

ON THE VINE

CAROLINA WINE COUNTRY NEWS

FALL 2024



- WINE FESTIVAL TIME
- FALL FUN IN THE YADKIN VALLEY
- NC WINE COMPETITION
- SCC WINE WINS BEST ROSÉ

SEE MORE INSIDE

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COZY SEASON *is here*



**KITSEY
BURNS
HARRISON**

It's time to break out those hoodies or favorite cardigans and get ready for the cozy fall season. This autumn there will be lots to enjoy here in the Yadkin Valley with several annual festivals, including one just for wine!

Yadkinville's annual Grape Festival is slated

for October and with its small-town feel it's a perfect chance to sample wines from multiple vineyards while also enjoying live music, food and more. Yadkinville's Harvest Fest is another great opportunity to spend time in the Valley this season.

In September, Elkin will host its annual Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival. There's nothing to get in the fall spirit like seeing the Great Pumpkin Weigh-Off, where growers compete for a chance at

the top prize of \$1,000.

The wineries of the Yadkin Valley have plenty to celebrate this season as there are numerous award winners you will read about in this edition.

As we revel in this time of harvest and abundance it's a great time to stock up on your favorite wines from the region to have ready for Turkey Day, tailgate parties and more!

Cheers!

Kitsey Burns Harrison
Editor



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ON THE VINE

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REGENIA GRANT

ON THE COVER:

The Surry Cellars Blue Ridge Rosé won a gold medal and the Best Rosé award at the 2024 N.C. Fine Wine Competition. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC

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TNNC232581-1



FALL: A 'GRAPE' TIME *for a Wine Festival!*

BY KITSEY BURNS HARRISON
kitsey.burns@yadkinripple.com

The 2024 Yadkin Valley Grape Festival is set for Saturday, Oct. 19 in downtown Yadkinville from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The festival grounds are located in the parking lot beside the Yadkin County Chamber of Commerce at 205 S. Jackson St. in Yadkinville.

Jamie Johnston with the Yadkin County Chamber of Commerce, which hosts the annual festival, said the event draws visitors from all over. Wineries from Yadkin, Surry Counties and beyond are featured at the festival as well as food and craft vendors.

Wineries at the 2024 festival will include Native Vines Winery, Carolina Heritage Vineyards, Surry Cellars, StarDust Cellars, Shadow Springs Vineyards, Windsor Run Cellars, Hanover Park Vineyards, Haze Gray Vineyards, Sanders Ridge Vineyards, Shelton Vineyards, Stony Knoll Vineyards, Weathervane Winery, and Williamson Mead & Brewing.

Perfectly blue skies greeted wine lovers at last year's event for the

19th annual Yadkin Valley Grape Festival. This year's 20th festival is expected to be even better.

Yadkin County Chamber Director Bobby Todd reflected on the first festival nearly 20 years ago. It was a very small event tagged on

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TNNC207120-1



White wines from Christian Paul Vineyards keeping cool for customers at the 19th annual Yadkin Valley Grape Festival. KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE

that year alongside the Harvest Festival. The event has continued to grow since then but remains a small festival, something that appeals to its many repeat customers.

“We’ve never set out to be a big festival. We set out to be a smaller festival to celebrate the wines of the Yadkin Valley and that’s what we continue to do,” Todd said.

Yadkinville Mayor Eddie Norman praised the work of the Chamber which organizes the event.

“It’s a great place to be,” Norman said at last year’s festival. “We’re excited about all the new visitors here in town and the economic impact we get from it.”

Todd said while the festival always has its share of returning visitors, they knew from calls they had received that there were many newcomers to the 2023 festival.

Breanna Wooten was one of the new attendees last year. Though she lives in Yadkinville she said it was her first time attending the event.

SEE WINE FESTIVAL PAGE 15

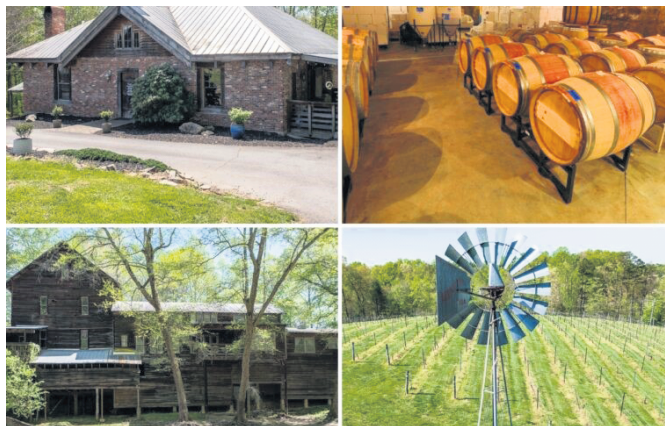


Seeing, sipping and swirling underway at the 19th annual Yadkin Valley Grape Festival. KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE



Shelton Vineyards is among the participating wineries at the 19th annual Yadkin Valley Grape Festival held in Yadkinville. KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE

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Blues DeVille performs at the 2023 Yadkin Valley Harvest Festival in Yadkinville. | FILE PHOTO

FALL FESTIVAL FUN *in the Yadkin Valley*

BY KITSEY BURNS HARRISON

kitsey.burns@yadkinripple.com

There will be plenty of fall festivities hosted locally this season. On Saturday, Sept. 28, the annual Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival will be held in historic downtown Elkin.

