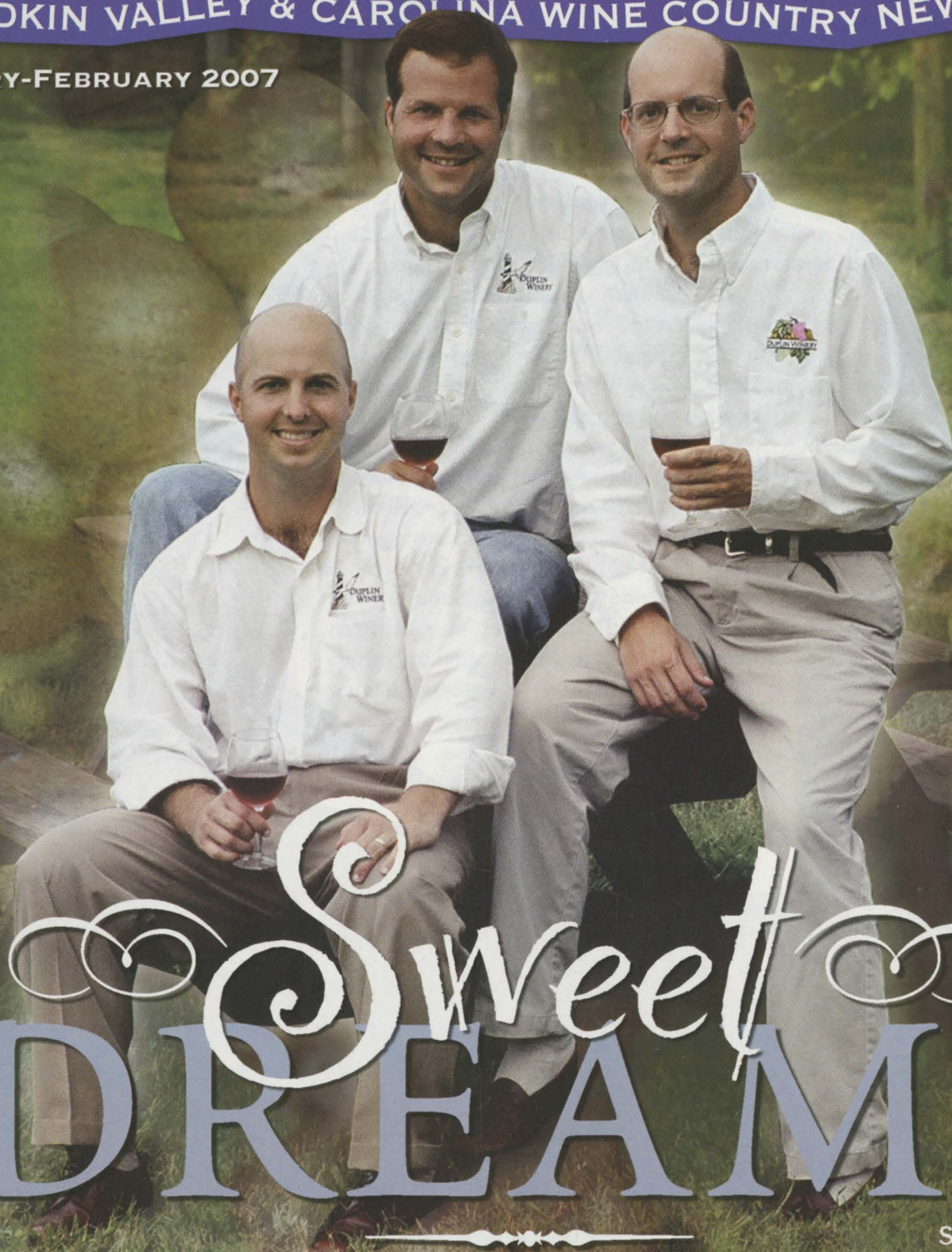


On The Vine

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YADKIN VALLEY & CAROLINA WINE COUNTRY NEWS

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2007



Sweet DREAMS

See Page 4

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On The Vine

YADKIN VALLEY & CAROLINA WINE COUNTRY NEWS

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FOUNDER
Susan Lyons

Hot off the wine press . . .

Every wine has a backstory

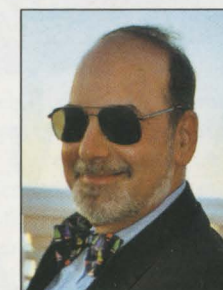
It's nice to see that whimsy lives in the hearts of our winemakers. Beginning with this issue (see Page 17), we're starting a new feature — What's in a Name? — taking a look at some of the more interesting wine names and labels coming out of our wineries and vineyards.

It's generally agreed that a wine's label is one of the strongest compelling factors on the consumer's checklist. On shelves crowded with vintages, many with identical or similar names, a drab label can be a killer. Conversely, a dazzling label coupled with an intriguing name, complete with a catchy backstory on the label's reverse, can make a bottle jump off the shelf.

So far, our wineries have sent me labels showing dogs and cats and pigs, windmills and bridges and what at first glance looks like a totem carving. Two vineyards have featured cows, including RagApple Lassie's cow-on-the-crescent-moon design that is a repeat award-winner in a national-level competition. Wines have been named for kids and grandkids and grandmothers, for folksy places and classy locations.

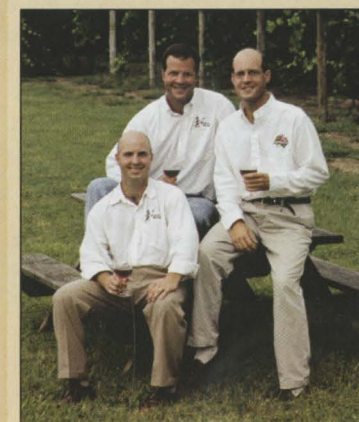
Labels range from some that appear to have come off of a plain-paper home printer to metallic etchings directly on the bottle.

While the finest wines from the best-known wineries can get away with a more minimalist approach, our winemakers know they need to fight for recognition in the marketplace. It's good to see the creative marketing talent going into wine names and label designs, and that they have a heightened sense of humor.



Rebel Good

Rebel Good,
Publisher



On The Cover...

The Fussell brothers of Duplin Winery. Jon is the vice-president of retail sales; David Jr. is president; and Pat is the vineyard manager.



DUPLIN'S Wild Ride

• State's oldest winery has had its downs and ups

By Ed Williams

ROSE HILL — Reminiscing about three decades now — and watching those 30 years roller-coaster by — David Fussell Sr. sees more clearly than most what he fears may be ahead for some in the North Carolina wine industry.

"The pendulum has swung so many times in this state," says Fussell, largely responsible for keeping the state's oldest winery — the world's largest Muscadine winery — operating. "Right now it's in upward mode, but at some point, I'm afraid it will swing down again."

Sobering words from a man who is upbeat, good-naturedly defiant and fiercely loyal to grape-growing and winemaking in the Old North State. Fussell doesn't mean to sound gloom-and-doom. He serves only to remind that there are a lot of grape growers out there — a lot of them without a secure home for their fruit.

Fussell, who knows the value of a handshake and a steadfast business promise, has a tale that's part inspiration, part evangelical and part cautionary rolled into one. When you've teetered on the precipice and then seen life swing back around, it can teach a lesson or two

about perseverance.

And lots of faith. Hop aboard his wild ride and lean close, because it's a long story. And, for Duplin Wine Cellars, an even longer journey.



It's the mid-1970s in eastern North Carolina and state agricultural leaders are pushing some traditional farmers to return to a glorious past. Grow Muscadine grapes, they urge. We've done it before, we'll do it again.

Made sense at that time, what with New York winemakers paying \$350 per ton for grapes trucked north of the Mason-Dixon line.

Indeed, North Carolina had done it before with Muscadine, becoming the country's leading wine producer before the Civil War, and then again in the early 1900s — only to see fortunes fade fast.

In the 1970s, the financials were incentive enough for Fussell and family to sink hope and income into vineyard.

Then, almost overnight, that northern rain-bow went south. Grape prices fell to \$150 per ton.

Facing ruin, Fussell figured, "Hey, we'll turn grapes into wine. What choice do we have?"

Local politicians, local clergy — local everybody it seemed — didn't mind grape-growing. But fermenting the fruit? That was different in the Bible Belt, and Fussell's vines were tangled thick in it.

"They lumped us right in there with sinners, with demon rum, that sort of thing," Fussell recalls.

Local politicians first denied him a permit

to operate. The Fussell family enlisted the aid of state Sen. Harold Hardison who lobbied the General Assembly to pass legislation giving the state, not locals, power to issue use permits to farmers in cases such as Duplin.

Fussell was teaching at a Christian academy at the time and was told by locals, "You're going to hell."

"Every other Sunday, I was speaking in a church as a Methodist lay speaker," Fussell says. "Well, that stopped in a hurry. Even to this day, I have not been asked to speak in those churches. Now this was in 1975."

And some local clergy nudged local politicians to put Fussell through a little hell. Grow your grapes, opponents said. But we can still stop you from tasting and selling wine.

And back then, they could.

Again, Fussell worked through the General Assembly, which saw to it that there was some tasting and selling at Duplin Wine Cellars.

By 1976, about 1,000 cases of wine were moving out the door.



It's the early 1980s, and Duplin Wine Cellars, between Raleigh and Wilmington, is seeing market creep its way. Overhead is low, family is pitching in, and it seems with a little more luck, a little more production, and a little more time, prosperity might be waiting just around the corner. Local grape growers rally around Fussell and they send their crop exclusively Duplin's way.

"In 1983, we bought every grape in the state. None went to New York," he recalls.

The New York wineries were not pleased, says Fussell, and squeezed North Carolina distributors to put the pinch on Duplin, which soon enough found itself shut out of grocery stores

"Our sales went from 40,000 cases a year to 4,000," Fussell remembers. "That's when we decided we needed to get more exposure."

That was the beginning of Southland Estate Winery. And that was just about the end of Duplin Wine Cellars.

To hear Fussell tell it, establishing a retail wine sales operation along I-95 would catch traffic flowing north and south through North Carolina. Naturally, that big store would sell Duplin wines. Some 500 shareholders threw in with Duplin, which itself owned a third of the stock.

The idea bombed. Duplin teetered on ruin. "This was in 1986 and wine (in the South) just wasn't accepted as it is now. When [Southland Estate] went under, it about drove Duplin under," Fussell remembers.

It didn't help that a year before, North Carolina reversed preferential tax breaks for producers of table wine, dramatically raising wine prices.

With banks knocking at the door, the extended family rallied to keep homes and farmland intact. Fussell returned to work as a teacher. He credits his wife with keeping his spirits up. And with manning the forklift, over-seeing crush, and helping a beleaguered winery claw back.



It's the mid-1990s and Duplin experiences a turn-around from unanticipated quarters: Scientific research suggests that wine has health benefits.

When a TV segment dubbed "The French Paradox" airs on CBS' *60 Minutes*, the fortunes of Duplin Wine Cellars skyrocket.

