

# *Your Local* **Winery Guide 2020**



## **STAR BEACON**

**September 30, 2020**



# Decades and counting

## Area's wine roots date all the way back to Prohibition



**'First, we grew grapes. From Prohibition on, this area grew grapes, primarily juice grapes that were sold to large processors. [Later] they recognized that, as a community, they could grow grapes and make good wine. And there was a lot of collaboration.'**

**Doniella Winchell**

Executive Director, Ohio Wine Producers Association

**BY BRIAN HAYTCHER**  
bhaytcher@starbeacon.com

The Grand River region has played host to wineries for nearly 50 years.

There are currently 30 wineries in the region, said Donniella Winchell, executive director of the Ohio Wine Producers Association.

The area's wine tradition goes back to the 1970s, Winchell said.

"First, we grew grapes," Winchell said. "From Prohibition on, this area grew

grapes, primarily juice grapes that were sold to the large processors."

Chalet Debonne, Grand River Wine, and Markko Vineyards served as the foundation for wineries in the area, Winchell said. In 1984, there were 12 wineries in the area.

"They recognized that, as a community, they could grow grapes and make good wine," Winchell said. "And there was a whole lot of collaboration."

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**'Our trifecta of why people come here is Lake Erie, the wineries and the covered bridges. Most of [the wineries] are having record-breaking seasons. ... People who come to visit the wineries don't just come to drink wine, they want to see what else there is to do.'**



**Stephanie Siegel**

Executive Director, Ashtabula County Convention and Visitors Bureau



### CASK 307

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[www.cask307.com](http://www.cask307.com)

440-307-9586

#### *Current Wines:*

Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Red Blend, Riesling, Chardonnay, Fumé Blanc, Chardonnay Ice Wine, Bourbon Chardonnay, Rosé of Pinot Grigio, Cask Chardonnay, Cask Semillon-Riesling, Cask Blush, Cask Grand River Red

#### *Entertainment Offered*

#### *Most Popular Wines:*

- Bourbon Chardonnay,
- Fumé Blanc
- Cabernet Sauvignon
- Red Blend
- Rosé of Pinot Grigio



### DEBONNÉ VINEYARDS

7840 Doty Road, Madison, OH 44057

[www.debonne.com](http://www.debonne.com)

440-466-3485

#### *Current Wines:*

Unoaked Chardonnay, Chardonnay Reserve, Semillon Reserve, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Chairman's White (dry Niagara), Riesling, Riesling Reserve, Vidal Blanc, River Blanc, Riesling Reserve Lot 907, Peach Tree Grigio, White Catawba, Moscato-Riesling, Rosé of Pinot Noir, Razzberry Riesling, River Blush, River Rosé, Strawberry Rosé, Pink Catawba, Cabernet Franc, Cab/Cab, Merlot, Chambourcin, Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, Bourbon-Aged Cab Sauv Reserve, Cask 1019, Cask 1020, Cask 2, Classic Red, Red Blend, River Rouge, Blueberry Noir, Holiday Rouge, Sparkling Rouge, Sparkling Riesling, Vidal Blanc Ice Wine, Riesling Ice Wine, Cherry-Bourbon Ice Wine

#### *Most Popular Wines:*

River Rouge • Riesling Reserve • Unoaked Chardonnay • Cab/Cab • Moscato-Riesling

#### *Awards and Recognitions:*

The News-Herald Best of the Best Winery 2020, San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition Best of Class for Unoaked Chardonnay, Best Ice Wine Finger Lakes International Wine Competition/Best Show Pacific Rim International Wine Competition/et al for Vidal Blanc Ice Wine, Ohio Wine Competition Director's Choice "Best White" for Riesling Reserve



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440-298-9838

*Current Wines:*  
Chardonnay Reserve, Chardonnay, Muddy Paw Semillon,  
Pinot Grigio, Cabernet Franc Rosé, Grand Red, Austin's Red,  
Red Zinfandel, Cabernet Franc Unoaked, Cabernet Franc, Merlot,  
Muddy Paw Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot Reserve, Cask 1019,  
Cask 1020

*Entertainment Offered*

*Most Popular Wines:*  
Merlot Reserve • Cabernet Franc Rosé, Cask 1020

*Awards and Recognitions:*  
• Ohio Director of Agriculture's Award for the Best Dessert Wine  
• Best Red and Best White  
• Voted Best Winery in the News-Herald Best of the Best  
Competition



**SOUTH RIVER VINEYARD**  
6062 South River Rd., Geneva, OH 44041  
[www.southernrivervineyard.com](http://www.southernrivervineyard.com)  
440-466-6676

*Current Wines:*  
• Chardonnay  
• Dry Riesling  
• Pinot Grigio  
• Semillon  
• Creation  
• Temptation  
• Riesling Reserve  
• Pinot Noir  
• Trinity  
• Exodus  
• Karma  
• Concord Ice Wine  
• Blush Ice Wine



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## WINE VARIETIES AT A GLANCE

### 1. CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Widely available and incredibly popular, Cabernet Sauvignons are typically bold wines that are rich in flavor. Cabernet Sauvignons are derived from a full-bodied red grape, which is why they are often described as “full-bodied.” Tannins are a naturally occurring polyphenol found in plants and seeds that are predominantly in red wines, and those in Cabernet Sauvignons are bold. Some Cabernet Sauvignons elicit tastes similar to baking spices, while others may taste more like black cherry or black currant.