Festivities begin in the morning with the annual Great Pumpkin Weigh-Off. Portly pumpkins from growers all over the East Coast hit the scales to see which one takes home the \$1,000 first prize. Previous winners have weighed in at more than 1,500 pounds. It is considered one of the most famous pumpkin contests east of the Mississippi.

Attendees are encouraged to arrive shortly after the festival opens at 9 a.m. to view the massive pumpkins, watermelons and other gourds on display. The weigh-in process begins at



Fiddle Dee Dee performs during the 2023 Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival. | KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE



Competitors line up their giant pumpkins to compete in the weight-off at the 2023 Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival. | KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE

that time and continues through lunchtime. Large fork lifts are required to move the giant pumpkins and watermelons to the scales.

The weigh-off takes place in the parking lot of the Yadkin Valley Visitors Center, 257 Standard Street, Elkin, NC 28621.

Meanwhile, the day-long festival fills nearby Main Street with arts-and-crafts vendors, festival food, live music, a dunking booth and a kids zone.

Last year's event brought in an estimated 6,000 visitors to town, according to Yadkin Valley Chamber President David Steelman.

Yadkinville will celebrate autumn on Saturday, Sept. 21 with its annual Yadkin Valley Harvest Festival.

The Yadkin Valley Harvest Festival is an annual event where, for one day of the year, the entire downtown area of Yadkinville



Pumpkins for sale at the a farmers market stall at the 2023 Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival. | KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE

is transformed by celebration and fun festivities! Celebrate the changing of the seasons with the Yadkin Arts Council and all the citizens of Yadkin County.

Festivities include activities for every member of the family, live music, food vendors, agricultural displays, food vendors, and more. Live music performances will take place throughout the day at the Yadkin Cultural Arts Center Plaza.

The festival will be set up on Elm Street, Jackson Street, and the campus of the Yadkin Cultural Arts Center, including the Willingham Theater and Center Bistro beginning at 10 a.m. Free parking is available in the Elm Street lot (access off of Birch St.), Main Street, and in the surrounding areas.

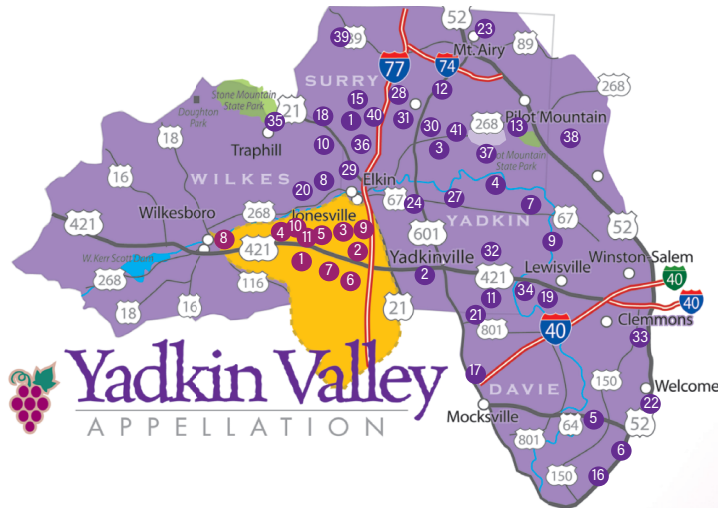
Make time to stop in for some fall fun at these great events happening here in Yadkin Valley wine country!



The streets of Yadkinville are full of folks enjoying the 2023 Yadkin Valley Harvest Festival hosted by the Yadkin Arts Council. | KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE



Local honey on sale at the Yadkin County Bee Association booth during the 2023 Yadkin Valley Harvest Festival. | KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE



1 Adagio Vineyards

2 Brandon Hills Vineyard

336-463-WINE
1927 Brandon Hills Road,
Yadkinville, NC 27055
Website: www.brandonhillsvineyard.com
Owners: Larry & Elizabeth Muller
Hours: Friday 1pm - 5pm,
Saturday 12pm - 6pm, Sunday 1pm - 5pm
(Closed January, Open Sat & Sun 1pm - 5pm in February)


3 Carolina Heritage Vineyard & Winery

4 Cellar 4201

5 Childress Vineyards

6 Curran Alexander Vineyards

7 Divine Llama Vineyards, LLC



336-699-2525
4126 Divine Llama Lane, East Bend, NC 27018
Owners: Michael and Patricia West,
Paul Baumbach and Leslie Messick
Winemaker: Dana Aker
Tasting Room Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday
12-6 year round
Website: www.divinellamavineyards.com
Location: From NC Hwy 67, turn onto Macedonia Road in East Bend. Vineyard is .6 mi on left.


