
Wysox, PA 18854



Paradox Vineyard

1833 Flint Hill Road
Landenberg, PA 19350



The Winery at Wilcox

1867 Mefferts Run Road
Wilcox, Pennsylvania 15870



Hilton Garden Inn, Kennett Square

815 E. Baltimore Pike
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania 19348
Phone (610) 444-9100



Ontario, Canada

Hilton Garden Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake

500 York Road
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
L0S 1J0
Phone 905-984-4200
Toll free: 866-777-9877

Virginia



Barrel Oak Winery

3623 Grove Lane
Delaplane, Virginia 20144



Chateau O'Brien at Northpoint

3238 Rail Stop Road
Markham, VA 22643



Kluge Estate Winery & Vineyards

100 Grand Cru Drive
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902



Pearmund Cellars

6190 Georgetown Road
Broad Run, VA 20137



Veritas Vineyard & Winery

145 Saddleback Farm
Afton, Virginia 22920



White Fences Vineyard & Winery

170 White Fences Drive
Irvington, VA 22480



The Winery at La Grange

4970 Antioch Road
Haymarket, Virginia 20169