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Charlottesville

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On the Wine Trail

Thomas Jefferson's dream of producing quality wines in Virginia has come true, for along with the Hunt Country in northern Virginia, the Charlottesville area today is one of the state's two top winemaking regions. Be sure to pick up a brochure for the **Monticello Wine Trail** (www.monticellowinetrail.org) at one of the visitor centers; it gives information about all the nearby wineries including their business hours.

To sample all you want and not risk driving home tipsy, take a full day or afternoon excursion with **Arcady Vineyard Wine Tasting Tours** (tel. **434/872-9475**; www.arcadyvineyard.com). Erika and Chris Goddell, owners of Arcady Vineyard, do all the driving while taking you to and from local vineyards. They do not accept marketing or trades with the wineries, and thus are free to visit to the best, not those who pay the most. Their 4-hour tours cost \$115 per person Monday through Thursday, \$125 per person on weekends. The trip includes a cheese platter, lunch may be added for an additional \$20. Reservations are required.

Most convenient of the local wineries to visit on your own is **Jefferson Vineyards**, 1353 Thomas Jefferson Pkwy. (Va. 53; tel. **434/977-3042**; www.jeffersonvineyards.com), between Monticello and Ash Lawn-Highland. Thomas Jefferson and an Italian named Filippo Mazzei planted grapes on this property in 1774. Consider stopping for a taste after your day's sightseeing. From there you can drive south on C.R. 795 to the **Kluge Estate Winery** (tel. **434/977-3895**; www.klugeestate.com), an up-and-coming vineyard whose owner, the well-heeled Patricia Kluge, has had success with her sparkling wines. You can browse her **Kluge Estate Farm Shop**, purveying the wines and other Virginia products.

If you're going to James Madison's Montpelier, the award-winning **Horton Vineyards** (tel. **800/829-4633** or 540/832-7440; www.hvwine.com) is 8 miles east of U.S. 29 on U.S. 33 near Gordonsville. Between there and U.S. 29, **Barboursville Vineyards** (tel. **540/832-3824**; www.barboursvillewine.com), on C.R. 177 near the intersection of Va. 20 and Va. 33, was Virginia's first modern winery, having been established in 1976 by the largest family-owned Italian winemaker. Nearer to Charlottesville on C.R. 641 west of Va. 20, **Burnley Vineyards** (tel. **540/832-2828**; www.burnleywines.com) is one of the oldest wineries in the area.

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