8 Elkin Creek Vineyard



336-526-5119
318 Elkin Creek Mill Road, Elkin, NC 28621
Tasting Room Hrs: Thursday - Sunday 11am - 5pm. Wine Tasting & Light Foods Daily, Brick-Oven Pizzas Every Sunday. Available for Weddings & Special Events - Private Luxury Rental Cabins
Website: www.elkincreekvineyard.com

9 Flint Hill Vineyards & Century Kitchen

40 Golden Road Vineyards



336-466-7264
542 Golden Road, State Road, NC 28676
Website: www.grvwines.com
Owners: Crista and Chad Guebert
Hours: Friday 2pm-7pm; Saturday & Sunday 12pm-6pm

10 Grassy Creek Vineyard



336-835-2458
235 Cottage Circle,
State Road, NC 28676
Owners: Derrill and Lori Rice, Jim and Cynthia Douthit
Winemaker: Jim Douthit
Website: www.grassycreekvineyard.com
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 miles.


11 Hanover Park Vineyard

37 Haze Gray Vineyards

12 Herrera Vineyards

41 Hidden Vineyard

13 JOLO Winery & Vineyards




336-614-0030, 1-855-JOLOWINE
219 JOLO Winery Lane
Pilot Mountain, NC 27041
Website: www.jolovineyards.com
Owners: JW & Kristen Ray

Location: Take exit 134 (NC 268) toward Pilot Mountain/Elkin. After exiting 134, head west on Highway 268 and go around the roundabouts, Continuing heading west on Hwy 268. Travel approximately two miles and veer to the left onto Pilot Power Dam Road, a slight fork in the road. JOLO Winery & Vineyards will be your first left.

15 Jones von Drehle Vineyards & Winery

16 Junius Lindsay Vineyard

17 Lazy Elm Vineyard and Winery



336-909-4914
523 Danner Road, Mocksville, NC 27028
www.lazyelm.com
See Website For Hours

18 McRitchie Winery & Ciderworks

19 Medaloni Cellars

20 MenaRick Vineyard & Winery

21 Misty Creek Vineyards

22 Native Vines Winery

23 Old North State Winery & Brewery

38 Pilot Mountain Vineyards & Winery

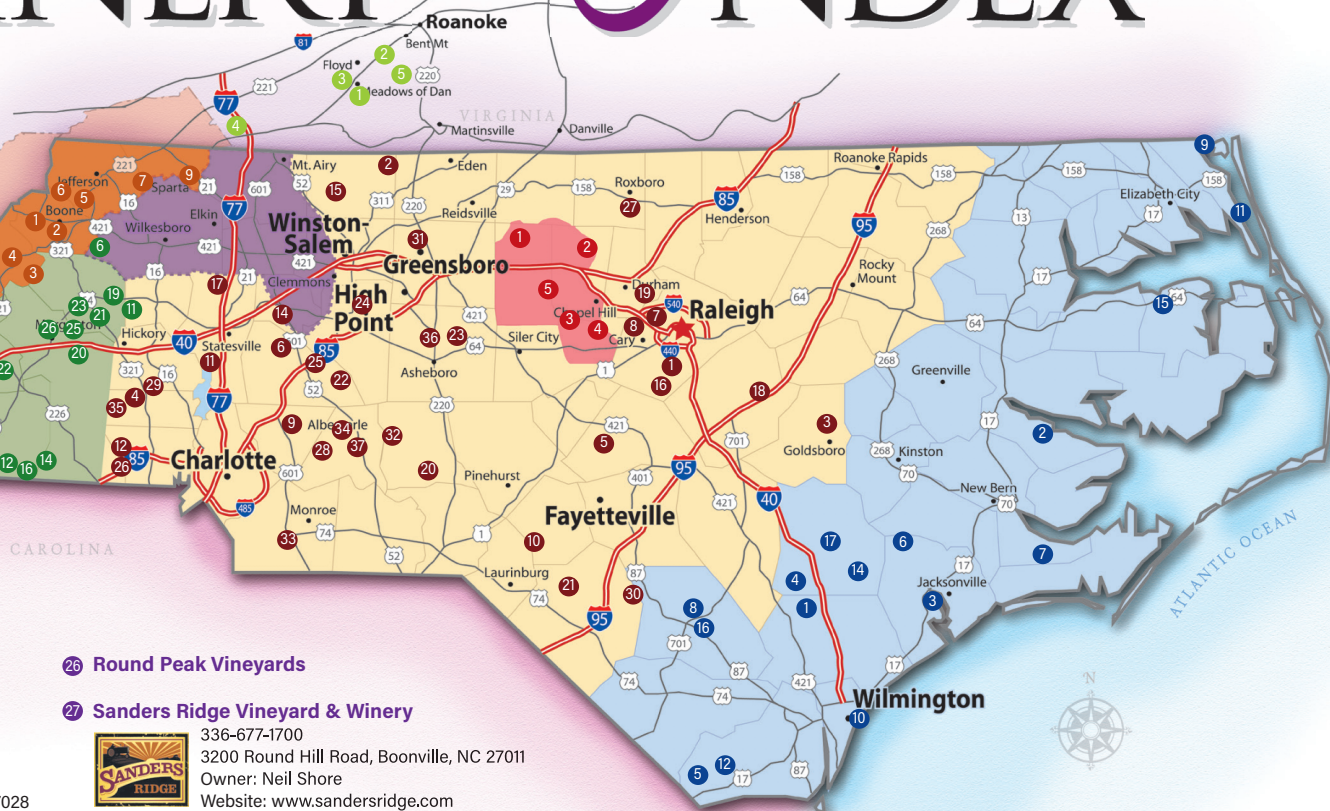
24 RagApple Lassie Vineyards

35 Roaring River Vineyards



336-957-2332
493 Brewer Mill Road, Traphill, NC 28685
Owners: Josephine & Tom Silvey
Wine Tasting Room & Restaurant Luxury Lodgings, Business Meetings, Weddings, Rehearsal Dinners, and Private Events.
Website: www.roaringrivervineyards.com

