

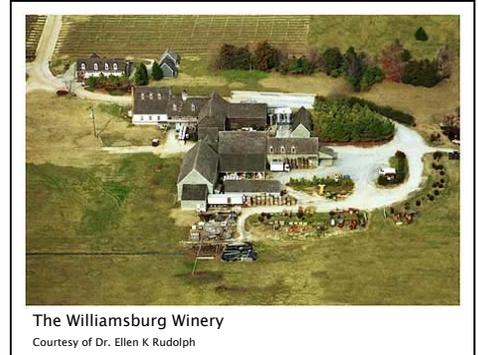
The Home Edition

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Wineries in Virginia: Near Williamsburg, Northern Neck and Chesapeake Bay Country

By Elaine VonCannon

In Colonial Virginia, wine was a staple. The House of Burgesses, passed an Act governing vineyards in 1619. The Twelfth Act stated that each settler was obligated to plant at least 10 vines for the purpose of making wine on his land. The colonial settlers could not transport all of the wine and provisions they needed so they began to establish vineyards to supply the colony. The Colonial tradition of having an estate with a vineyard was widely practiced in Virginia during Colonial times. Even to this day, Virginia has well established and new vineyards, from the mountains to the sea. This article will focus on wineries in Southeastern Virginia, home to vast numbers of colonial estates, waterfront estates, plantations, country estates --- and, high quality vineyards often planted with grapes from the old world.



Athena Vineyards

804-580-4944 - <http://www.atheanvineyards.com>

With a grand opening scheduled for Memorial Day 2006, the three friends who began in the health care profession and opened a vineyard because they were inspired by the healthful qualities of wine will present their first vintages to the world. Athena Vineyards are located in Northumberland County. This new vineyard also hails as the first commercial vineyard in Northumberland County. With an assortment of Wiccomico Whites and some Cabernets and other varieties, Athena Vineyards has plenty of wine offerings to open its first season.

Belle Mount Vineyards

800-335-5564 - <http://www.bellemount.com>

Belle Mount Vineyards is in Virginia's Northern Neck, in the town of Warsaw. The parcel of land where the vineyards are located is within sight of the Rappahannock River, which feeds into the Chesapeake Bay. Belle Mount offers handcrafted wines and a unique, original selection of Chardonnay, Merlot, and Cab Franc grapes. This Northern Neck vineyard also grows the Norton grape, discovered in Richmond, Virginia. Wine tastings and tours of the vineyard and winery are free.

Bloxom Winery, Bloxom, Virginia

(757) 655-5670 - <http://www.virginiawines.org/wineries/bloxom.html>

Take the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel from Williamsburg/Norfolk/Virginia Beach north to the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Visit old world traditions when you visit the Bloxom Winery. This 35 acre Victorian farm has six acres of wine including Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet. Bloxom Winery is only open from June through September from 1-6 p.m. The chocolate enthusiast can indulge in the combination of free wine tasting and chocolate confections.

Hummel Winery, Montross, Virginia

(804) 493-1544

Hummel Vineyards is tucked away near Westmoreland, in the Northern Neck of Chesapeake Bay Country. The sea air and surroundings are evocative of a country estate, with open wood beams in the traditional style sampling room. Tastings are \$5 at Hummel Winery. Sandwiches and light gourmet food are also available to complement the wine.

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Ingleside Vineyards, Oak Grove, Virginia
(804) 224-8687 – <http://www.ipwine.com>

At the intersection of the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, Virginia's Northern Neck is rich in history and classic and contemporary wines. Ingleside Vineyard's is part of the 3,000 acre Flemer estate. Planted in the fertile river land between the Potomac and Rappahannock, 70 acres of grapes grow to their luscious fullness in a stable climate. The Vineyard has been producing wines with awards since 1980, and is run by Charles H. Flemer's great-great grandson. Basic tastings with a souvenir glass are \$2.50 and Black Label tastings are \$6.00.

Oak Crest Vineyard, King George, Virginia
540-663-2813 – <http://www.oakcrestwinery.com/>

There are approximately 100 vineyards in Virginia, and each has its own unique approach. Oak Crest Vineyard is founded by a family that has been handcrafting wines since the 1960s. The Conrad Brandts opened the Winery in 2002, but it seems years have gone into the making of these grape connoisseurs. Known for their Bordeaux reds and Rhine style whites, this winery seems to have a healthy offering of Cabernets and Merlots and has just added some sweet blush wines to the menu. The tasting room is a traditional post and beam room. Tastings and tours are free. The winery is only open April 1 – December 23rd.

