

TASTE & TRAVEL

INTERNATIONAL

PERU
SACRED VALLEY

AUTUMN
IN **JAPAN**

ONTARIO
ON THE APPLE
PIE TRAIL

SHOWSTOPPING
PAVLOVA

RETURN TO
YUCATÁN

Expand your culinary horizons

*Road trip
to Paradise*
MIAMI - KEY WEST

PLUS

AUCKLAND
SOUTH CAROLINA
MONTREAL
ANDALUSIA
THAILAND

REGIONAL
CUISINE

Hawaii

Issue 3 Autumn 2011

CAD/US \$6.95

03



FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO READ, LOVE TO EAT AND LOVE TO TRAVEL



Wisconsin

WHERE ON EARTH

WISCONSIN

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DIANE PENWILL

Shines

*More than 35 wineries,
600 cheeses, 6,000 lakes
and the dazzling Cream
City brick of Milwaukee*

AFTER A VISIT TO ITALY, we decided to model our winery after a Tuscan villa," Steve Johnson tells me. A Tuscan winery in Wisconsin? Yes. Parallel 44, high on a hill, overlooks the vineyards in the glacial-etched valley of Kewaunee. It is convincingly Tuscan with its intense hues of ochre, an interior courtyard created by open Palladian arches around the entranceway and floor-to-ceiling windows that let in the strong Midwestern summer sunlight. Potted cypresses extend a welcoming nod to the Italian landscape. From a distance, the late afternoon sun bouncing off the building on the hill provides a beacon to guide visitors.

But — a Tuscan winery in Wisconsin — why? Wine isn't the first association that comes to mind when you think of Wisconsin. If it's on any kind of gastronomic radar, it's likely for the state's celebrated beer, especially with its recent Super Bowl success. Most people also know America's Dairyland makes cheese. What few people know is that before Sonoma, before Napa, there was Wisconsin. It has a well-established wine culture and the state wineries produce internationally award-winning wines with grapes that can't be found anywhere else. It also has an unpretentious, light-hearted and accessible wine touring scene with a strong culinary tradition founded on its dairyland roots.

DIANE PENWILL is a Toronto-based writer who has travelled extensively through the U.S., Canada, Europe, the Caribbean and Central and South America. She enjoys writing about food and wine and sharing the joy of travel. Her article *Beltze, Birthplace of Chocolate* appeared in the *Taste&Travel* Spring issue and she has a blog, savouryplanet.ca.

Click
to



THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP ROW Parallel 44 owners Steve Johnson and Maria Milano; Parallel 44 Winery; Sign at LedgeStone Vineyards; Owner Tim Abel of LedgeStone Vineyards; Andrea DeBaker of Trout Springs; Thief Wine in Milwaukee Public Market; Milwaukee Pedal Tavern; Trout Springs Sign; Waterfall on Taliesin Preservation **FACING PAGE** Wine tasting at Parallel 44.



Wine growing here dates back to the mid-nineteenth century when a Hungarian entrepreneur, Count Agoston Haraszthy, planted vines and built a cellar. The oldest winery in the United States, Wollersheim, is on land originally settled by Haraszthy in southwest Wisconsin. Born in 1812 in what is now Budapest, Haraszthy eventually settled on the Sauk Prairie, on the Wisconsin River west of Madison. Haraszthy planted grapes and dug wine cellars into the hillside slopes above the town. He smelled long, hot summers, but not vine-killing winters. The Hungarian Count eventually gave up on Wisconsin's brutal cold and in 1849, left for the Gold Rush in California. He settled in Sonoma where he bought a small vineyard — Buena Vista — and planted more than 5,000 acres. His were the first stone-cellar wineries in California and he's considered the founder of the California wine industry. Haraszthy's original cellars and slopes in Wisconsin are today home to the Wollersheim Winery, one of the state's best known wine producers.