VINEYARD INDEX



26 Round Peak Vineyards

27 Sanders Ridge Vineyard & Winery



336-677-1700
3200 Round Hill Road, Boonville, NC 27011
Owner: Neil Shore
Website: www.sandersridge.com
Hours: Thur-Sun 12pm-5pm

39 Serre Vineyards

28 Shelton Vineyards



336-366-4724
286 Cabernet Lane, Dobson, NC 27017
Owner: R. Edwin Shelton
Winemaker: Gill Giese

Website: www.sheltonvineyards.com
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.

36 Skull Camp Wines

29 Slightly Askew Winery



336-835-2700
913 N. Bridge Street, Elkin, NC 28621
Owners: Tim Gentry and Karen Defreitas
Website: www.slightlyaskewwines.com

Location: Surry County — Take Exit 85 from I-77. West on 268 bypass (CC Camp Rd) .9 miles turn left on S-21 (N Bridge St.) go .8 miles, winery on right (yellow house).
Wine List: Large selection of wines. 20+ wines from semi-dry to Dry Whites and Reds, and large selection of Fruit/Sweet wines

30 Stony Knoll Vineyards

31 Surry Community College Winery

32 Sweet Home Carolina Vineyard & Winery

33 Weathervane Winery

34 Westbend Winery & Brewery

6 Shadow Springs Vineyard

7 Windsor Run Winery & Distillery

8 Stardust Cellars



336-466-4454
1202 Curtis Bridge Road, Wilkesboro, NC 28697
Website: www.stardustcellars.com
Owner: Nick von Cosmos
Hours: Thursday 4pm-9pm, Friday 4pm-10pm, Saturday 2pm-10pm, Sunday 2pm-8pm

9 Dynamis Estate Wines



336-468-6702
1004 Highland Road, Jonesville, NC 28642
Winemakers: Matheson Worrell & Katy Kidd
Website: www.dynamisestatewines.com
Hours: Wed - Sat 11am - 5pm, Sun Noon - 5pm

10 Castello Barone

11 Sotrio Vineyards and Winery

SWAN CREEK AVA

1 Dobbins Creek Vineyards

2 Laurel Gray Vineyards

3 Midnight Magdalena Vineyards

4 Piccione Vineyards



336-571-1024
2364 Cedar Forest Rd., Ronda, NC 28670
Email: info@piccionewine.com

Tasting Room Hours: Every day 12:00 to 6:00pm. Last call at 5:30pm
Live Music Almost Every Weekend. Check our events at piccionevineyards.com or visit us at



5 Raffaldini Vineyards





336-835-9463
450 Groce Road, Ronda, NC 28670

Website: www.raffaldini.com
Email: info@raffaldini.com
Hours: Sunday 12pm-5pm
Monday 11pm-5pm
Wednesday - Saturday 11am-5pm

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hlamm@elkintribune.com
336-835-1513

PIEDMONT REGION

- 1 Adams Vineyards and Winery
- 2 Autumn Creek Vineyard
- 3 A Secret Garden Winery
- 4 Baker Buffalo Creek Vineyard & Winery
- 5 Black Rock Vineyards
- 6 Cauble Creek Vineyard
- 7 Chatham Hill Winery
- 8 Cloer Family Vineyards
- 9 Cougar Run Winery
- 10 Cypress Bend Vineyards
- 11  **Davesté Vineyards**
704-528-3882 info@daveste.com
155 Lytton Farm Rd., Troutman, NC 28166
Website: www.davestevineyards.com
Tasting Room & Art Gallery
Vineyard, Winery, Brewery and Event Venue. Offering dry to semi-sweet wines in both red and white varieties of grape.
- 12 Fiddler's Vineyard
- 14 Garden Gate Vineyards
- 15 Germantown Vineyard & Winery
- 16 Gregory Vineyards
- 17 Grietje's Garden Vineyard & Small Event Venue
- 18 Hinnant Family Vineyard
- 19 Honeygirl Meadery
- 20 Little River Wines
- 21 Locklear Vineyards & Winery
- 22 Morgan Ridge Vineyards & Brewhouse
- 23 Native Son Vineyard and Farm
- 24 Old Homeplace Vineyard
- 25 Old Stone Winery
- 26 Owl's Eye Vineyard & Winery LLC
- 27 Rock of Ages Winery
- 28 Rocky River Vineyards
- 29 Southern Charm Winery
- 30 Stephens Vineyard & Winery
- 31 Stonefield Cellars
- 32  **Stony Mountain Vineyards**
704-982-0922
26370 Mountain Ridge Road,
Albemarle, NC 28001
Website: www.stonymountainvineyards.com
Owners: Ken, Marie and Devron Furr
Location: Stanly County – Take Hwy 24-27 East from Albemarle.
Turn left at Stone Mountain sign. Turn right on Mountain Ridge Rd.