This is where David Fussell Jr., now president, picks up the tale: "Up until that time, we had lost money every single year. Then we started selling a sweet red wine and we were selling out. In fact, we've sold out every year since then."

A year after the *60 Minutes* segment, researchers at nearby Campbell University were following a tip that the key chemical component in red wine was resveratrol. It had been found in vinifera and Campbell researchers wondered if it might be found in Muscadine as well.

"When we didn't hear anything, we called them. They said, 'Well, we have figures showing Muscadine has seven times more resveratrol than these other red wines. So we sent it off to another lab,'" said David Jr.

"Well, the USDA got involved and they sent it off to Boston. Now suddenly, everyone was getting the same figures back and it showed



The Bistro provides outdoor dining.

that our Muscadine wines had seven times more of this potent resveratrol."

In the mid-1990s, this is the perfect storm — only in reverse, and long before "perfect storm" became a cliché.

This is at a time when wine was barely sinking into the American consumer subconscious — this after the libertine days of three-Martini-lunches had passed. Suddenly, here's an alcoholic beverage rich in antioxidants and linked to cardiovascular benefit.

At Duplin, it's neatly packaged in a sweet red wine sold amongst a people already swimming in sweet coffee, sweeter tea and sweetest desserts.

Even in the Bible Belt, this is lightning in a bottle.

Duplin's fate is changing overnight. Wine is selling out. Production is growing. More farmers are throwing in on a handshake. Seems everyone is making some jingle.

And as Duplin wine sales begin creeping across North Carolina, there is developing a parallel track. There are the first real rumblings among the popular press about vinifera grapes.

Early reports are murky, hitting hard on North Carolina's once glorious pre-Prohibition wine past, but getting a little

cloudy in explaining differences between vinifera — a relative newcomer — and native Muscadine, a storied player on the East Coast.

Today, if you ask David Sr. what credit he might take for jumpstarting a now-burgeoning North Carolina wine industry, he demurs.

That wouldn't be his way.

And if you ask him what he thinks about some vinifera-growing brethren to the west who readily hold Muscadine in contempt, he demurs as well.

What Fussell Sr. will say is this: "The whole climate has changed. The reason we have such a strong wine industry in North Carolina today is that wine has been accepted as a beverage of moderation and health."

In 2005, Duplin celebrated its one millionth case. About 220,000 cases will be produced from the 2006 harvest. There are plans to build on 40 acres off I-40 to create a destination spot that will include a hotel, restaurant, wellness center and farmer's market — all dubbed The Village of Duplin Winery.

Ask David Sr., now in retirement, what lies ahead for him, and he lights up about scientific research and commercial efforts to create useful purees from fruit, be it blueberry or strawberry or Muscadine.

"We can make jams and jellies and meat fillers out of Muscadine," he says. "We're throwing away probably the healthiest part of the grape (skins, pulp, seeds). It's really a sin."

Get David Sr., 64, talking about that and it conjures that scene from *Forrest Gump*, the one about the multi-faceted uses of shrimp.

"... Muscadine muffins. Muscadine candy. Granola from Muscadine. Muscadine breakfast cereal. You can make ice cream out of Muscadines..."



Ed Williams, Brand Marketing Manager for the *News & Record* in Greensboro, has written about the wine industry since 1990. His column "Uncorked" appears monthly in the *News & Record*. Williams' reporting, writing and editing have received state and national awards over the last 20 years.

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Don't look 'sideways' at our Merlots

By Ed Williams

So insanely popular had Merlot become by turn of the 21st century that even Hollywood, in the cult wine flick *Sideways*, had to snipe.

And what a big fat target Merlot makes:

- It's the top-selling red wine in the U.S. Yes, even ahead of Cabernet Sauvignon.

- It holds the second largest market share among wine varietals in the U.S. (Chardonnay reigns supreme.)

- It's the third most planted red grape in France. (Cab isn't even in the Big Three).

- French Bordeaux wouldn't be Bordeaux without Merlot, Cab's prowess notwithstanding.

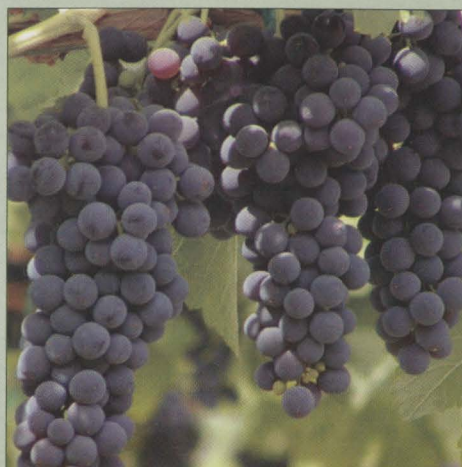
- And because everyone knows this, massive plantings of Merlot have spread into Italy, Spain, Chile, Argentina, New Zealand, the U.S. — and anywhere else a red grape grows.

Oh sure, Merlot has struggled of late. Market share has slipped. It's fashionably chic in some consumer circles to mimic the *Sideways* "I'm-so-out-of-here-if-they-serve-Merlot" sentiment. And a media that once asked, "What's up with Merlot?" now wonders: what's down with that?

Is Merlot now just a cliché for red wine? Has familiarity bred contempt?

"I think Merlot has reached its peak, and that percentage-wise it won't gain any ground compared to other varietals," says Bernard DeLille, winemaker at Biltmore Estate.

George Little, co-owner of Round Peak Vineyards, agrees. "Demand appears to be dropping. The name is a downside right now.



It does not have staying power in our opinion."

But those opinions are not universally shared. The sheer acreage planted to Merlot on both the U.S. West Coast and, increasingly, the East Coast ensures that Merlot will dominate the red wine scene for decades to come. Some of North Carolina's largest wineries — Childress, Shelton, RayLen and Westbend — are heavily invested in a grape that they believe could prove provident in the state's emerging wine industry. Merlot, they say, is strongly positioned to buck short-term swings in consumer behavior — and is here to stay.

In the U.S., Merlot's meteoric rise built for 20 years, but the grape's roots were sunk as far back as the 1st century and began a global stampede in Europe in the 1800s. This grape just can't help pumping out silky, fleshy, cher-

ry, plum, violet, rose petal and lavender.

Merlot — never the austere, angular, tannic monster Cabernet can be in youth — is instant gratification.

"Merlot is meant to be smooooooth," says Westbend Vineyards winemaker Mark Terry. "The softer the tannins, the greater the sales."

Plus it's remarkably flexible across menu and easy to pronounce — Mare-low.

Plus, with so much new acreage planted worldwide, the average pocketbook finds it affordable.

Plus, red wine is still basking in medical reports linking it to health benefits.

Plus, plus, plus. It added up to an *On The Vine* tasting panel assessing North Carolina's Merlot, most carrying some percentage of additional red wine grapes and most hailing from 2004 and 2005 harvests.

Across much of the world, Merlot's early-ripening genetics provide winemakers an insurance policy. That trait, says Shelton Vineyards president George Denka, "is very helpful in getting the grapes fully ripened and picked prior to any late-season storms. It is typically our most consistent red wine variety."

On the flip side, Merlot also buds early, so it can be susceptible to early spring frosts. Still, says Childress Vineyards winemaker



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Mark Friszolowski, "we can live with those statistics. Light frosts should not hurt us once the vines get more mature and higher on the trellis. As a vine gets older, its bud break is later because the roots are deeper and the soil profile is colder."

Max Lloyd, owner of Grove Winery just east of Greensboro, says he'll risk spring frost to beat harvest season rains. "Merlot harvests early, before much of the hurricane season. This can be a huge advantage in our area. I think that in our eastern location, that benefit outweighs any early bud break concerns."

Steve Shepard, winemaker for RayLen Vineyards near Mocksville, notes the biggest downside to Merlot: "There are a lot of Merlots in the marketplace and people tend to compare your wine to what they are used to."

In the *On The Vine* tasting, the wines were bagged and tasted blind. A consensus vote put the 17 wines into three tiers based on flavor, finish, color and aroma.

The top tier was (in no order):

- 2004 Childress Vineyards Reserve Merlot;
- 2004 RayLen Vineyards
- 2003 Childress Vineyards Signature Series

These three wines displayed the widest range of flavors and aromas against hefty texture, brooding color and a finish that just... wouldn't... seem... to finish.

The 2004 Childress Reserve has 16 percent Cabernet Sauvignon and 8 percent Cabernet Franc blended in. At nearly 15 percent alcohol, this Merlot boasts black cherry, black berry, blueberry, plum and vanilla.

The 2004 RayLen shows raspberry, blackberry, cherry and a hint of coffee. The blend includes 16 percent Syrah and 8 percent Petit Verdot.

The 2003 Childress Signature Merlot came from purchased grapes from a difficult rainy season. It was among the submitted wines that contained the most Merlot (92 percent with an additional 8 percent Cabernet Sauvignon).

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The second tier to emerge was (in no order):

- 2004 Round Peak Vineyards
- 2004 Childress Vineyards
- NV Biltmore Estate Winery
- 2005 Westbend Vineyards
- 2004 Shelton Vineyards
- 2005 Grassy Creek Vineyard

The 2004 regular bottling from Childress also suggested a pronounced sensation of alcohol and the most body. In addition to cherry, plum and blackberry, panelists picked up strawberry, raspberry and a peppery spice.

In marked contrast, the 2005 Westbend displayed light colors, gobs of fruit — cherry and strawberry — and a lingering finish that belied its color and initial impression.

The 2005 Grassy Creek showed a noticeably dark color and medium body and finish that echoed plum, currant and blackberry.

Round Peak's 2004 offering suggested dried cherry, raspberry, blueberry and a hint of green vegetable.

The third tier to emerge was a series of pleasant everyday reds, nearly all light-bodied and skewing toward cherry-raspberry flavors. Silver Coast, Stonefield Cellars and 38 Vines utilized grapes from Georgia. They were (in no order):

- 2004 Chateau Morrisette
- 2004 Stonefield Cellars
- 2002 Silver Coast Winery
- 2002 Silver Coast Winery Reserve
- 2005 Grove Winery
- 2004 Weathervane Winery
- 2003 38 Vines (Old North State Winery)

• 2005 RayLen Vineyards

While market share suggests a softening in Merlot demand, many North Carolina wineries see bright days ahead for the grape, including RayLen's Shepard: "I think Merlot has held on, considering other choices in the market."

Terry at Westbend is more emphatic: "Merlot is here to stay. Maybe someday, the American way will be baseball, apple pie and Merlot."

Denka at Shelton believes Merlot, along with Cabernet Franc, may emerge as "the signature red varieties of the Yadkin Valley. We have not noticed any slippage in the popularity of Merlot. The pedigree of Merlot is every bit as impressive as Cabernet Sauvignon. But it is unfortunate that some wine writers seem to snub Merlot in favor of the more trendy, big, bold and beefy Cabernets that are not particularly good food wines."

Childress' Friszolowski sees "a healthy comeback once everything rebounds from *Sideways* and all the junk Pinot Noir on the market."

