



ESCAPE TO VIRGINIA WINE COUNTRY

Get Lost in the History and Romance of Barboursville Vineyards



If you've been searching for a relaxing retreat filled with rich history, fine dining and exceptional wine, look no further.

Barboursville Vineyards in Orange County, Virginia, offers the complete experience.

About two hours south of Washington, D.C., nestled between the Southwest Mountains and the Blue Ridge, is the home of this exquisite, Italian-style winery that cultivates 173 acres on the historic property once owned by Governor, James Barbour.

The Tasting Room and Visitors Center features a double-sided fireplace for cool days, covered loggias overlooking the mountains for warmer weather, and an impressive wine-tasting bar that can accommodate up to six large groups at a time. There is also a mini-museum, a screening room where you can view a film on Barboursville's history, and tours of the winery that are available on weekends.

The winery alone makes Barboursville well worth the visit. But Barboursville is more than a winery. It is also home to the mouth-watering Palladio Restaurant, the peaceful and elegant 1804 Inn and the historic ruins of Governor James Barbour's mansion.

But perhaps most special about Barboursville is their palpable passion for everything they do, and the particular way that they make each guest feel like visiting royalty, as well as a close personal friend.

THE ART OF PALLADIO

Upon arrival at Barboursville's Northern Italian-style restaurant, Palladio, each guest is greeted with a glass of their Brut sparkling wine.

"It is traditional in Italy to start dinner with sparkling wine," explains Luca Paschina, Barboursville general manager and winemaker. Although it may be ordinary for Italians, if you think that sparkling wine signals a celebration, you will not be disappointed here. Every lunch or dinner at Palladio is a celebration of sorts—of food, of wine, of life.

"The best experience with wine is to be able to appreciate all the different types because they all have a reason to exist," says Paschina. To that end, Paschina works with Maître d' and Sommelier Alessandro Medici and Chef Melissa Close Hart to pair food and wine so that they bring out the best in each other.

Bread, pasta and even cured meats are all handmade on premises. How many restaurants take the time to make their own prosciutto? Palladio does, and it is further evidence of Barboursville's passion for food, their devotion to quality.

"There are some foods you eat and they fill you up, but they don't nourish you," Paschina says. "We do everything we can to get the best ingredients, the healthiest, most flavorful meat and vegetables."

Menus change every six weeks so that visitors are always greeted with new Italian-inspired creations. New dishes reflect the changing seasons, as well as available produce and meat.

One thing always stays the same, though—the *tiramisu della casa*.



"We tried to take it off the menu once and people went ballistic," Paschina says. "Now it is the only thing on the menu that never changes."

PERKS OF THE JOB

The owners of the Barboursville estate, Gianni and Silvana Zonin, are eighth-generation winemakers from Italy. Every year in January, they bring Palladio's senior staff to Italy to visit the leading kitchens in Tuscany, Piemonte, Lombardy and the Veneto. There, they recharge their batteries and gather recipes and ideas for the coming year at Palladio.

"We fell in love with a pasta machine this year," Chef Hart laughs. She has always made her own pasta, but this machine will allow her to make more types. "The Zonins bought the pasta machine for us, and this thing is huge," she continues. "I don't know how it's getting to this country. It may have to ride in the plane with the Zonins, buckled into the seat next to them."

With employers like that, it is no wonder that Hart and Medici have been at Palladio for more than 11 years. "Everyone here is like family," Medici says. Although he grew up in Italy, Medici has fallen in love with this area. "Barboursville is my home," he says.

CONNECTION TO HISTORY

Many years before the Zonins bought the estate in 1976, it was home to James Barbour, the 18th governor of Virginia. Barbour's good friend, Thomas Jefferson, designed the home that was built on the property. A fire burned the house down on Christmas Day 1884, but the ruins of the Barbour mansion have been preserved and now exist as a historic landmark that winery guests can visit and tour.

One of the key features of the Barbour mansion is a room in the shape of an octagon, one of Thomas Jefferson's favorite architectural shapes. Barboursville honors the legacy of the estate's history by naming its signature wine "Octagon."

Octagon is a blend of Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon

and Petit Verdot, and it is made only in years of the finest grape harvests. The 2006 vintage won the Monticello Cup in Virginia in 2009, and attained the second-highest ranking of any red wine in Beverage Testing Institute's (Chicago) review of regional wines in 2010 (92 points, Gold Medal, one point behind the "Best," Barboursville's Cabernet Franc Reserve 2007).

STAY AWHILE

Adjacent to the Barboursville ruins is The 1804 Inn, a Georgian-style villa with Flemish-bond walls that welcomes guests to spend the night in historic luxury.

After the fire that destroyed their home, the Barbour family moved into this villa, and every successive owner has maintained and lived in it since. The Zonins spend much of their time in Italy, so they decided to open their home to the public and allow others to appreciate Barboursville exactly as they do.

"Here we live a simple life of outdoors, good food and good wine," Paschina says, humbly belying the elegant accommodations. The 1804 Inn has three suites, each with sitting rooms, working fireplaces and antique furnishings collected by the Zonin family from England, Italy, France and Virginia. The upstairs suites have 45-foot long private balconies that overlook the front lawn, as well as



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private gardens framed by towering, hundred-year-old boxwood. In the Octagon suite, guests have a beautiful view of the Barboursville ruins from their bedroom window.

The inn also has three guest cottages, and two more are being completed this year. Guests are invited to a free tasting at the winery, and they are given their choice of bottle of wine to enjoy in their suite—or perhaps as they meander through the lush gardens or relax in an Adirondack chair or chaise lounge.

In the morning, the innkeeper, Lisa Morgan, serves a breakfast that is a blend of English and Italian—seasonal fruit, pastries, muffins and breads fresh-baked in her kitchen, and hot entrées cooked to

order. Everything is served in the inn's dining room on Barboursville china, giving the experience a comfortable yet luxurious flair.

After all that, if you can bear to leave the estate, Barboursville is convenient to other wineries on the Monticello Wine Trail, as well as to other landmarks. It is just 30 minutes from Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and 10 minutes from James Madison's Montpelier.

Whether you go to Barboursville for a romantic weekend getaway or a convenient day trip, you're sure to return home feeling nurtured and relaxed. And if you can't find the time to visit, you can always do the next best thing—simply enjoy a glass of one of Barboursville's award-winning wines! 

If You Go...

WINERY AND VISITORS CENTER

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday
11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday
540-832-3824

WINERY TOURS

Noon to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday;
also by appointment

THE 1804 INN AND COTTAGES

Open daily; weekly rental available
540-832-5384

PALLADIO RESTAURANT

Lunch: Noon to 2:30 p.m., Wednesday through
Sunday; reservations suggested

Dinner: 6:30 to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday;
reservations required

Gentlemen are asked to wear jackets for dinner.
540-832-7848

www.barboursvillewine.net

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