PIEDMONT REGION

- 33 Treehouse Vineyards
- 34 Uwharrie Vineyards
- 35 Woodmill Winery
- 36 Zimmerman Vineyards
- 37 Dennis Vineyards

COASTAL REGION

- 1 Bannerman Vineyard And Winery
- 2 Bennett Vineyards
- 3 Botticelli Vineyards
- 4 Duplin Winery
- 5 Grapefull Sisters Vineyard
- 6 Huffman Vineyards Winery & Mirey Creek Gifts
- 7 Lake Road Winery
- 8  **Lu Mil Winery**
910-866-5819
438 Suggs-Taylor Road,
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
Website: www.lumilvineyard.com
Owner: Ron Taylor
Tasting Room Hours: Monday - Saturday (10am - 6pm) & Sunday (1pm - 6pm)
Wine List: Old Cumberland, Taylor Divine, Bladen Blush, Harmony Hall, Cape Owen Red, Merry Christmas, Sir Walter Raleigh, Red Sangria and White Sangria
- 9 Martin Vineyards
- 10 Noni Bacca Winery
- 11 Sanctuary Vineyards
- 12  **Silver Coast Winery**
910-287-2800
6680 Barbeque Rd.,
Ocean Isle Beach, NC 28469
Southport Tasting Room
910-777-5151
105 S. Howe St., Southport NC 28461
Owners: John and Maryann Azzato
Website: www.silvercoastwinery.com
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.
- 14 The Tipsy Bee
- 15 Vineyards on the Scuppernon, LLC
- 16  **Cape Fear Vineyard & Winery**
Winery Address: 195 Vineyard Drive
Elizabethtown, NC 28337
Phone (844) VINE-FUN
Monday - Sunday Lunch 11:30 am - 4 pm
Wednesday - Saturday Dinner 5:00 pm - 9 pm
Website: www.CapeFearWinery.com
- 17 The Country Squire Restaurant, Inn & Winery

HAW RIVER AVA

- 1 Grove Winery
- 2 Iron Gate Vineyards & Winery
- 3 Silk Hope Winery
- 4 Starrlight Mead
- 5 Wolfe Wines

MOUNTAIN REGION

- 1 Addison Farms Vineyard
- 3 Biltmore Estate Winery
- 4 Burntshirt Vineyards
- 5 Calaboose Cellars
- 6 Cerminaro Vineyard
- 7 Cherokee Cellars Winery
- 8 Eagle Fork Vineyards
- 9 Elk Mountain Winery
- 10 FernCrest Winery
- 11 Ginger Creek Vineyards
- 12 Green Creek Winery
- 14 Mountain Brook Vineyards
- 15 Nottely River Valley Vineyards
- 16 Overmountain Vineyards
- 17 Parker-Binns Vineyard
- 18 Saint Paul Mountain Vineyards
- 19 Shadow Line Vineyard
- 20 Silver Fork Vineyard & Winery
- 21 Six Waterpots Vineyard & Winery
- 22 South Creek Vineyards
- 23 Twisted Vine Winery
- 24 Valley River Vineyards
- 25 Waldensian Heritage Wines
- 26 Lake James Cellars

APPALACHIAN HIGH COUNTRY AVA

- 1 Banner Elk Winery and Villa
- 2 Grandfather Vineyard & Winery
- 3 Linville Falls Winery
- 4 Plumtree Valley Vineyards
- 5 Raven Rock Vineyards
- 6 Spencer Mountain Vineyards
- 7 Thistle Meadow Winery
- 8  **Watauga Lake Winery and Vineyards**
423-768-0345 or 423-768-3633
6952 Big Dry Run Road, Butler, TN 37640
Website: www.WataugaLakeWinery.com
- 9 Williamson Mead and Brewing

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA REGION

- 1 Blacksnake Meadery
- 2 Chateau Morrisette
- 3 Foggy Ridge Cider
- 4 Mt. Vale Vineyards
- 5 Villa Appalacia

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TNNC215425-1

Winners announced in 2024 N.C. Wine Competition

SPECIAL TO ON THE VINE

Three North Carolina wineries took home the state's most prestigious award for wine, cider and mead production in the recent N.C. Wine Competition. N.C. Wine Cups were awarded in three categories – Vinifera/Hybrid Grapes, Muscadine Grapes and Fruit/Cider/Mead.