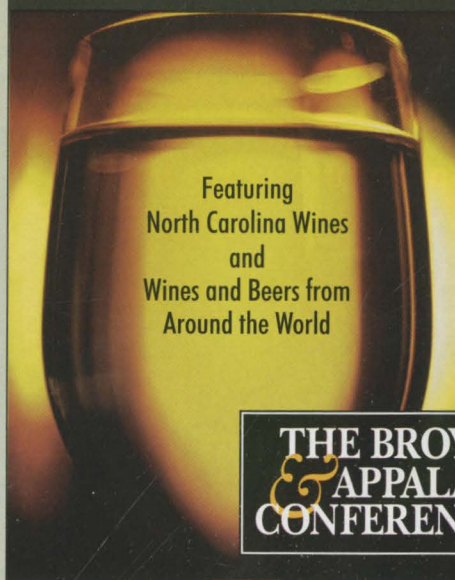
Adds Jim Douthit of Grassy Creek Vineyards: "Don't pay any attention to Hollywood. Actors say what they are paid to say. Merlot is just a good everyday, go-with-everything, smooth-tasting table wine."



Ed Williams, Brand Marketing Manager for the *News & Record* in Greensboro, has written about the wine industry since 1990. His column "Uncorked" appears monthly in the *News & Record*. Williams' reporting, writing and editing have received state and national awards over the last 20 years.

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Latest harvest dodged rains; expectations good

By Brook R. Corwin

It may have caused a lot of sleepless nights and more than a few held breaths, but the 2006 harvest season left most vineyard managers with a big sigh of relief when it was all said and done.

The season was marked by record rainfall and cool temperatures at the start, which pushed back harvest time for most vineyards to the brink. Erratic weather and localized storms during the early fall made the process even more nerve-wracking.

"The buds broke, but they wouldn't grow. They were sluggish and it set things back," says Frank Hobson, co-owner of RagApple Lassie Vineyards in Yadkin County. "It's like a poker game. You've got to play whatever hand nature deals you."

When compared to the smooth and sunny sailing of a mostly dry 2005, the 2006 season certainly had a flair for the dramatic. But the longer season did give growers more options in the vineyard, just as they've begun to master techniques that can unlock more flavor from North Carolina fruit.

"Last year was a good year. This year wasn't quite as good, but it's still a lot better than 2003," says Jim Douthit, winemaker and grower for Grassy Creek Winery near Elkin. "The cool temperatures slow down the ripening process, so you have more time to pick. It causes some bad things but it can also help."

Douthit manages two vineyards for Grassy Creek, one in Surry County and another about 50 miles south in Iredell. This year one



Baker Patton of Winston-Salem helps with the harvest at Grassy Creek Vineyard.

would get drenched while the other would stay dry during the same week, an unpredictable pattern growers across the Yadkin Valley reported seeing.

"The rain came in spurts," says George Little, co-owner of Round Peak Vineyards near Mount Airy. "We'd harvest [a day early] to try and beat the rain."

Harvest weather was even more inconsistent to the west, where mountain ranges frequently broke up storm fronts.

Jerry Douglas, vice president of sales and

marketing for the Biltmore Co. in Asheville, said he purchased grapes from surrounding counties such as Polk and Madison that dodged the worst of the weather.

"Sometimes the storm patterns got pushed

off the mountains away from those growers and we would catch them," he said. "It's all part of the fun."

Biltmore caught the worst of the 2005 season since April frost killed much of the crop. In 2006, it wasn't a spring frost growers across the state were worried about. Frost in late October and early November posed the bigger threat. Since nothing too major hit during those months, most crops turned out all right in the end.

"There were a lot of nervous people worrying about frost, probably waking up in the middle of the night for a couple of weeks there," says Margo Knight, executive director of the North Carolina Wine & Grape Council. "But the general consensus is that it's going to be a great vintage."

The high quality is attributed to both skill and luck.

On the lucky side, the heaviest rains came in June, not September or October. Both the Piedmont Triad and the Raleigh-Durham airports reported a record rainfall of more than 10 inches for June. But that still gave the grapes time to recover, even if it set back the growing season.

Knight said flooding in the east hurt the tobacco crop, but with most vineyards on slightly higher elevation, there were no major crop losses that she heard about from grape growers. Many eastern growers specialize in the native Muscadine, which is a lot hardier and more resistant when compared to European varieties.

"All the reports I'm getting anecdotally are that [2006] is on par with last year. The rating is in the eight-out-of-10 range," Knight said.



Sometimes leaving fruit on the ground works to improve overall harvest quality.

"It's going to vary for individual growers, but in general it looks to be great."

August and September were not without their share of rain, as both airports recorded above-average precipitation during those months. That's where the skill of growers came into play. Many are still relatively new to the industry, and this year some began to perfect creative pest control methods that made it possible to bump harvest dates around the forecast.

"It was a scary, risk-taking process," Van Coe, owner of Stony Knoll Vineyards in Surry County, said of keeping fruit out longer. "We were spraying and using all sorts of methods to keep the fruit out there as long as we could."

Each year, a number of new vineyards sprout up. There are now several hundred to provide fruit for roughly 70 wineries. The

abundance of growers has put a premium on quality over quantity. In 2006, many vineyards "dropped" large portions of their crop, a procedure that ensures what fruit remains gets more nutrients and sunlight and increases overall quality.

"We're selectively harvesting, looking for small clusters or damaged clusters and throwing them out," Douthit said. "I'm looking for quality. There's plenty of grapes out there if you want to buy them."

The final effect of 2006's topsy turvy growing season might vary depending upon the varietal. Grapes ripen at different times, with whites being plucked first and heavier bodied reds last.

No doubt a few of those varieties made growers nervous. But for all the uncertainty, almost every grower can point to a few that came out ideally.

"There was generally drier weather and distances between rains," said Sean McRitchie, a winemaker and consultant for several vineyards in the Yadkin Valley. "I look forward to the 2006 wine quality. All vintages vary and that is what makes wine interesting to explore."



Brook Corwin is a reporter for The Tribune, Elkin-Jonesville, N.C.



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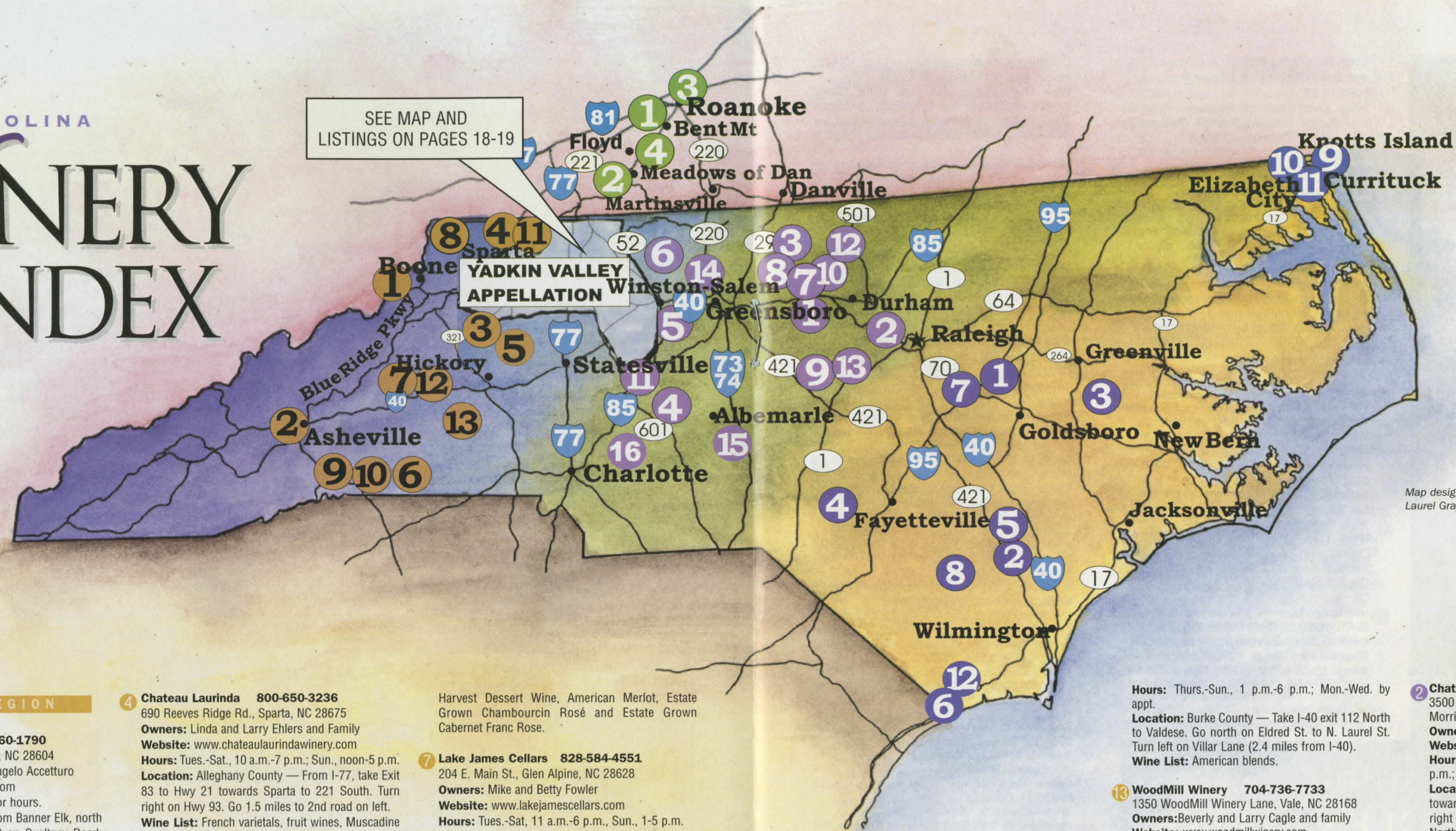
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WINERY INDEX

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Map designed by Kim Myers, Laurel Gray Vineyards

MOUNTAIN REGION

- 1 Banner Elk Winery 828-260-1790**
135 Gualtney Road, Banner Elk, NC 28604
Owners: Dr. Dick Wolfe and Angelo Accetturo
Website: www.blueberryvilla.com
Hours: Opening July 20. Call for hours.
Location: Avery County — from Banner Elk, north on N.C. 194 1.5 mi. Then left on Gualtney Road. Winery is 1/4 mi. on right.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Seyval Blanc, Blueberry, red and white blends.
- 2 Biltmore Estate Winery 800-543-2961**
One North Pack Square, Asheville, NC 28801
Owner: Bernard DeLille, VP/Winemaker
Website: www.biltmorewine.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun., noon-7 p.m.
Location: Buncombe County — On the grounds of Biltmore Estate in Asheville. Take I-40 Exit 50A and go north on Hwy 25 two blocks to Biltmore House entrance.
Wine List: French varietals, blends.
- 3 Cerminaro Vineyard 828-754-9306**
4399 Wilkesboro Boulevard, Boomer, NC 28606
Owners: Joe and Deborah Cerminaro
Hours: Sat., noon-6 p.m. Other days by appointment.
Location: Caldwell County — In Kings Creek on Hwy 18 between Lenoir and Wilkesboro
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sangiovese.