In the 1970s, Bob Wollersheim took over where Haraszthy left off more than 150 years earlier. He sparked a revival of vineyard planting and serious wine-making. Now Wisconsin has five wine touring regions and over 50 wineries which span the four corners of the state. The vast majority of vineyards here are planted with cool-climate French-American and American hybrid grapes that can survive the harsh winters. *Marechal Foch*, *Frontenac*, *Marquette* and *St. Croix* lead the reds. *St. Pepin*, *Edelweiss*, *La Crosse*, *Seyval Blanc*, *Vignoles*, *Frontenac Gris* and *La Crescent* are the main white wines. Many of the wineries also plant more traditional European grape varieties, such as *Chardonnay*, *Pinot Noir* and *Riesling*. However, the hybrid varieties remain very popular and have 'cult status,' as some of the Wisconsin grapes can't be found anywhere else. Many of the wineries also produce fruit wines, several revisit the farmstead European cider heritage and one or two even produce traditional mead wine.

The state is also famous for its long, sandy beaches on Lakes Michigan and Superior and some 6,000 other lakes, surrounded by rolling hills and lush pastureland. In spring, cherry blossoms emerge in Door County, the peninsula running between Green Bay and Lake Michigan and in summer, it begins to resemble Cape Cod. In autumn, Wisconsin has a spare beauty, wispy clouds wafting across bright blue skies over fields of alfalfa and corn spent by a healthy harvest. Hills are dotted with cows and little white churches set against darkly-wooded forests. The late afternoon sun hits the side of a red barn or highlights the window glass of a church.

Wisconsin is divided into five wine regions. The Northwoods Region, on the shore of Lake Superior, has ten wineries scattered over the area. Following the map counter-clockwise, the Driftless Region in southwest Wisconsin, with Minnesota and Iowa bordering on the west and Illinois on the south, a landscape of high plateaus cut with deep valleys and clear rivers, has ten wineries, of which Wollersheim is one of the better known. Glacial Hills, in the southeast, »

mainly farmsteads and rolling hills, encompasses Milwaukee, Wisconsin's largest city, and extends west to Madison, the capital — it has seven wineries. Fox Valley, in the northeast, classic dairy farming country, has four wineries, which include Trout Springs and LedgeStone. Door County, further north than Fox Valley, has eight wineries, including Parallel 44.

Wollersheim Winery, near Prairie du Sac, a three-hour drive west of Milwaukee, sits on a hillside in a cluster of ivy-covered buildings overlooking the Wisconsin River. It's part of the Lake Wisconsin AVA (American Viticultural Association, or official grape growing region). Bob Wollersheim, who passed away in 2005, hired a French winemaker from *Beaujolais*, Philippe Coquard, who married Wollersheim's daughter, Julie. Coquard uses Wisconsin hybrid grapes from the estate's 27-acre production to make the *Beaujolais*-style *Domaine du Sac* (with the estate-grown *Marechal Foch* grape, aged in French and American oak) as well as custom-grown, purchased grapes (from Washington and New York) to produce *Chardonnay*, *Riesling* and *Pinot Noir* and the award winning *Prairie Fumé* (a crisp, off-dry white made with the *Seyval Blanc* grape).

LedgeStone is in Fox Valley, about a two-hour drive north of Milwaukee, near Greenleaf. It is perched at the foot of 'The Ledge,' the escarpment — in Wisconsin, this limestone cuesta extends for 230 miles, following the Door County Peninsula. The ledge helps create just the right conditions for grape growing. Ten years ago, Tim Abel planted five acres (now 15), with the help of his family and friends. Over a selection of artisanal Wisconsin cheeses — a Hook's cheddar, a La Clare Farms goat cheese, a Seymour Blue and a Sartori Reserve Parmesan — we try his flagship LedgeStone *Frontenac Reserve 2007*. It's a full-bodied, oak-aged red, made from the *Frontenac* grape as well as a Monarch Creek *Cabernet Sauvignon*, named for the butterflies his children gather in the nearby creek.