N.C. WINE CUP WINNERS:

Vinifera/Hybrid Grapes – Childress Vineyards “Reserve Series” - Cabernet Franc - 2019 – Lexington

Muscadine Grapes – Cypress Bend Vineyards “Catherine” – Carlos - NV – Wagram



The Surry Cellars Blue Ridge Rosé won a gold medal and the Best Rosé award at the 2024 N.C. Fine Wine Competition. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC

Fruit/Cider/Mead – Noble Cider “Village Tart” - Apples, Montmorency and Morello Cherries - 2024 – Asheville

In addition, 19 judges, comprised of wine, cider and mead experts, beverage directors, beverage media leaders, wine shop bar owners, chefs, American Wine Society-certified judges and wine researchers

Eat, Drink, Shop, Play & Stay in the Yadkin Valley

1 Yadkin Cultural Arts Center

Yadkin Cultural Arts Center
226 East Main Street
Yadkinville, NC 27055
Website: YadkinArts.org
Phone: 336-679-2941
Located in Downtown Yadkinville

2 Barn Star

3 Jonesville Tourism Development

4 Underdown Ball Real Estate

5 Lewis Furniture

6 The Wisdom Table

THE WISDOM TABLE
101 East Main Street
Elkin, NC 28621
Phone: 336-258-8077
Website: WisdomTable.com

Email Info@WisdomTable.com
Dining starts at 5:30pm.
Weekly menus can be found at WisdomTable.com
Wed - Fri 5:30pm - 9:00pm
Sat 2:00pm-9:00pm

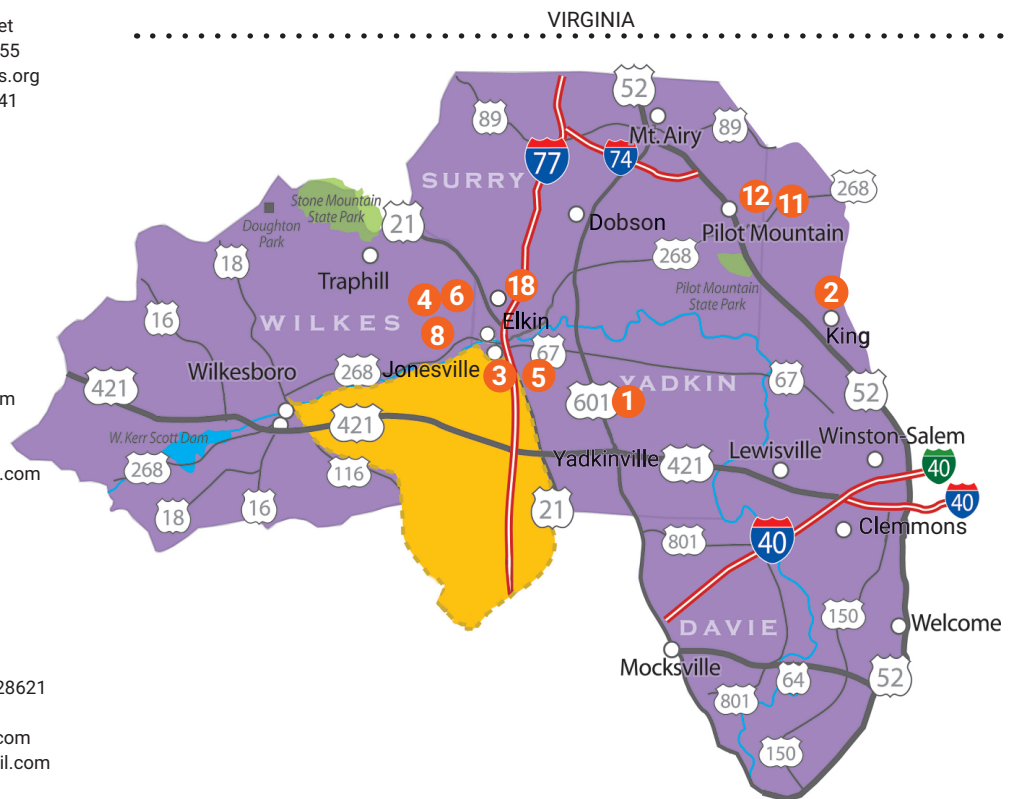
8 Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce

11 Mount Pilot Antique Mall

12 Econo Lodge Inn & Suites

18 Cypress Trails Event Center

Cypress Trails
157 Interstate Way, Elkin, NC 28621
Phone: 910-574-5396
Website: cypresstrailsevents.com
Email: cypresstrailstara@gmail.com



TNNC215427-1



Wines are readied for sampling at the N.C. Wine Competition. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC



Arthur Barham, CMS 1, Host/Producer of Merlot2Muscadine, takes notes as he tastes wines in the N.C. Wine Competition. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC

tasted 336 wine, cider and mead entries. This marks a 15% increase in entries from 2023. To qualify for entry into the competition, producers must be able to show their wine, cider and mead is produced from at least 75% North Carolina grown fruit and honey.

“The wine and grape industry continues to grow in North Carolina, offering tastings, sales and agritourism opportunities that contribute over \$6 billion to the state’s \$111.1 billion agriculture and agribusiness industry,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “These awards recognize the high quality of wines, ciders and meads being produced in the state.” This year, judges were unanimous with 17 wines receiving a gold medal score from all judges. These wines were awarded a double gold medal. The following winners scored the highest aggregate score in their category apart from the N.C. Wine Cup winners:

THE BEST OF CATEGORY WINNERS:

BEST VINIFERA/HYBRID WHITE - Sanctuary Vineyards - 2023 - “Pearl” - Albariño - Jarvisburg

BEST VINIFERA/HYBRID ROSÉ - Davesté Vineyards - 2023 - Chambourcin Rosé - Troutman