- 4 Chateau Laurinda 800-650-3236**
690 Reeves Ridge Rd., Sparta, NC 28675
Owners: Linda and Larry Ehlers and Family
Website: www.chateaulaurindawinery.com
Hours: Tues.-Sat., 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun., noon-5 p.m.
Location: Alleghany County — From I-77, take Exit 83 to Hwy 21 towards Sparta to 221 South. Turn right on Hwy 93. Go 1.5 miles to 2nd road on left.
Wine List: French varietals, fruit wines, Muscadine varieties
- 5 Ginger Creek Vineyards 828-312-4362**
858 John Cline Road, Taylorsville, NC 28681
Owners: Dwight and Sharon Austin
Hours: Thurs.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sun. by appt.
Location: Caldwell County — Take US 64 west from I-40. Left on Caldwell Pond Rd; in 1.5 miles, turn right on John Cline Rd. Turn left at end of pavement in 1 mi.
Wine list: Carlos, Scuppernong, Noble, Blackberry, Apple
- 6 Green Creek Winery 828-863-2182**
413 Gilbert Road, Columbus, NC 28722
Owner: Alvin Pack et al
Hours: Thurs.-Sun., 1-5 p.m., or by appointment
Website: www.greencreekwinery.com
Location: Polk County — Exit 167 off U.S.74, south on N.C. 9, 3 mi. to Landrum Rd. Then right 1 mi. to Gilbert Rd. Winery on left.
Wine List: American Chardonnay, American Chardonnay Un-Oaked, N.C. Estate Grown Chardonnay, N.C. Estate Grown Cabernet Franc, Late

- 7 Lake James Cellars 828-584-4551**
204 E. Main St., Glen Alpine, NC 28628
Owners: Mike and Betty Fowler
Website: www.lakejamescellars.com
Hours: Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Sun., 1-5 p.m.
Location: From I-40, take Exit 100 to downtown Glen Alpine.
Wine list: French varietals, Italian blends, fruit blends.
- 8 New River Winery 336-846-1498**
106 N. Jefferson Ave., West Jefferson, NC 28694
(in Bohemia Gallery)
Owner: New River Wineries, Inc.
Winemaker: Dan Strickland
Website: www.newriverwineries.com
Hours: Tues.-Sat., 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Ashe County — downtown West Jefferson.
Wine List: Bohemia Red, Bohemia White, Back Porch Blueberry.
- 9 Rockhouse Vineyards 828-863-2784**
1525 Turner Rd., Tryon, NC 28782
Owners: Lee Griffin and Marsha Cassidy
Website: www.rockhousevineyards.com
Hours: Thurs.-Sun., 1-5 p.m.
Location: Polk County — Take Hwy 74 to Hwy 9, Exit 167. Travel 2.2 miles south on Hwy 9 to Turner Rd. Turn left on Turner Rd.
Wine List: French varietals.

- 10 The Teensy Winery 828-287-7763**
3661 Painters Gap Rd., Union Mills, NC 28167
Owner: Bob Howard
Hours: By appointment only
Location: Rutherford County — Take I-40 Rutherfordton exit. Take Hwy 221 south to Thermal City. Turn west on SR 1321 then right on SR 1328 (Painters Gap Rd.).
Wine List: French varietals.
- 11 Thistle Meadow 800-233-1505**
102 Thistle Meadow, Laurel Springs, NC 28644
Owner/Winemaker: Thomas R. Burgess
Website: www.thistlemeadowwinery.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat., noon-4 p.m.
Location: Alleghany County — Off Blue Ridge Parkway, Milepost 246, then 3 miles on Elk Knob Road.
Wine List: French varietals, Italian blends, Fruit blends.
- 12 Waldensian Heritage Wines 828-879-3202**
4940 Villar Lane NE, Valdese, NC 28690
Owners: Joel Dalmas, Joe Jacumin, Freddy Leger, John Bourous, Tom Garrou

Hours: Thurs.-Sun., 1 p.m.-6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. by appt.
Location: Burke County — Take I-40 exit 112 North to Valdese. Go north on Eldred St. to N. Laurel St. Turn left on Villar Lane (2.4 miles from I-40).
Wine List: American blends.

- 13 WoodMill Winery 704-736-7733**
1350 WoodMill Winery Lane, Vale, NC 28168
Owners: Beverly and Larry Cagle and family
Website: www.woodmillwinery.com
Hours: Thurs., Fri, Sun., 1-6 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Lincoln County — I-85 Exit 17 north on U.S. 321. Exit 24 north on NC 27 to down town Lincolnton. Go north 8 mi., then right 2 mi. on Cat Square Rd; then left 1/2 mile on Beam Lumber Rd.; then right on John Beam Rd.; winery 1 mi. on right.
Wine List: Muscadine, blueberry, scuppernong.

PIEDMONT REGION

- 1 Benjamin Vineyards & Winery 336-376-1080**
6516 Whitney Road, Graham (Saxapahaw), NC 27253
Owners: Andy and Nancy Zeman
Website: www.benjaminvineyards.com
Hours: Thurs.-Sun., noon-5 p.m.
Location: Alamance County — Take Exit 154 off I-40/85 south 8.5 miles. Cross Hwy. 54 and continue 4 miles. Left on Whitney Road. Vineyard 1.2 miles on left.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Chardone, Sauvignon Blanc, Chambourcin, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Carlos, Magnolia, Scuppernong, Hunt and fruit-muscadine blends.

- 2 Chatham Hill Winery 800-808-6768**
3500 Gateway Centre Blvd. #200
Morrisville, NC 27560
Owners: Marek Wojciechowski and Jill Winkler
Website: www.chathamhillwine.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m.
Location: Wake County — Take I-40 Exit 285 toward Morrisville on Aviation Parkway. Take first right at Gateway Centre Boulevard. Right onto Northgate Ct. at 3500 sign.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Zinfandel, Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Chardonnay, Viognier, Sweet Carolina Red and White and fruit blends.
- 3 Creek Side Winery 336-584-4117**
3515 Stoney Creek Church Road, Elon, NC 27244
Owners: Angie and Fred Wallace
Website: www.creeksidewinery.com
Hours: Mon., Thurs.-Sat., noon-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.
Location: Alamance County — Take Exit 140 off I-40 and stay on University Drive to the end. Right on Burlington, Ave, left onto Shallowford Church Road, Left onto NC 87 for 6.6 mi., right on Stoney Creek Church Road, winery 1.3 mi. on left.
Wine list: Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay, Stoney Creek Red, Deep Creek Red, Shallow Creek Rosé, Creek Side Sunset, Port, Red Raspberry and Peach.
- 4 Dennis Vineyards 800-230-1743**
24043 Endy Rd., Albemarle, NC 28001
Owners: Pritchard and Sandon Dennis
Website: www.dennisvineyards.com

Hours: Mon-Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; seasonal Sunday hours, call ahead.
Location: Stanly County — From Albemarle, take NC 24-27 west approx. 5 miles; at caution light at Endy Road, turn right; winery 1/2 mile on left.
Wine List: Muscadine varietals in Dry, Semi-Dry and Sweet; Strawberry, Blueberry, Blackberry and Cherry fruit wines.

5 Garden Gate Vineyards 336-751-3794
 261 Scenic Drive, Mocksville, NC 27028
Owners: Bob and Sonya Whitaker
Website: www.gardengatevineyards.com
Hours: Wed.-Sat. 12-5 p.m.; Call for Sun. hours or by appt.
Location: Davie County — Exit 168 off I-40 to East US 64; right on Green Hill Rd.; left on County Home Rd.; right on Scenic Drive; vineyard on right
Wine List: Scuppernong, Raspberry, Scarlet Blush, Muscadine, Blackberry, Blueberry, Strawberry, JitterBug.

6 Germantown Vineyard & Winery 336-969-2075
 3530 Hwy 8 and 65, Germantown, NC 27019
Owners: Judy and David Simpson
Website: www.germantowngallery.com
Hours: Tues-Fri, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Call Sun. hours. Tastings only; no tours
Location: Stokes County — In Germantown. Tasting room in gallery on corner of Hwy. 8 and Friendship Rd. (8 miles north of W-S.)
Wine List: Niagara, Sweet Red, Blush, Seyval, Chardonnay, Chambourcin, Merlot, Vermillion.

7 Glen Marie Winery 336-578-3938
 1838 Johnson Road, Burlington, NC 27217
Owners: Glendale and Joyce Marie Dickey
Website: www.glenmariewinery.com
Hours: Thurs.-Sun., noon-6 p.m.
Location: Alamance County — From I-85, take Exit 150, proceeding north; right at fourth light to

Basen Road; then left on Mebane Rogers Road; go over the lake and right on Johnson Road; fifth house on left.

Wine List: Syrah, Sweet Marie, Dallas Red, Chambourcin, Summer's Promise, Golden Nugget, Scuppernong, Chardonnay, Muscadine, Carolina Springtime.

8 Grove Winery 336-584-4060
 7360 Brooks Bridge Rd, Gibsonville, NC 27249
Owner: Max Lloyd
Winemaker: Bob Moncksco
Website: www.grovetwinery.com
Hours: Fri.-Sat., noon-5 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m.
Location: Guilford County — From 29, take Brown Summit exit; go east 7.6 mi. on 150 and Osceola-Ossipee Rd; left on Brooks Bridge Rd. Winery .6 mi. on right.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chardonnay, Niagara, Eno River White, Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Norton.

9 Horizon Cellars 919-742-1404
 466 Vineyard Ridge, Siler City, NC
Owner: Guy Loeffler
Winemaker: Chris Pearmund
Website: www.horizoncellars.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., noon-6 p.m.
Location: Chatham County — From U.S. 421, take Exit 168 right 1 mile to Old 421. Left on Old 421 .5 mi. to Vineyard Ridge. Right .4 mi.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chambourcin, Viognier, Cabernet Franc, Syrah, Prestige Reserve, Late Harvest Vidal, Carolina Comfort.

10 Iron Gate Vineyards & Winery 919-304-9463
 2540 Lynch Store Road, Mebane, NC 27302
Owners: Gene and Debbie Stikeleather
Website: www.irongatevineyards.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.

Location: Alamance County — Exit 153 off I-40; approx. 3 mi. N. of Mebane on NC 119.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Chambourcin, Pack House Red, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Brightleaf White, Flue Fire Sweet White, Dixie Dawn.

11 Old Stone Vineyard & Winery 704-279-0930
 6245 Hwy. 52, Salisbury, NC 28146
Owner: Mark Brown
Website: www.osvwinery.com
Hours: Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m.
Location: Rowan County — Take Exit 76 off I-85 onto US 52 South. Winery is 5 miles on left (1 mi. south of town of Granite Quarry).
Wine List: White and Red Muscadine in dry to sweet styles, Carlos Riesling, Noble Cabernet and Peach.