White Fences Vineyard and Winery, Irvington, Virginia
(804) 438-5559 – <http://www.northernneckwinetrail.com/whitefences.html>

The first White Fences vintages were presented at the Irvington Stomp in September 2005. White Fences is slated to open in the summer of 2006. Self-guided tours of the vineyards are available.

The Williamsburg Winery, Williamsburg, Virginia
(757) 229-0999 – <http://www.williamsburgwinery.com>

This Williamsburg favorite has been producing wine since 1988. The Williamsburg Winery is known for its signature vintage, Governor's White, "the best selling wine made in Virginia". Sample some reserve stocks and varietal blends at this winery, too. Dessert wines include Late Harvest Vidal, Blackberry Merlot, and Raspberry Merlot. The Williamsburg Winery is close to downtown Williamsburg, just off Route 199 West towards Jamestown.

For information on properties in the Greater Williamsburg and Southeastern Virginia area, visit <http://www.voncannonrealestate.com>. Or, to find out about colonial estates, country estates, waterfront estates, farmettes, equestrian estates, estates with vineyards, historic estates and more, visit <http://www.estatesinvirginia.com>.



Six Steps to Perfect Perennials

Follow these simple steps to a low-maintenance, hardy garden By Shari Brennan, www.realtor.com

Question: What types of plants return annually, deter weeds, require little fertilizer, are resistant to disease and pests, tolerant of their growing conditions and are beautiful to boot? Answer: perennials. Read on for a step-by-step guide to fill your garden with these low-maintenance residents.

Step One: Make a Design Plan

First draw out the existing landscape. Use a ruler and graph paper to draw it to scale. Include everything you don't plan to move or remove, such as your house, garage, trees, bushes and swing sets. Once you have the base plan, start your new design. Look for inspiration in your neighbors' yards or in garden magazines and books. Consider the colors, textures and plant heights you want. You can create a formal style with straight lines and symmetrical beds or a more informal look with curving lines and asymmetrical beds.

Step Two: Choose Plants

Choose your plants before you even enter a nursery. Use your final plan to decide which plants to buy--and how many you need. Consider the growing environments and make notes on each bed's lighting (shade, bright sun, partial sun) and moisture (dry, wet, normal) conditions. Next, make a list of your favorite perennials with the growing conditions they prefer. Select varieties native to your climate and growing region first, then simply match your dream list of perennials to your own climate and conditions. Place them into the design based on where you want certain heights, colors and textures. Know that perennials sometimes take multiple seasons to fill in and spread, so it's all right if it takes a few years for you to acquire all the plants in your plan.



Mathews, Gwynn's Island, Deltaville, Urbanna: Scenic Chesapeake Bay Cruising

By Elaine VonCannon



Cruising the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia from the Peninsula where Gloucester begins northward to Mathews, Gwynn's Island, Deltaville, Urbanna and Kilmarnock is scenic and filled with solitude. Enjoy the peaceful marshes, quiet rural and plantation lifestyles along the shoreline, and abundant wildlife and natural surroundings. The mouth of Mobjack Bay is about 4 miles wide and the bay spans 7 miles. The bay has four main tributaries: the East, North, Ware and Severn Rivers. Above Mobjack Bay is Horn Harbor, where New Point Comfort Lighthouse has been lighting the mariner's way into this tranquil part of the Chesapeake Bay since 1804. There are only a few marinas along the way, but you'll find many sprinkled along the tidal inlets and creeks that populate this part of the bay.

Fishing Bay Yacht Club, Deltaville, Virginia – <http://www.fbyc.net>

This Yacht club has waterfront property on both Fishing Bay and Jackson Creek. It's close to the site of the Urbanna Oyster Festival, which happens annually. The boat launch allows access for visiting tailored yachts. A brand new, elegant two-story clubhouse is a meeting place during boat races. Stove Point, Deltaville, Virginia. Phone: (804) 776-9636.

Mathews Yacht Club, Mathews Virginia – <http://www.mathesyachtclub.com>

No transient slips are available at this marina, because it is a private club. Boaters are welcome to stop by and purchase gas. This exclusive club has a small waiting list for membership. Inquire with the Mathews Yacht Club for more information on obtaining a membership. Phone: (804) 725-3165.

Mobjack Bay Marina, North Virginia, Virginia

This marina offers about 5 transient slips for boaters on a Chesapeake Bay journey. Gas and diesel fuel, as well as basic provisions from the Ship's Store can be obtained here. Amenities include restrooms and hot showers, as well as a picnic area. Bicycles are available for use. A boat launch and a travel lift are available at Mobjack Bay Marina, and they repair boats. 450 Marina Road, North Virginia. Phone: (804) 725-7245.