BEST VINIFERA/HYBRID RED - Brandon Hills Vineyard - 2019 - Barbera - Yadkinville

BEST VINIFERA/HYBRID DESSERT - Windsor Run Cellars - 2015 - “Midnight Run Grand Reserve” - Fortified Red - Hamptonville

BEST MUSCADINE WHITE - Hinnant Family Vineyards - NV - Carlos - Pine Level

BEST MUSCADINE ROSÉ - Hinnant Family Vineyards - NV - “Southern Pink” - Magnolia - Pine Level

BEST MUSCADINE RED - Erik Martella Wines - 2023 - “Workshop Method No. 03” - Noble - Yadkin Valley

BEST MUSCADINE DESSERT - Cypress Bend Vineyards - NV - “Sweetheart Stream” - Carlos - Wagram

BEST SPARKLING WINE - JOLO Winery & Vineyards - 2023 - “Beach Bubbles” - White Blend - Pilot Mountain

BEST CIDER - Noble Cider - NV - “Spice Merchant” - Apples, Chai Spice - Asheville

BEST MEAD - Williamson Mead and Brewing - NV - “Freya” - Honey, Strawberry, Black Cherry - Glade Valley

BEST FRUIT WINE - Childress Vineyards - NV - “Sun-Kissed Peach” - Vidal Blanc, Peach - Lexington

“Our producers are committed to showcasing the quality of the land here and the ability to grow grapes, apples and other fruits as

SEE COMPETITION PAGE 15



Robert O'Brien is a current student in SCC's Viticulture & Enology program. He plans to earn an associate degree in Viticulture and Enology from SCC by 2025. O'Brien plans to enter the field as a winemaker. He also plans to continue his education in winemaking. He also helped develop the award-winning Blue Ridge Rosé. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC



The Surry Cellars Blue Ridge Rosé won a gold medal and the Best Rosé award at the 2024 N.C. Fine Wine Competition. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC

SCC's Surry Cellars Student-Produced Wine Wins Best Rosé

SPECIAL TO ON THE VINE

Surry Cellars, the label for student-produced wine at Surry Community College through its Viticulture and Enology Program, took away the Best Rosé award at the 2024 North Carolina Fine Wines Competition with the Blue Ridge Rosé 2023.

The N.C. Fine Wines Competition is recognized by the industry as one of the toughest competitions in the United States. All judges are level three advanced sommeliers and perform blind taste tests with no discussion among the judges during tasting.

The award-winning Surry Cellars Blue Ridge Rosé was produced by students along with guidance of their instructors, entirely in the vineyard and in the on-campus winery of Surry Community College at the Shelton-Badgett N.C. Center for Viticulture and Enology. This wine was made from the Chambourcin grapes, a French-American hybrid grape usually known for its dark red color and earthy aromatics and undertones – everything this wine is not.

To develop a fruity award-winning rosé, Surry Cellars students and faculty performed carbonic maceration on the grapes, a technique used to create more fruit-driven and candy-like aromatic compounds that drive a consumer's perception of the wine. The wine was finished

slightly sweet with vibrant, lemonade-like acidity and a berry finish.

SCC Enology Instructor David Bower said, "This wine is an achievement because we set out at the beginning of the semester to accomplish a phenomenal rosé, and this affirms that we did just that."

The Chambourcin grapes were managed and harvested specifically for making a rosé style wine with carbonic maceration. Students carefully harvested each cluster and gently placed them into small bins that hold about 25 pounds of grapes.

"For carbonic maceration it's very important that the berries remained intact and are not crushed," SCC Viticulture Instructor Sarah Bowman explained, "and that was possible with the trellis system that our Chambourcin vines are trained on."

"It was exciting to be able to utilize a winemaking technique that I studied and to win an award with it," said Jason Bartoe, recent SCC graduate from the Viticulture & Enology program.

The students in the Grape Harvest class picked the Chambourcin grapes from the Watson trellis system early one morning in mid-September.

"The Watson trellis system helps to suspend the clusters so they can be delicately harvested. It also keeps the clusters protected from extreme sun and heat which aids in developing grapes that are perfect



Jason Bartoe is a recent graduate from SCC's Viticulture & Enology program. He earned an associate degree in Viticulture and Enology from SCC in May 2024. Bartoe will remain in North Carolina to work in the local wine industry, and he plans to further his formal education. He helped develop the award-winning Blue Ridge Rosé. | PHOTO COURTESY OF SCC

for rosé wine," Bowman said.

Robert O'Brien, current SCC Viticulture & Enology student, said, "I had the pleasure of being involved with almost every part of our Blue Ridge Rosé's production and am thrilled that our hard work has been recognized."

Both instructors were quick to point out how instrumental the viticulture and enology students, who worked on this wine were, from the field to the bottle. Bowman commented, "Winning this award was a real confidence builder for the students. They saw they could produce a top tier wine for the state."

Bower noted how the students, as well as a product like the Blue Ridge Rosé, benefitted the whole North Carolina wine industry by saying, "This award is a combination of everything we have been working on as a team. The students' hard work was rewarded. They can say they had a hand in this and apply it to their careers. The award also helps the entire industry grow and fights the stigma that N.C. wines are not as good as wines from other states."

"Getting to work on the Blue Ridge Rosé and our other wines over the last year has been a spectacular experience, and I'm incredibly grateful that it was recognized for its quality," said O'Brien.