12 Rock of Ages Winery & Vineyard 336-364-7625
 1890 Charlie Long Road, Hurdle Mills, NC 27541
Owners: Kevin and Kimberly Moore
Winemaker: Kevin Moore
Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 1-5 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.
Location: Person County — From Burlington, take N.C. 49 north. Inside Person County, turn right on Charlie Long Road. Winery is 1.9 mi. on right.
Wine List: Chardonnay (steel), Chardonnay (oaked), Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Merlot, Semi-Dry Muscadine, Sweet Muscadine.

13 SilkHope Winery 919-742-4601
 2601 Silk Hope Gum Springs Road, Pittsboro, NC 27312
Owner: Wally Butler
Hours: Sat.-Sun., noon-5 p.m.; weekdays by appt.
Website: www.silkhopewinery.com
Location: Chatham County — Off U.S. 64 Bypass at Exit 381, north on N.C. 87 1.8 miles to Silk Hope Gum Springs Road. Left 2.5 miles. Winery on left at intersection with Emerson Cook Road.
Wine List: Vidal Blanc, Sparkling White Viognier, Sparkling White Chambourcin, Grand Vista, Red Roots, Chambourcin.

14 Stonefield Cellars 336-644-9908
 8220 Hwy. 68 N., Stokesdale, NC 27357
Owners: Robert and Natalie Wurz
Winemaker: Robert Wurz
Hours: Thurs.-Sat., noon-6 p.m.; Sun, 1-6 p.m., or by appt.
Website: www.stonefieldcellars.com
Location: Guilford County — North off I-40 at Exit 210. Take NC 68 north 13 miles. Winery on right at intersection with NC 65 (entrance on NC 65).
Wine List: European varietals, French/American hybrids and blends.

15 Stony Mountain Vineyards 704-982-0922
 26370 Mountain Ridge Road, Albemarle, NC 28001
Owners: Ken, Marie and Devron Furr
Hours: Fri.-Sat., 12-6 p.m.; other days by appt.
Website: www.stonymountainvineyards.com
Location: Stanly County — Take Hwy 24-27 East from Albemarle. Turn left at Stone Mountain sign. Turn right on Mountain Ridge Rd.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot and American varietals.

16 Uwharrie Vineyards 704-982-9463
 28014 Austin Road, Albemarle, NC 28001
Owner: David Braswell
Hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., noon-5 p.m.
Website: www.uwharrievineyards.com
Location: Stanly County — Take Hwy 73 west from

Albemarle. Turn right on Austin Road. Winery is 1/2 mile.
Wine List: Merlot, Cabernet, Noble, White Syrah, Chardonnay, Muscat, Magnolia.

SANDHILL/COASTAL REGION

1 A Secret Garden Winery 919-734-0260
 1008 Airport Road, Pikeville, NC 27863
Owners: Gerald and Linda Hall
Hours: Thurs.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.
Website: www.ascretgardenwinery.com
Location: Wayne County — From U.S. 70, take N.C. 117 North to Exit 94 (Pikeville). Turn right. Straight for 2 mi., then right onto Airport Road. Winery 1.25 mi. on left.
Wine List: Carlos, Noble, blends.

2 Bannerman Vineyard 910-259-5474
 2624 Stag Park Rd., Burgaw, NC 28425
Owners: Scot and Colleen Bannerman
Website: www.bannermanvineyard.com
Hours: Wed.-Sat., noon-4 p.m., or by appt.
Location: Pender County — Take I-40 Exit #398. Turn West on NC Hwy 53. Go 1 mile and turn left on Stag Park Rd and go 2.5 miles.
Wine List: Sweet White Oak Blend, Semi-Sweet White Oak Blend, Sweet Bay Blush, Red Oak Sweet, Red Oak Semi-Sweet, Weeping Willow, Marilyn.

3 Bennett Vineyards 877-762-9463
 6832 Bennett Vineyards Rd., Edward, NC 27821
Owners: Buddy Harrell and Robert Thornton
Website: www.ncwines.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat., 2-5 pm. Please call ahead.
Location: Beaufort County — 35 miles south of Greenville, off Hwy 33. Follow signs.
Wine List: American blends.

4 Cypress Bend Vineyards 910-369-0411
 21904 Riverton Road, Wagram, NC 28396
Owners: Tina and Dan Smith
Website: www.cypressbendvineyards.com
Hours: Wed.-Fri., Sun., noon-6 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Scotland County — Off US 401 (10 mi. north of Laurinburg) in Wagram, right on Riverton Rd. Winery is 3 mi. on left.
Wine List: Muscadine and Carlos blends.

5 Duplin Winery 800-774-9634
 P.O. Box 756, Rose Hill, NC 28458
Owners: David Fussell and family
Website: www.duplinwinery.com
Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Fri., 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Duplin County — Take I-40 exit 380. Right on Hwy 117.
Wine List: Muscadine blends.

6 Grapefull Sisters Vineyard 910-653-2944
 4903 Ramsey Ford Road, Tabor City, NC 28463
Owners: Sheila Suggs Little and Amy Suggs
Website: www.grapefullsistersvineyard.com
Hours: Wed-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Columbus County — From NC 17, take NC 904 west about 15 mi. Left on Dulah Rd. in Pineway. Vineyard 1.2 mi. on left.
Wine List: Muscadine and Carlos blends.

7 Hinnant Family Vineyard 919-965-3350
 826 Pine Level Micro Rd., Pine Level, NC 27568
Owners: Willard and Bob Hinnant
Website: www.hinnantvineyards.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun. 12:30 p.m.-5 p.m.
Location: Johnston County — From Raleigh take I-40 east to US 70 East. Go 30 mi., then left at Peedin Ave. Vineyard 2 mi. on right.
Wine List: Muscadine varieties, Norton and fruit wines.

8 Lu Mil Vineyard 910-866-5819
 438 Suggs-Taylor Road, Dublin, NC 28332
Owner: Lu Mil Vineyard, Inc.
Website: www.lumilvineyard.com

Hours: Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 1-6 p.m.
Location: Bladen County — South at I-95 Exit 46 on NC 87 25 mi. to Dublin. Left on 4th St. for 1/2 mi., then right on Suggs-Taylor Rd. Vineyard on right.
Wine List: Bladen Blush, Cape Owen Red, Taylor Divine, Merry Christmas, Old Cumberland, Alcohol-free wines and ciders.

9 Martin Vineyards 252-429-3542
 P.O. Box 186, Knotts Island, NC 27950
Owners: David and Jeanie Martin
Website: www.martinvineyards.com
Hours: Daily, noon-5 p.m. (closed Wednesdays)
Location: Currituck County — From Rt. 168, take scenic free ferry (800-BY FERRY) across Currituck Sound to Knotts Island. Follow NC 615 north 2.7 miles to Martin Farm Lane.
Wine List: French varietals, Muscadine varieties, Fruit wines.

10 Moonrise Bay Vineyard 866-888-9463
 134 Moonrise Bay Landing, Knotts Island, NC 27950
Owners: Richard and Kate Morris
Website: www.moonrisebaywine.com
Hours: Daily, noon-5 p.m.
Location: Currituck County — From Virginia Beach, take Princess Anne Rd. south to Knotts Island. Bear left at the Knotts Island Market and proceed one mile to vineyard on left. Or take the Ferry from Currituck, NC.
Wine List: French varietals, French hybrids, Fruit wines, American varietals

11 Sanctuary Vineyards 800-637-2446
 6957 Carotake Highway, Jarvisburg, NC 27947
Owners: Tom and Jerry Wright
Website: www.sanctuaryvineyards.com
Hours: Sat.-Sun., tasting room open.
Location: Currituck County — Off Hwy. 158 in Jarvisburg.
Wine List: Coastal Collage, The Lightkeeper, Moonrise Bay wines.

12 Silver Coast Winery 910-287-2800
 6680 Barbeque Rd., Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469
Owners: John and Maryann Azzato
Website: www.silvercoastwinery.com
Hours: Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., noon-5 p.m.
Location: Brunswick County — From Hwy. 17 (7 mi. north of S.C. border) take Hwy. 904 west. After 1.5 miles, take right on Russtown Rd. After 1.5 miles, take 4th right on Barbeque Rd.
Wine List: French Varietals, French Hybrids, Blends.

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

1 AmRhein Wine Cellars 540-929-4632
 9243 Patterson Drive, Bent Mountain, VA 24059
Website: www.amrheinwinecellars.com
Hours: Fri.-Sun., noon-5 p.m. or by appointment
Wine List: French Varietals, Blends

2 Chateau Morrisette 540-593-2865
 Floyd, VA 24091 (Milepost 171.5 on BR Parkway)
Owners: Morrisette family.
Website: www.thedogs.com
Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; (call for restaurant hours)
Wine List: European and proprietary blends. The Black Dog, Our Dog Blue, Angel Chardonnay.

3 Valhalla Vineyards 540-725-9463
 6500 Mt. Chestnut Road, Roanoke, VA 24018
Website: www.valhallawines.com
Hours: Closed, Jan.-March. Reopening March 31.
Wine List: Fine French and Italian Varietals.

4 Villa Appalaccia Winery 540-593-3100
 752 Rock Castle Gorge, Floyd, VA 24091
Website: www.villaappalaccia.com
Hours: Thurs.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 12-4 p.m.
Wine List: Italian Varietals and Blends.

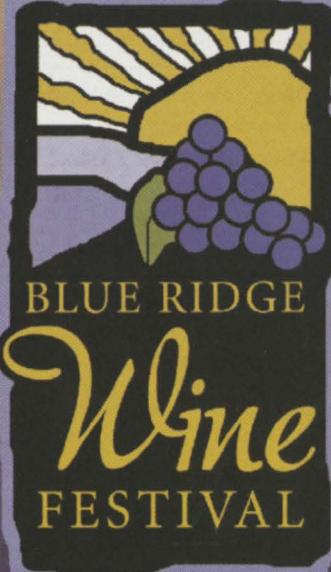
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OTV'S Q&A...

By Norm Oches,
Vineyard Specialist

What aid is available for budding vintners?

By Norm Oches

If you have any questions about the North Carolina wine industry, or about winemaking, grape growing or wine marketing in general, email them to the attention of Norm Oches at onthevine@yadkinvalley.com.

QUESTION: My wife and I have some land and want to put in a vineyard, and maybe later build a winery. What resources are out there to help us get started?

— B.E., Whiteville, N.C.

Background: The challenge is that the North Carolina wine industry is relatively new and doesn't have much of a track record yet. There is a lot of material available online and in print about putting in vineyards and building wineries, but very little of it is specifically targeted toward growing grapes and making wine in North Carolina. We are just now working out things in our hot, humid climate and clay soils that people will start reading about five years from now. Today, the only way to learn about the ins-and-outs of vineyard management in North Carolina is to actually do it (or talk to people who have done it).

Current Status: A good start is to take some courses at Surry Community College. Their viticulture and enology program is a good place to meet people in the industry and to actually get some hands-on experience before putting your own plants in the ground.