Norton's Marina, Deltaville, Virginia – <http://www.nortonyachts.com/marinaservicespage.html>

This marina on Broad Creek in Deltaville offers quite a few amenities for the Boater. Over 60 covered slips are available for the weary traveler. Gas, diesel and ice can be purchased here, and towing and docking services are available. Broad Creek, Deltaville, Virginia. Phone: (804) 776-9211.

Chesapeake Boat Basin, Kilmarnock, Virginia

This 50 year-old marina is a well-established favorite for Chesapeake Bay area boaters. Stop here for fuel, pump out sewage, visit the ship's store to stock up on supplies, or make repairs. Chesapeake Boat Basin is on Indian Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. 1686 Waverly Avenue, Kilmarnock, VA. Phone: 804-435-3110 or 877-482-4287.

Queens Creek Marina, Mathews County, Virginia

Queens Creek Marina accommodates sailboats and fuel powered boats with special slips for each. This quiet marina is well kept and has a clean bathhouse and a picnic area that is covered. For the fisherman anxious to eat a fresh catch, the fish cleaning station comes in handy. Boats on trailers can be stored Queen's Creek Marina and it is only two miles to the Gwynn's Island boat ramp. This well protected waterway also allows for easy access to the Chesapeake Bay and the Piankatank River. Cell phone access available here. Call 804-730-5818 or 725-2395 or email qcmarina@aol.com.

Regent Point Marina, Topping, Virginia

This marina caters to only sailboats. Explore Topping Virginia by bicycle or small craft by renting a bike or canoes or kayaks. A family friendly picnic area and playground is a nice feature. The boatyard provides hauling and boat repair facilities. Boaters on the Chesapeake Bay will find Regent Point Marina in Topping, Virginia a safe harbor during storms. The marina is located on Locklies Creek which feeds into the Rappahannock River, near Urbanna, Virginia. 317 Regent Point Drive, Topping, Virginia. Phone: 804-758-4478.

If you are searching high and low for a waterfront estate, property with waterfront, country estate, or plantation on a waterway, this area of Virginia is prime. I'm a local Realtor who grew up in Tidewater Virginia and I'm familiar with the terrain and the waterways as well as the colonial history of the area, when the population relied on waterways for travel and trade. Please call me at 757-288-4685 if I can be of assistance in locating a waterfront property. Or e-mail me at vonmor1@cox.net if you want me to assist in a search for a waterfront estate or waterfront property in the Northern Neck counties of Virginia, in the heart of Chesapeake Bay country.



Elaine VonCannon

RE/MAX Capital

1166 Jamestown Road
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

(757) 564-1557 office

(757) 345-6666 fax

(757) 288-4685 direct

Be Sure To Visit My Website:

www.voncannonrealestate.com

www.estatesinvirginia.com



We are very excited to announce the launch Elaine's newest website, Virginia_Estates.

The website focuses solely on equestrian and estate properties in Eastern Virginia and includes detailed and essential information on Virginia Counties and the Hampton Roads Region.

Visit Elaine's new website online today at www.estatesinvirginia.com

Ask Elaine. . .

Dear Elaine,

I am a retiree, and I am enjoying my retirement immensely. I needed some work done on my home so I got an equity line. I feel that the equity line payment is rather high. Would I have been better off getting a mortgage, as I own my home free and clear except for the equity line.

Martha Ottman, New Kent

Dear Martha,

An equity line is considered a second mortgage at a higher interest rate. GET RID OF THAT NOW. There are several loan packages out there that would work well for you. One being a loan that is geared towards the retiree. Even a reverse mortgage will work for you. You will definitely save money by having a mortgage, even if it is small, in the amount you will pay in interest. If you need information on lenders, please contact me and I would be more than happy to forward you my list of preferred lenders.

Thanks for Asking,

Elaine

Honey Nut Banana Splits

- 4 ripe bananas
- 1 cup chunky peanut butter
- 2 pints vanilla ice cream
- 4 tablespoons honey, eyeball it
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 canister whipped cream
- 1 package (2-ounce pouch) chopped nut topping, available on baking aisle



Peel and slice the banana down the center lengthwise and place in dessert boats or bowls.

Place peanut butter in a small pan and melt gently over low heat.

Scoop vanilla ice cream into bowls or boats on top of bananas, 2 scoops per sundae. Top 1 scoop of ice cream with melted peanut butter sauce, the other with a drizzle of honey and a sprinkle of cinnamon, use about 1 tablespoon of honey per dessert. Garnish sundaes with whipped cream and chopped nut topping.

www.foodnetwork.com courtesy of Rachel Ray's 30 Minute Meals