

MAKING LIFE MORE FUN

Day-tripping Through America's New Wine Country

(NAPS)—With Americans buying 457 million gallons of wine in just one year, according to the industry's Gomberg-Fredrikson Report, more people are heading to vineyards for a relaxing get-away. But much of that wine tasting takes place in parts of the country you might not expect.

For instance, one state that tends to be synonymous with beer, cheese and bratwurst now boasts a number of nationally recognized wineries. During the past decade, a spate of independent vintners have set up operations in Wisconsin, producing everything from regional fruit and honey-based wines to classic varietals and even original, only-in-Wisconsin blends. In fact, the Wisconsin Winery Association has 34 members from every corner of the state, and almost all offer tastings and tours. Here's a closer look:

• **AepfelTreow Winery**—Pronounced "Apple True," this winery features many unique Wisconsin grown and produced artisan hard ciders, including champagne-method sparkling cider and perry draft ciders.

• **Bayfield Winery**—Located high on the hills above Lake Superior, the winery specializes in traditional hard ciders, and country wines made from primarily locally grown fruits and honey.

• **Botham Vineyards**—Nestled in the heart of Wisconsin's Iowa County uplands and surrounded by more than 900 acres of nature conservancy, the winery's wines have won more than 250 medals in national and international competitions.



Day-trippers can find top wineries in what might be a surprising state.

• **Cedar Creek Winery**—Located in the historic Cedar Creek Settlement, what used to be a woolen mill in the 1860s is now a cellar for aging more than a dozen different kinds of wine.

• **Door Peninsula Winery**—More than 50 award-winning wines are bottled on-site in the old Carlsville Schoolhouse. Visitors can choose from blueberry merlot and other fruity red wines or bottles of pear wine and more.

• **Mason Creek Winery**—This winery has won 14 international awards, including a silver medal at the San Francisco International Wine Competition, one of the most prestigious wine competitions in the world.

• **Orchard Country Winery**—Established in 1985, the Lautenbach family winery features homegrown fruit wines carefully crafted in a 100-year-old restored dairy barn.

• **Simon Creek Vineyard & Winery**—From the newest, most modern winery and largest vineyard in Wisconsin, three Simon Creek wines recently received double gold medals in an international competition.

• **Spurgeon Vineyards & Winery**—The winery offers a fully guided tour that discusses grape growing and care, as well as the in-depth steps to wine production.

• **Stone's Throw Winery**—Nestled in an 80-year-old stone barn, this winery combines small lots of premium grapes from California's finest growing regions to make fine wines.

• **Three Lakes Winery**—The McCain family has been making Wisconsin's original cranberry wine since 1972. Located in a turn-of-the-century train depot, the retail shop is a quaint stop full of delightful antiques and surprises.

• **Von Stiehl Winery**—The Von Stiehl Winery, listed in the Federal Historic Registry and part of the Wisconsin Heritage Tourism Program, has won more than 100 medals for its German-style wines, including six golds and the "Gold Taste Award."

• **Wollersheim Winery**—Wisconsin's oldest winery, this national historic site boasts a new winery store, new barrel aging room and an outdoor balcony overlooking a courtyard and hillside vineyards.

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