A good, but somewhat dated, practical guide to growing grapes in the Southeast is the Mid-Atlantic Winegrape Grower's Guide. Published in 1995, some of its costing data is way out of date, but it still gives readers a general idea of what they need to think about before putting in a vineyard. For a free copy of the 1995 Guide, go to www.ncwine.org (the NC Wine & Grape Council site) and click on "Grape Growing" to download a copy. Next, go to the N.C. Winegrower's Association website at www.ncwinegrowers.com and click on "Articles" to find other publications written for people who are thinking about putting in vineyards.

The Future: A new edition of the Mid-Atlantic Winegrape Grower's Guide is in the works and should be out next year. New viticulture and enology programs are starting up at App State and NC State to service their local areas. And last but not least, the North Carolina Winegrower's Association holds its annual meeting in February (Feb. 2, 3 and 4 in 2007), and it's a good place to meet people and attend a range of seminars on grape-growing, wine-making and wine marketing. Good luck!

QUESTION: Will N.C. wineries be concentrating more on whites or reds in the future?

— S.B., Mooresville, N.C.

Background: The answer hangs primarily on two variables: what grape varieties grow best in North Carolina and what consumers want to buy. It also depends to some degree on the maturity of the wine market in the region. Each wine area has to go through a period of trial and error to find the best grapes. Think Malbec in Argentina and Sauvignon Blanc in New Zealand. North Carolina grape growers are still going through that trial phase as far as varieties, clones and rootstocks are concerned. Because most of the state's vines are less than six years old, a lot of research has yet to be done.

Current Status: Here in North Carolina, many wineries feel it necessary to offer visitors at least one dry red, one dry white, and usually a sweeter red and a sweeter white. This lineup dictates somewhat the wines the wineries need to be producing today, your basic Cab Sav, Merlot and Chardonnay lineup. As production levels, and sales, increase, wineries can begin to be more creative and branch out into varieties that better reflect the distinct character of their vineyards and their own winemaking style. A case in point is Reisling at Shelton Vineyards. Given our state's high temperatures around harvest time, it is very difficult for the thin-skinned Riesling to ripen to maturity before being consumed by bunch rot. Yet, there is a particular site on Shelton's property, with slopes that are somewhat sheltered from the direct rays of the sun, which produces a

Riesling grape that has become the basis of one of Shelton Vineyard's best-selling wines.

The Future: "As far as production is concerned," says Stephen Rigby, winemaker at Raffaldini Vineyards, "it's easier to produce whites in North Carolina today than it is to produce reds. White grapes are just easier to work with. There are going to be some great reds out there in the future, but the vines need to be a little older and the techniques used to extract the essence of the red grape in our somewhat challenging climate need to be further developed." George Denka, president of Shelton Vineyards, mirrors Rigby's comments. "While both white and red grapes can be grown here successfully," says Denka, "whites are easier to ripen fully. Reds require more hang time to produce the bold flavors and complex body we are used to experiencing in wines from the West Coast, something North Carolina wineries and vineyards are working hard to perfect." Both Rigby and Denka feel we are making some real progress on the red front. Cab Franc shows a lot of promise, as does Merlot and some of the French hybrids like Chambourcin. And as vineyards like Raffaldini continue to add grape varieties not commonly grown in North Carolina today, we will see an even broader range of red wine offerings in the future.



Norm Oches designs and builds vineyards in North Carolina.



THE GRAPEVINE

Raffaldini breaks ground for new tasting room

Grapes won't be the only things growing at Raffaldini Vineyards this spring.

The Italian-themed vineyard, located in the Swan Creek region on the border of Wilkes and Yadkin counties, will be constructing a two-story villa with two tasting rooms overlooking the Yadkin Valley.

Raffaldini broke ground for the 5,800 square-foot building on Dec. 5. By March, the foundation should be poured and the villa will be built in time for a scheduled opening in May.

Its exterior design, utilizing terra cotta and stucco, will reflect the Italian heritage of its grapes and the Raffaldini family that owns the estate. The interior will include a tasting room on each floor, a hall for special events and a kitchen that can be used by caterers. An outdoor patio walkway will allow visitors to enjoy food and wine while taking in a 270° view.

Located on two acres, the villa will be placed between Raffaldini's vineyards and its rose gardens. The current tasting room, which has less than a third the capacity of the villa's downstairs alone, will remain on site to rent out for special events.



Westbend planning gala

Westbend Vineyards in Lewisville is commemorating the 35th anniversary of the planting of their

first vineyard in a big way. Yadkin Valley's pioneer vineyard has started renovations on a "new" facility, located across the street from the Williams Road tasting room and winery.

The Joel Benjamin Hauser House which appears prominently on Westbend's labels, has been Westbend's logo from the beginning. This beautiful old house was built in 1846 by Joel Benjamin Hauser for his family of nine children.

Jack and Lillian Kroustalis purchased the property in 1985 from Weldon and Esther Kelly who reside in Winston-Salem. Esther Kelly grew up in the Hauser house and has provided many fond memories and stories about her childhood home to Lillian. The first phase of the renovations began in the early 1990s with a new foundation under the solid, sturdy house that boasts huge split timbers. Next came the surrounding vineyards of Seyval Blanc to the north and Chambourcin in the fields south of the house. The vineyard workers lived in a wing on the back of the house, which was built by a previous owner.

The renovated and restored home will become Westbend's featured attraction and will accommodate weddings, private affairs, receptions, corporate events and winemaker's dinners. Completion is anticipated next summer.

On March 14, Westbend Vineyards will celebrate its 35th anniversary with an elegant benefit

dinner in the winery. Funds raised at the dinner and silent auction will benefit the Jack Kroustalis Scholarship Fund at Surry Community College.

Westbend's Annual Valentine's Day event will mark the release of a special port, Jack's Legacy, which will only be available in limited production, at Westbend Vineyards.



Horizon Cellars still battling

Horizon Cellars is still "swinging away" in its zoning battle with a rock quarry and the Town of Siler City.

The vineyard and winery has filed legal challenges to the town's decision last July to rezone adjacent property to allow ISP Minerals Inc. of Maryland to open up a rock quarry next door.

Guy Loeffler, owner of Horizon Cellars, has already been successful in delaying the quarry's groundbreaking, originally planned for September. A hearing on the issue is scheduled in January.

In a related matter, Loeffler reports that the public access to the vineyard and winery across a railroad right-of-way remains open.

Continued on Next Page

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Grapevine

Continued from Page 15

Childress pops sparkling wine

Childress Vineyards has released its first sparkling wine, Victory Cuvée, a non-vintage Blanc de Blancs Brut made in the traditional Méthode Champenoise. Childress joins Biltmore Estate as the only North Carolina wineries offering a sparkling wine.

Other new releases from Childress include a Meritage Red Table Wine with a label resembling the hood of the No. 21 car driven by Kevin Harvick in winning NASCAR's Busch Series Championship; Christmas Cardinal, a 2005 Chardonnay featuring a label from artist Bob Timberlake; and Snow Cap, a sweet white in a demi-bottle.



WHISPERS

A application for a new appellation, Haw River Valley, is about to be filed... Creek Side Winery has released "The Reverend's Creek Side Port," a full-bodied ruby port made from estate-grown Cabernet Franc, aged in Tennessee whiskey barrels... Sanctuary Vineyards will be releasing three new wines in the spring and is starting a discounted pre-order program... The Yadkin Valley has garnered more national attention with recent spots — featuring RagApple Lassie Vineyards, on ABC World News Tonight and the Weather Channel.



Benjamin Vineyards won three Bronze medals at the recent Wines of the South competition in Knoxville, Tenn. for its 2005 Blackberry Bramble, 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon and 2005 Merlot... Also at Wines of the South, Windy Gap Vineyards took Gold for its 2003 Reserve Cabernet Franc, Silver for 2004 Estate Chardonnay, and Bronze for 2003 Reserve Chambourcin and Blackberry Table Wine... Childress Vineyards' 2004 Wine-maker's Meritage from Hampton Estate garnered top honors at Knoxville, winning Best of Show Red, Concordance Gold and Gold. Its 2004 Barrel



Select Chardonnay took Double Gold, while 2004 Reserve Merlot, 2004 Reserve Cabernet Franc, 2004 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, 2005 Viognier and Serendipity white received Gold. Earning Silver were Classic Red, 2004 Merlot, Pinnacle, 2005 Pinot Gris and 2004 Sangiovese. Bronze winners were Classic Blush, 2004 Cabernet Franc, 2003 Syrah and Polaris... Biltmore Estate wines have won more than 75 awards this year at a variety of competitions, including Best of Class and Gold for its Méthode Champenoise Blanc de Noir at the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, and Best of Class and Gold for its Limited Release Merlot at the Wines of the World Competition in Los Angeles.

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PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

JANUARY

Jan. 13-14. Chilly vs. Chili at Horizon Cellars, Siler City, NC. Horizon wines paired with a complimentary bowl of chili to warm up during the winter.

Jan. 20. Murder Mystery Dinner at Iron Creek Vineyards and Winery, Mebane, NC. Titled "Death is a Cabernet Ol' Chum."

Jan. 20. Photography presentation at Round Peak Vineyards, Mount Airy, NC. Featuring the work of Robert Merritt.

Jan. 27. Barrel Room Dinner series at Horizon Cellars, Siler City NC. From 6 to 8 p.m. Gourmet dining in wine-aging barrel room. Cost of \$55 per person includes food and wine. Call 919-742-1404 to make a reservation.

Jan. 27. Amateur Wine Maker's Competition & Ultimate Wine Glass Competition and Toast Contest at Silver Coast Winery, Ocean Isle Beach, NC. From 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free event will showcase entries in both competitions. Those purchasing a glass can enter the toast contest, with prizes given to the most creative toast to the new year. For an entry form or artist prospectus, call 910-287-2800.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 3. "Romancing Broadway:" A Musical Revue at Château Morrisette, Floyd Va. An elegant dining experience featuring a three-course meal, wine and a musical revue of romantic favorites. Tickets are \$75 per person with limited seating. To make a reservation, call 540-593-2865.

Feb. 10. Wine dinner at Creek Side Winery, Elon, NC. Begins at 6 p.m. Featuring a six-course meal paired with Creek Side's wines. \$55 per person. Reservations required. Call 336-584-4117.

Feb. 10. Amateur Winemaker's Competition at Lu Mil Vineyard, Dublin, NC. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call 910-866-5819 for more information.

Feb. 10-11. Vermentino Valentine Weekend at Raffaldini Vineyards, Ronda, NC. From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Featuring the release of this year's Vermentino vintage along with complimentary Valentine treats.

Feb. 10-11. Wine and chocolate pairing at Silver Coast Winery, Ocean Isle Beach, NC. From 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Reservations are required. Call 910-287-2800.

Feb. 10-11. Hearts, Chocolate & Wine at Horizon Cellars, Siler City, NC.

Valentine's Day event paring world class chocolate with gold medal Horizon Cellar Wines. Extended wine tasting for \$10 per person.

