



For Immediate Release:

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**Virginia Celebrates 250th Anniversary of American Wine
at London International Wine Fair**
Successful birthplace of American wine rooted in British history

Richmond, Va. (May 22, 2012) - Virginia Wines continue to share the spotlight on the international stage, this time at the 2012 London International Wine Fair (LIWF), where award-winning wineries from the Central Virginia, Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads Regions will be pouring May 22 - 24. Four wineries from the Monticello AVA, home of Thomas Jefferson, will participate in addition to two from Northern Virginia and one from Hampton Roads, located near the heart of Colonial Williamsburg.

"We will be pouring wines at the London International Wine Fair just as we kick off celebrations for the 250th anniversary of the American Wine industry at Philip Carter Winery - Charles Carter's Virginia wines were the first American wines to be internationally recognized with a gold medal from the Royal Society of Arts. We are excited to return to London for our fourth wine fair, where we have received a warm reception and glowing reviews from the international wine press."

The following Virginia Wineries (pouring wines listed) are participating in the LIWF:

Monticello AVA, Central Virginia Region

- Barboursville Vineyards, 2008 Cabernet Franc, 2006 Octagon, 2010 Viognier
- King Family Vineyards, 2010 Viognier
- Veritas Winery, 2009 Kenmar Dessert Wine, 2010 Petit Verdot Paul Shaffer 4th Edition, 2011 Viognier
- Virginia Wineworks, NV Cabernet Franc, Michael Shaps 2009 Petit Verdot, Michael Shaps 2009 Viognier

- White Hall Vineyards, 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, 2010 Pinot Gris, 2011 Viognier

Northern Virginia Region

- Boxwood Estate Winery, 2010 Boxwood Meritage, 2008 Topiary
- Breaux Vineyards, 2007 Cabernet Franc Reserve, 2007 Meritage, 2005 Nebbiolo, 2010 Nebbiolo Ice, 2010 Viognier

Hampton Roads Region

- Williamsburg Winery, 2010 Acte 12 Chardonnay, 2009 Adagio, 2007 Gabriel Archer Reserve, 2007 Virginia Trianon, 2010 Vintage Reserve Chardonnay

The history of Virginia wine is rooted in England. The Royal Society of Arts (RSA), established awards for making wine in its colonies in 1759. The following year, the Virginia General Assembly passed an act to establish an independent wine industry in Virginia – signed by George Washington, the Lees, and the Virginia signers of Declaration of Independence. Charles Carter sent his wines to the RSA in 1762, and on Oct. 20, 1762, the RSA declared the wines excellent, awarding them a gold medal and recognizing the success in winemaking in Virginia, the first internationally recognized wines of colonial America.

The Commonwealth of Virginia officially took claim to being the successful birthplace of the American wine industry on February 3, 2012, with Senate Joint Resolution #114. The proclamation commends Virginia on the 250th anniversary of the American wine industry.

A recent study commissioned by the Virginia Wine Board shows that between 2005 and 2010, the Virginia wine industry's economic impact has more than doubled from \$36 million to nearly \$750 million, a 106 percent increase in contributions to the state's economy every year.

The amount of taxes paid to the state and to local governments grew from \$21 million to \$43 million, a 105 percent increase. The study also highlights the significant impact tourism is having on the Virginia wine industry; the number of wine-related tourists visiting Virginia increased from 1 million in 2005 to 1.62 million in 2010, a 62 percent increase. Spending related to winery tourism also increased from \$57 million in 2005 to \$131 million in 2010. Officials expect the industry to continue to grow in Virginia, which was named as one of the top 10 wine travel destinations for 2012 by Wine Enthusiast magazine.

The rapid growth of Virginia's vibrant wine industry has made it one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the state. In 1979, there were only six wineries in Virginia. Today, there are over 380 vineyards that cultivate over 3,000 acres of grapes and over 200 wineries in Virginia. The state's wine industry's growth is escalating as fast as the state's advancements in wine quality and

reputation. For a complete list of winners and further information about events, tours and tastings, please visit the Virginia Wine Marketing Office's website at <http://www.virginiawine.org/> or call 1-804-344-8200.

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About the Virginia Wine Regions and AVA Represented at the LIWF

Central Virginia Region

No wonder Thomas Jefferson started making wine at his home Monticello in the 1770s. The eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge and the rolling countryside to the east offer excellent topography, fertile granite-based clay soil and a growing season of over 200 days. This combination yields grapes with a rich and multilayered old world flavor. You'll find numerous wineries clustered around Charlottesville and to its north, several south of Lynchburg, and a few east and closer to Richmond. Central Virginia wineries produce Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chambourcin, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Malbec, Merlot, Muscat Canelli, Muscat of Alexandria, Norton, Orange Muscat, Petit Manseng, Petit Verdot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, Riesling, Rkatsiteli, Sauvignon Blanc, Seyval Blanc, Syrah, Tannat, Touriga Nacional, Traminette, Vidal Blanc, Viognier and Zinfandel.

The Monticello AVA

The Monticello AVA is in the central Piedmont area. The area is nestled along the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains and encompasses the small ridge known as Southwest Mountain. It is historic in that it is home to Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, where Jefferson spent years trying to grow European grape varieties.

Hampton Roads Region

Historic Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg, Yorktown, and the first battle between two ironclads, the Monitor and CSS Virginia – the names alone tell the rich and enduring history of this area that attracts millions of visitors every year. The year-round temperate climate and fertile soil provide ideal conditions for a variety of grapes and the varieties they produce. Among the wines found here are such popular choices as Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Seyval Blanc, Vidal Blanc and the Norton grape, which is native to Virginia. Blends and dessert wines are also available.

Northern Virginia Region

Visitors to Northern Virginia see entertaining and historic destinations in every direction, from George Washington's Mount Vernon and the National Air and Space Museum near Dulles to Wolftrap National Park for the Performing Arts and Arlington

National Cemetery. Civil War history is in every direction, too, with Harper's Ferry National Historical Park, Manassas National Battlefield Park and the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park the most notable. Across Northern Virginia, you'll discover a large number of wineries thanks to relative elevations that offer perfect sites for grape vines. The rolling landscape, with its rich soils from eons of granite and sandstone erosion, gives good air and drainage for wine grapes. Add the moderate winters and a generous growing season and the result is very productive ground for winemaking grapes. Northern Virginia wineries produce fine examples of every wine Virginia offers, including Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Chambourcin, Chardonnay, Mandolin, Merlot, Norton, Petit Verdot, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Seyval, Vidal Blanc, Traminette and Zinfandel as well as many fruit wines.

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