Judges for the competition look at the varietal typicity (what the variety tastes like) and the regional typicity (what the region has to offer) using the Wine Spectator Top 100 point system, a scale based on criteria set forth by Wine Spectator, which is an organization internationally known as a leading authority on wine. The higher the score, the better the wine.

Surry Community College is the only college east of California that can instruct students with hands-on experience in winemaking, from growing and harvesting the fruit, to processing it in a bonded winery, and then taking it through the bottling line. Even the label for the wine was created from student artwork.

Bartoe said, "Being part of such a great team of students in the vineyard and winery along with superior instruction and guidance from Sarah Bowman and David Bower has been a wonderful experience these last couple years."

"Students get so much experience here," said Bower, "especially on training methods, equipment, and learning about the variety and

species of grapes grown. Ninety percent of the wine made in the United States is grown in California, but learning the process here is affordable and accessible."

Bowman added, "Surry Community is a great place to learn this industry. If you can succeed in growing grapes and making wine in a challenging area like the Yadkin Valley, you can apply it elsewhere."

Bower also added, "Our program has consistently, and being consistent is key, won awards, and we have consistently grown and adapted. Now, our program has been awarded Best Rosé, Best Red, Best White, Best Hybrid, Best Sparkling, and Best Dessert from the N.C. Fine Wines Competition."

"Without our students, this wouldn't happen," said Bowman. "The SCC wine is student grown and student made. Instructors are here to guide them."

Bower finalized by saying, "Anyone of any level can take classes in SCC's Viticulture and Enology Program. We want people to take our classes." Surry Community College offers a degree, diploma, and certificate options in viticulture, enology, tasting room operations, and wine marketing.

The Shelton-Badgett N.C. Center for Viticulture and Enology at SCC, which opened in 2009, contains classrooms, a climate-controlled wine cellar, microbiology labs, an assembly hall, and a 2,500 gallon licensed and bonded teaching winery. The five-acre teaching and demonstration vineyard provides students with hands-

SEE BEST ROSÉ PAGE 15

27th Annual Yadkin Valley Pumpkin Festival

Saturday, Sept. 28th!

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Historic Downtown Elkin, N.C.

- Crafts • Food • Farmer's Market
- Children's Events & Activities

Kids Zone located on Standard St.

SOUTHEAST GREAT PUMPKIN WEIGH-OFF

Includes Pumpkins, Gourds & Watermelons

Weigh Off Starts at 9 a.m.

For more information:

Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce
(336) 526-1111 | yadkinvalley.org

Pumpkin Run: 5/10K Run Walk

Race starts at Jonesville Greenway, \$35 Registration 6:30-7:30 am
Race 8am-11am same location!
Benefit for VFW Post 7794 in support of Mental Health and Suicide

WINE FESTIVAL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5



Clear blue skies in downtown Yadkinville as wine lovers taste from vineyards around Yadkin County and beyond at the 19th annual Yadkin Valley Grape Festival. KITSEY BURNS HARRISON | THE YADKIN RIPPLE

“We are really enjoying it so far. We really enjoy that it’s right here in our community,” she said as she sipped wine with friends at the 2023 festival.

The cabernet sauvignon from Shelton Vineyards was one of her favorites she said.

“It has a very nice spicy flavor to it,” she said.

Wayne Harris and his wife Deborah have been coming to the Yadkin Valley Grape Festival for many years. The couple lived in nearby Hickory for years before retiring to Florida.

“We made an eight-hour trip for this day,” Harris said during last year’s Grape Fest. “We’ve been coming here for 15 years.”

“I love the area, it’s always a great time here and we’re always meeting great people and we look forward to seeing the same people over and over,” Harris said of why they keep returning to this wine festival year after year.

“It’s like family,” he said.

For more details on the 2024 Yadkin Valley Grape Festival visit yvgf.com.

COMPETITION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

well as to produce world-class honey that contribute to their products taste and quality,” said Brianna Burns, wine marketing specialist with the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and executive director of the N.C. Wine and Grape Council. “With over 190 tasting rooms across the state, we encourage both locals and visitors to explore our wine, cider and mead producers to try one of these award-winning selections.”

The N.C. Wine Competition

is produced annually by the N.C. Wine and Grape Council. Judging was held at the Shelton-Badgett Center for Viticulture and Enology at Surry Community College in Dobson. The wine and grape industry in North Carolina accounts for \$6.1 billion in economic impact and 44,937 jobs, according to the N.C. Wine and Grape Council’s 2022-2023 annual report. To explore North Carolina’s amazing wine, cider and mead producers, visit <https://ncwine.org>.

BEST ROSÉ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

on experience and exposure to a wide range of wine grape production techniques.

The center has recently expanded to include the 5,000 square-foot Sustainable Agriculture Building with classroom space, a farm equipment workshop, and a controlled environment crop production space. A new Agrichemical Building is used for safe and responsible pesticide storage and handling. The program incorporates sustainable practices wherever possible. All bottles are made from recycled glass and weigh 35 percent less than regular wine bottles. Additionally, the bottles are not finished with a polythermal or plastic cover, making them more environmentally friendly with the N.C. Department of Agriculture

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