Feb. 14. Wine, Roses and Romance at Iron Gate Vineyards and Winery, Mebane, NC. Event begins at 7 p.m.

Feb. 14. St. Valentine's Day Puppy Love at Château Morrisette, Floyd Va. Fixed menu of \$25 lunch, \$42 dinner includes complimentary flower. Reservations required.

Feb. 17. Gumbo Festival at RayLen Vineyards, Mocksville, NC. From 1 to 5 p.m. Featuring Preservation Hall style jazz by The Swamp Cats and gumbo with fixins' by Chef Alex from The Zevely House. Tickets are \$15 per person and include admission, food and a wine tasting with souvenir glass.

Feb. 17-18. Chilly vs. Chili at Horizon Cellars, Siler City, NC. Horizon wines paired with a complimentary bowl of chili to warm up during the winter.

Feb. 24. Barrel Room Dinner series at Horizon Cellars, Siler City NC. From 6 to 8 p.m. Gourmet dining in wine-aging barrel room. Cost of \$55 per person includes food and wine. Call 919-742-1404 to make a reservation.

MARCH

March 2. Reception and square dance at Round Peak Vineyards, Mount Airy, NC. Part of the Surry County Arts Council's Tommy Jarrell Festival weekend in Mount Airy.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Klondike Farm '05 Guernsey Red Table Wine

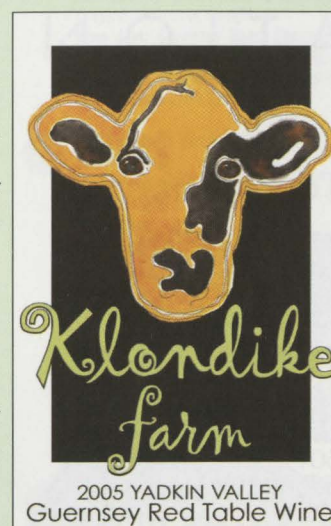
When Grassy Creek Vineyard & Winery in State Road embarked upon a line of sweeter wines, it decided to pay homage to its roots as a dairy farm.

Its 2005 Guernsey Red Table Wine is produced under the Klondike Farm label with a stylized cow designed by co-owner Cynthia Douthit.

"It was a collaborative effort," says Derrill Rice, another co-owner. "We started with the name. Decided to add a cow. Played around with several versions but could not get it right. A graphics designer on Cynthia's team at the textile company said, 'let me play with it; this label needs to have some fun.'"

The original Klondike Farm dairy barn, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is being converted into the winery.

Oh, and Guernsey Red is available in glass milk bottles.

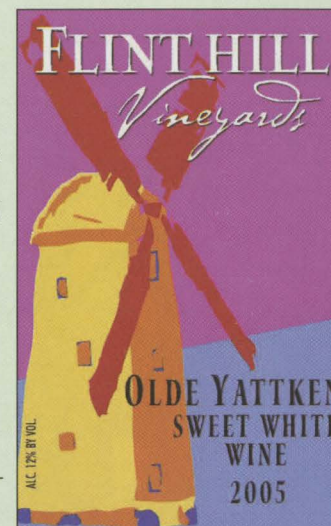


Flint Hill Vineyards '05 Olde Yattken Sweet White Wine

The windmill logo on all Flint Hill wine labels is a tribute to the Dutch parents of Brenda Doub, co-owner of the vineyard in eastern Yadkin County. "I chose to add this bit of unique history to our labels because of the bright colors and the recognition that it brings to our name — 'that wine with the windmill on it' — says Brenda.

The Olde Yattken name comes from husband Tim's family history. His great-grandfather, William H. Renigar was a distiller before prohibition and ran Riverside Distillery. Its liquor jugs have become collectors items. Renigar called one of his liquors, Old Yadkin, and the Doubs changed that to Olde Yattken, the Native American spelling for Yadkin County.

"Yattken" supposedly meant "land beside muddy waters." "Makes sense to me," says Brenda.



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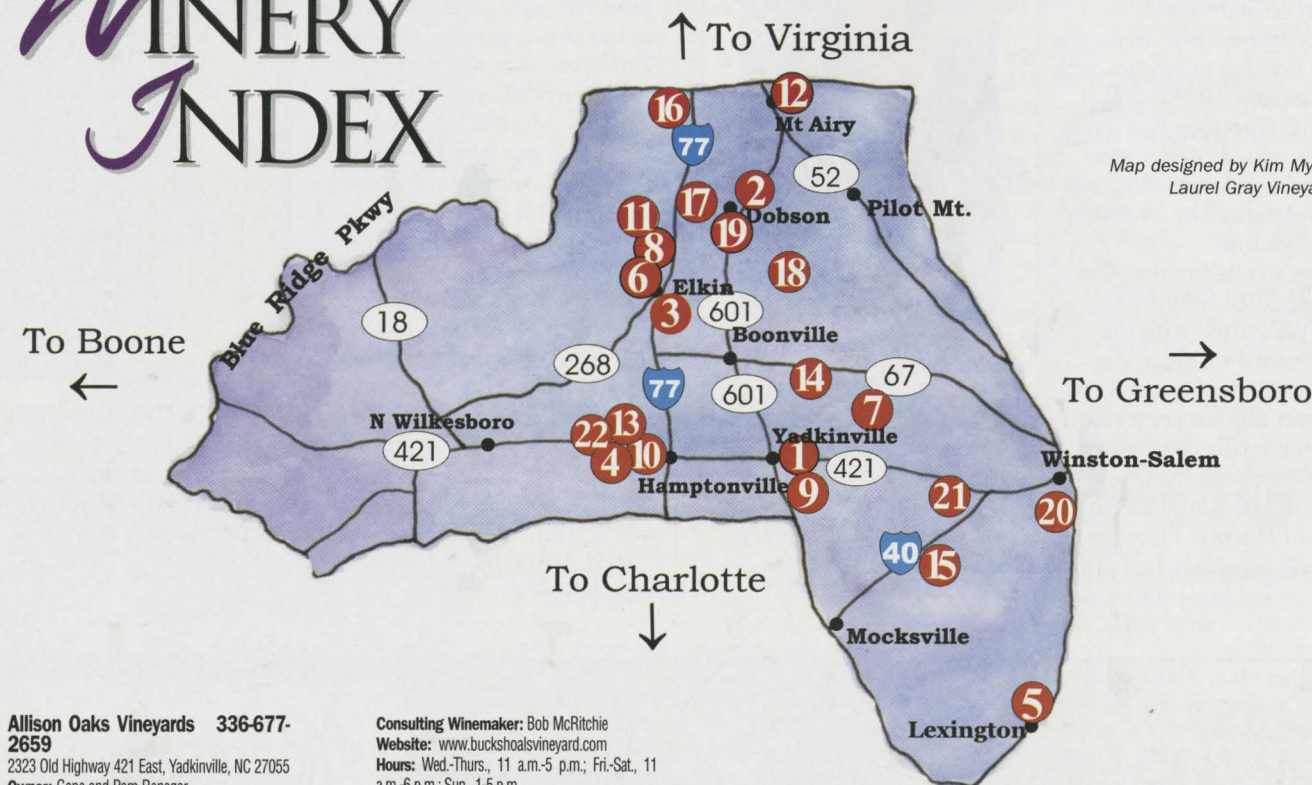
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Yadkin Valley

APPELLATION

WINERY INDEX



Map designed by Kim Myers,
Laurel Gray Vineyards

1 Allison Oaks Vineyards 336-677-2659

2323 Old Highway 421 East, Yadkinville, NC 27055
Owner: Gene and Pam Renegar
Winemaker: Mark Terry/Westbend
Website: www.allisonoaksvineyards.com
Hours: tasting room opening next spring.
Location: Yadkin County — 1 mile east of Yadkinville.
Wine List: Orchard White and Proprietor's Blend red.

2 Black Wolf Vineyards 336-374-2532

283 Vineyard Lane, Dobson, NC 27017
Owner: Dana Theis
Winemaker: Joyce Rigby
Website: www.blackwolfvineyards.com
Hours: M-Sat, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; Thurs-Sat, 5-10 p.m.; Sun, 12-8 p.m.
Location: Dobson in Surry County — Off U.S. 601 at Vineyard Lane.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Seyval Blanc, Chambourcin, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc, red and white blends.

3 Brushy Mountain Winery 336-835-1313

125 W. Main St., Elkin, NC 28621
Owners: Matthew and Ann Mayberry and family.
Winemaker: Sean McRitchie
Hours: Thurs-Fri, noon-6 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 1-5 p.m. or by appt.
Location: Surry County — Downtown Elkin, 1/2 block west of Bridge Street.
Wine List: French varietals, Blackberry, Raspberry.

4 Buck Shoals Vineyards 336-468-9274

6121 Vintner Way, Hamptonville, NC 27020
Owners: Terry and Joanne Crater
Winemaker: Dana Acker

Consulting Winemaker: Bob McRitchie
Website: www.buckshoalsvineyard.com
Hours: Wed-Thurs, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri-Sat, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Yadkin County — Exit 267 off U.S. 421 and follow the signs 2.6 miles on Windsor Road; vineyard and winery on right.
Wine List: Rocco Red, Bryan's Legacy, Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Vito's Pride, Shoals Creek Red, Viognier.

5 Childress Vineyards 336-236-9463

1000 Childress Vineyards Road, Lexington, NC 27295
Owners: Richard Childress and Greg Johns
Winemaker: Mark Friszolowski
Website: www.childressvineyards.com
Hours: Mon-Sat, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun, noon-6 p.m.
Location: Davidson County — off US 64 just west of intersection with US 52.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Viognier, Pinot Gris, Pinnacle, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Sangiovese, Merlot, Classic Red, White and Blush, Serendipity White and Red (muscadine), Port and Sweet Last Harvest Dessert wines, Reserve and Signature Reserves.

6 Elkin Creek Vineyard 336-526-5119

318 Elkin Creek Mill Road, Elkin NC 28621
Owner and Winemaker: Mark Greene
Website: www.elkinckreekvineyard.com
Hours (The Kitchen at Elkin Creek): Thurs-Sat, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Vineyard: Open daily, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Location: Wilkes County — West off I-77 at Exit 85.2 mi. to N. Bridge St.; right 3/4 mi.; left on Carter Mill Road for 1.5 mi.; left on Elkin Mill Road.
Wine list: Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Barbera, Rossa, Sangiovese, Dessert Wine.

7 Flint Hill Vineyards 336-699-4455

2133 Flint Hill Road, East Bend, NC 27018
Owners: Brenda and Tim Doub
Winemaker: Sean McRitchie
Website: www.flinthillvineyards.com
Hours: Fri, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat, noon-5 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Yadkin County — Off US 421 at Baltimore Road exit to Old 421. Turn right. Then left on Flint Hill Road. Vineyard 2 mi. on left.
Wine list: Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Chardonnay, Viognier, Olde Yattken, Crushed Velvet.