### 2. PINOT NOIR

Another popular, widely available varietal, Pinot Noirs boast a low tannin finish with a fruity taste reminiscent of cherry or cranberry. Pinot Noirs are light-bodied and smooth. The alcohol content in Pinot Noirs tends to be lower than that of a typical Cabernet Sauvignon.

### 3. RIESLING

Rieslings are white wines that are popular thanks in large part to their sweetness and floral, citrus taste. Rieslings are a go-to option when pairing wines with certain ethnic cuisine, including Indian, Thai and Vietnamese dishes. Some Rieslings can be dry, so wine enthusiasts looking for Rieslings for their sweetness may want to speak with a representative at the winery to ensure they're getting the wine they want.

### 4. MERLOT

Another wildly popular red wine, Merlots have an extensive flavor profile. Some Merlots may produce a taste reminiscent of black cherries, while others may provide strong hints of cocoa. Merlots are typically made in a dry style, and they are easily mistaken for Cabernet Sauvignons.

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# DECADES: Area's wine roots date back to Prohibition

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More grapes are still being planted, Winchell said.

"When I took this job in the late 70s, the wine islands were the focal point," Winchell said. "Because of the energy that was launched by Markko and Debonne and those 12 or 13 wineries that came immediately after them, the focal point moved to the Grand River Valley."

The move was in part due to being able to grow grapes in this region.

The Lodge at Geneva-on-the-Lake has been a large component of the growth of the region, Winchell said.

"I think the visitor's bureau has been very aggressive in promoting the wineries as a hook for everything else we have to offer,"

Winchell said.

Wineries are a big part what draws tourists to Ashtabula County, said Stephanie Siegel, executive director of the Ashtabula County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"Our trifecta of why people come here is Lake Erie, the wineries ... and the covered bridges," Siegel said. "Most of [the wineries in this region] are having record breaking seasons."

The Grand River region wineries have been an asset to the economy in the area, Siegel said.

"People who come to visit the wineries don't just come to drink wine, they want to see what else there is to do," Siegel said.

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**COURTNEY SOWRY**  
440-228-8860



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216-316-9855



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**Current Wines:**

- Caves Rd. Chardonnay, Sheriff Dominic Pinot Grigio, Road Trippin' Riesling, The Happy Couple (Sweet White Blend), Zoom Zoom Peach, Ten 21 Cabernet Sauvignon, Red Brick Road Merlot, Living the Dream Zinfandel, Everything Family (Semi-Sweet Red Blend), Tail Wagging Blackberry

**Most Popular Wines:**

- The Happy Couple
- Ten 21 Cabernet Sauvignon
- Sheriff Dominic Pinot Grigio
- Tail Wagging Blackberry
- Zoom Zoom Peach



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# DECADES: Area's wine roots date back to Prohibition

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"And so they're exploring the shops, and places to eat and discovering our natural resources. It's kind of a great entre to the region. And so that winery region attracts people, and then they understand things and recognize things that they want to come back for and spend more time for."

Winchell said there is still room for growth.

"I think the future is relatively unlimit-

ed," she said.

Wineries have been very busy even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Winchell said.

"We're outdoors, we can socially distance," she said. "The customers have been extremely responsible in terms of not gathering customers together."

Ohio State University recently launched a program to identify land that will work well for grape growing.

"We're very excited about it," Winchell said. "Because it won't be hit or miss, it'll be scientifically based."

The data could also be used to help get a loan to purchase the land, she said.

"The wineries provided an opportunity for a lot of new faces to visit," Winchell said.

"So I think if we're careful, and we continue to promote this locally grown, high-quality fruit and we continue to grow more grapes to meet the broadening demand of the consumer palate, we really have an opportunity to explode here. We are within 500 miles of half the population of



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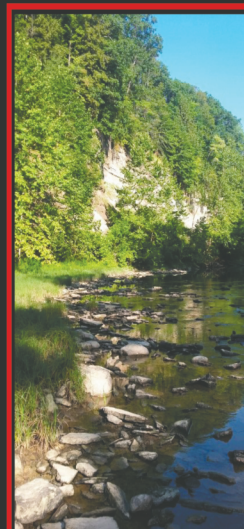
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### Current Wines:

Rosie's Harvest Sweet Blend  
 Riesling  
 Chardonnay  
 Dornfelder  
 Cabernet Franc  
 Cabernet Sauvignon

### Most Popular Wines:

- Dornfelder
- Cabernet Sauvignon - Schubert-Ferney Vineyard
- Cabernet Franc
- Cabernet Sauvignon - Gerald Smith Vineyard
- Rosie's Harvest



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