8 Grassy Creek Vineyard 336-835-4230

235 Chatham Cottage Circle, Elkin, NC 28621
Owners: Derrill and Lori Rice, Jim and Cynthia Douthitt
Winemaker: Jim Douthitt
Website: www.grassycreekvineyard.com
Hours: Thurs-Sat, 12-6 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.; or by appt.
Location: Surry/Wilkes Counties — West off I-77 at Exit 85 to US 21-Bypass North, left after first traffic light onto Klondike Road. Left into vineyard after about 1/2 mi.
Wine list: Chardonnay, Merlot, Guernsey Red (sweet), Red Barn Blend.

9 Hanover Park Vineyard 336-463-2875

1927 Courtney-Huntsville Rd., Yadkinville, NC

27055
Owners: Michael and Amy Helton
Winemaker: Michael Helton
Website: www.hanoverparkwines.com
Hours: Thurs-Sat, 12-6 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Yadkin County — Take US 421 to U.S. 601. Go south 4 miles. Left on Courtney-Huntsville Rd.
Wine list: Chardonnay, Viognier, Rosé, Chambourcin, Mourvedre, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Early Twilight, Michael's Blend.

10 Laurel Gray Vineyards 336-GOT WINE

5726 Old Hwy 421, Hamptonville, NC 27020
Owners: Kim and Benny Myers
Website: www.laurelgray.com
Hours: Wed, 1-6; Thurs-Fri, 10-6; Sat, 10-5; Sun, 1-5
Location: Yadkin County, Hwy 421 North to Exit 267, (1.5 miles north of I-77) Exit right onto Windsor Rd., go .1 mile to Old Hwy 421 turn right, Vineyard is .1 mile ahead on left.
Wine List: Barrel Fermented Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Scarlet Mountain (off-dry red), Syrah, 1773 sweet pink blend, Viognier.

11 McRitchie Wine Company 336-874-3003

315 Thurmond PO Road, Thurmond, NC 28683
Owners: Sean and Patricia McRitchie
Winemaker: Sean McRitchie
Website: www.mcritchiewine.com
Hours: By appt. Call ahead.
Location: Wilkes County — From I-77, Take Exit 83

or Exit 85 to US 21 north toward Sparta. After 8 miles, turn right on Thurmond PO Road (not Thurmond Road). Vineyard 1/8 mi. on left.
Wine List: French varietals and blends.

12 Old North State Winery 336-789-9463

308 North Main Street, Mount Airy, NC 27030
Owners: Mike Thomas, Ben Webb, Tom Webb
Website: www.oldnorthstatewinery.com
Hours: Mon-Sat, 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun, 1-6
Location: Surry County — From I-77, take I-74 East to US 601 into Mt. Airy. Follow signs for Visitor Center. Winery is on left past the Visitor Center on Main Street.
Wine List: Cabernet Franc Reserve, Chardonnay, Spring House White, Starlight White, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Prélude, Autumn Leaf Red, Autumn Leaf Rosé, Autumn Leaf Gold, Sandy Cross Muscadine, Afternoon Delight Red Muscadine, Restless Souls Red Blend.

13 Raffaldini Vineyards 336-835-9463

450 Groce Road, Ronda, NC 28670
Owners: The Raffaldini Family
Partner and General Manager: Stephen Lyons
Winemaker: Stephen Rigby
Website: www.raffaldini.com
Hours: Wed-Sat, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Wilkes County — Take I-40 West through Winston-Salem. Bear right on US Hwy. 421 North towards Yadkinville. Proceed on Hwy. 421 N for approximately 31 miles to Exit 267, Windsor Rd. Turn right on Windsor. Follow signs. Go left on Old Hwy. 421 for 1.4 miles. Go right on Swan Creek Rd. for 2.6 miles. Go left on Clingman Rd. for 1 mile. Go left on Groce Rd.
Wine List: Bella Misto, Rosso, Sangiovese, Rosato, Chiara, Vermentino, Montepulciano, Fiori.

14 RagApple Lassie Vineyards 866-RAG-APPLE

3724 RagApple Lassie Lane, Boonville, NC 27011
Owners: Frank and Lenna Hobson
Winemaker: Linda M. King
Website: www.ragapplelassie.com
Hours: daily, noon-6 p.m.
Location: Yadkin County — 3 miles east of Boonville off NC 67.
Wine List: Pinot Gris, Viognier, Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Red Zinfandel, Rockford red, Boonville Blanc.

15 RayLen Vineyards 336-998-3100

3577 US Hwy 158, Mocksville, NC 27028
Owners: Joe & Joyce Neely
Winemaker: Steve Shepard
Website: www.raylenvineyards.com
Hours: Mon-Sat, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
Location: Davie County — Via I-40 West, Exit 180, left on NC 801 S, right on 158 West; winery is 4 mi. on right.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Viognier, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Shiraz, Carolinious, Category 5 Cabernet Blend.

16 Round Peak Vineyards 336-352-5595

765 Round Peak Church Rd., Mount Airy, NC 27030
Owners: Susan & George Little, Janet & Lee Martin
Vineyard Manager: Josh McKeown
Winemaker: Sean McRitchie
Website: www.roundpeak.com
Hours: Mon, Thurs-Sat, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun, noon-5 p.m. or by appt.
Location: Surry County — I-77 to Exit 100. Left on NC89 toward Low Gap. Right on Round Peak Church Rd. for 1.4 mi. Vineyard is on left.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Merlot, Sangiovese, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Nebbiolo, Fiddler's Red and Sweet Niagara

17 Shelton Vineyards 336-366-4724

286 Cabernet Lane, Dobson, NC 27017
Owners: Charles M. Shelton and R. Edwin Shelton
Winemaker: Murphy Moore
Website: www.sheltonvineyards.com
Hours: Mon-Sat, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun, 1-5 p.m.
Location: Surry County — I-77 to Exit 93 Dobson. Turn right, then take first right onto Twin Oaks Rd. Go 2.5 miles to the Shelton Vineyards entrance on the right.
Wine List: Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Pinot Noir, Port, Madison Lee Red and White, Salem Fork Blush.

18 Stony Knoll Vineyards 336-374-5752

1143 Stony Knoll Road, Dobson, NC 27017
Owners: Van and Kathy Coe
Winemaker: Lynn Crouse
Website: stonyknollvineyards.com
Hours: Sat, noon-6 p.m.; Sun, 2-6 p.m.; or by appt.
Location: Surry County — From the south, go 7 miles north on Rockford Road from NC 67, then left on Stony Knoll Road; from the north, take U.S. 601 to Rockford Road, go south 7 miles and turn right on Stony Knoll Road.
Wine List: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Syrah.

19 Surry Community College Winery 336-386-3408

Surry County — I-77 to Exit 93 (Dobson); Turn right and follow Zephyr Road into Dobson. Turn right at courthouse and SCC is 1/2 mile on right. Tours by appointment.

20 Weathervane Winery 336-775-9717

484 Hartman Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27127
Owner: Sid Proctor
Hours: Call for appt.
Website: www.weathervanewinery.com
Location: Davidson County — From U.S. 52 south of Winston-Salem, west on Hickory Tree Rd. for .2 mi., then left .2 mi. on Hartman Rd.
Wine List: Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier, Pinot Grigio, Merlot, Stratosphere, Grand Vieux Chateau du Roi, Temperature Rising, Rooster Red, Rooster Black, Sweet Mountain Bliss, Strawberry Breeze, Tropical Wave.

21 Westbend Vineyards 336-945-5032

5394 Williams Rd., Lewisville, NC 27023
Owner: Lillian Kroustalis
Winemaker: Mark Terry
Website: www.westbendvineyards.com
Hours: Tues-Sat, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun, noon-5 p.m.
Location: Forsyth County — Go 15 miles west of Winston-Salem on Highway 421. Take Shallowford Rd., Exit 246, and turn left. Go 2 mi., turn left onto Williams Rd.
Wine List: Chardonnay, Riesling, Viognier, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Chambourcin, Yadkin Fumé, Vintner's Signature Carolina Series blends, Pioneer Series blends.

22 Windy Gap Vineyards 336-984-3926

656 Pardue Farm Rd., Ronda, NC 28670
Owners: Allen and Sandra Hinchey
Winemaker: Allen Hinchey
Website: www.windygapvine.com
Hours: Tues-Sat, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun, noon-5 p.m.; Mon, by appt.
Location: Wilkes County — From US 421, Exit 272 (Clingman Road). Go north on Clingman Rd. After approx. 1/2 mile, turn left onto Pardue Farm Rd. Go 1/4 mile and turn left again on Pardue Farm Rd. Go .3 mile and turn right onto paved driveway. Winery is at end of driveway.
Wine List: Viognier, Chardonnay, Chambourcin, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Tory Red, Three Dawg Nite, Frog Level Fling Blush, Sweet Fat Basset, Blueberry, Blackberry.

CHILDRESS VINEYARDS RELEASES FIRST SPARKLING WINE

LEXINGTON, NC — Childress Vineyards became one of only two wineries in North Carolina to offer a sparkling wine with its release of the new Victory Cuvée.

The timing of its release was to coincide with the busy holiday party season and also celebrate the victorious rebound of RCR Racing's (Richard Childress Racing) NASCAR teams this past season.

Two of RCR Racing's teams finished in the top 10 in the Nextel NASCAR Cup chase this year and another captured the Busch Series Championship this season.

The long-anticipated bubbly from Childress Vineyards is a Blanc de Blancs Brut NV (non-vintage) made in the traditional Méthode Champenoise. It is rich with Bartlett pear and Granny Smith apple flavors and has a creamy, elegant texture for pairing with food.

Adorned with embossed silver metal labels, Victory Cuvée sports a toast from NASCAR team owner Richard Childress "to all your winning moments in life!" It retails for \$24.99.

To honor driver Kevin Harvick, the winner of the Busch Series Championship, Childress Vineyards introduced a Meritage Red Table Wine with a label that resembles the hood of the 21 car that Harvick drove to victory in that series. The orange and blue label also has Harvick's stylized signature on the front and a list of all the races he won during the year on the back. It retails for \$29.

Childress teamed with artist Bob Timberlake to develop a special holiday Chardonnay.

Called "Christmas Cardinal," the 2005 vintage Chardonnay featured a label with a colorful red cardinal in a holly bush from Timberlake's original painting, entitled, "Christmas Cardinal."

The buttery, oak-kissed Chardonnay is loaded with tropical fruit. It retailed for \$19.99 and marked the second time Timberlake and Childress Vineyards have collaborated on special wines in 2006. "Fine Swine Wine" was the other popular offering from the two that was released at the Barbecue Festival of Lexington and sold out within hours.

As a new dessert offering, Childress created "Snow Cap," a sweet white wine in a petite 375 millimeter bottle. An avid outdoorsman, Richard Childress designed the label himself to resemble snow capped mountains he frequents on hunting trips. The bottle is capped with a hand-dipped, white waxed top.

All of the wines from Childress Vineyards were crafted by award-winning winemaker Mark Friszolowski. They can be purchased at the winery and online at www.childressvineyards.com. Fast Track Wine Club Members will receive a discount on purchases for 20%. Case discounts are available for both the wine club and the general public.



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