"I can look at the ponds and tell if the fish are happy. Grapes, same thing," says Steve DeBaker, winemaker and owner at Trout Springs. It's on a five-acre farm, which Steve and Andrea bought in 1983 and which quadruples as a winery, trout hatchery, game farm and plant nursery. They produce dry wines using Wisconsin hybrids, but also have a dizzying number of award winning fruit wines, such as 'Millennium Cherry,' made from hand-picked Door County cherries, 'Pear Extraordinaire,' made from Asian and Bartlett pears, peach, elderberry, blackberry, crab apple and dandelion wine. But don't let the word 'fruit' deter you. They use traditional wine-making techniques, like chaptalization, to enrich 'Peach Perfection,' and *sur lie* to attain a complex, creamy character in the pear wines. Steve has been the leader in getting approval for a new Wisconsin AVA designation, Wisconsin Ledge, which once official, will help the escarpment wineries compete internationally.

Steve Johnson and his wife, Maria Milano, of Parallel 44, grew up in wine-making families in Wisconsin. They named it Parallel 44 because it's on the same latitudinal line as Tuscany and France's



THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP ROW Red barn in rural Wisconsin; Wollersheim Winery; Iron Horse Hotel Executive Chef Jason Gorman; Milwaukee Public Market; Sculpture outside Harley Davidson Museum; Bruce Workman, Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker at Edelweiss Creamery; Sign for Milwaukee River Walk.



Cook



USA

SERVES 4

Eggplant Othello

THIS RECIPE, using Carr Valley Cheeses, is from a cooking class taught by Jasper Mirabile Jr., of Jasper's Restaurant in Kansas City, MO.

Eggplant
1 large, sliced into
6-8 pieces

**Marinara
Tomato Sauce**
1 x 16 oz jar

Olive Oil
1 cup

Ricotta Cheese
16 oz

Italian Sausage
ground, 4 oz

Parsley
chopped, 1 Tbs

Eggs
2

**Carr Valley Cave Aged
Mellage Cheese**¹
2 oz, diced


**Carr Valley Airco
Cheese**²
thinly sliced into strips

- 1 In a large skillet, heat the olive oil. Add the eggplant slices and sauté on both sides for 4-5 minutes. Take out of the skillet and place on a napkin to soak up the oil.
- 2 In a large mixing bowl, add the parsley, eggs and Carr Valley Cave Aged Mellage and ricotta cheeses.
- 3 Sauté the ground sausage and add to the cheese mixture. Place one heavy tablespoon of the mixture onto each eggplant slice and roll up. Place in baking dish and add tomato sauce, baking at 400°F for 10 minutes. Take out and place strips of Carr Valley Airco cheese on top of each eggplant roll. Serve hot.

¹ Or Provolone.

² Or any smoked cheese.

Bordeaux regions. After years of searching for the right location, they found the 35-acre piece of land in Door County, and in 2005, they planted their first vines. The wines we taste include the white, semi-sweet, *Vignoles* and a red, port-style dessert wine called Frost Bite, their 2008 vintage made with the *Frontenac* grape.

While there's disagreement about the meaning of the name Wisconsin, which originated with the Menominee Indians, some sources believe it means 'the stream which meanders through red,' (possibly a reference to the red sandstone bluffs of Wisconsin Dells). However, wine lovers would likely prefer to explain the name as a Native American premonition of Wisconsin's red wines to come — probably the best red wines this side of Tuscany. 

travelwisconsin.com

wiswine.org

visitmilwaukee.org

ambassadormilwaukee.com

hotelmetro.com

Click

THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT, FROM TOP Lighthouse on Lake Michigan; Rolling hills of rural Wisconsin; Cream City brick of Milwaukee buildings; Sign inside Milwaukee Public Market; Cycling on Lake Michigan; Well-preserved industrial buildings in Milwaukee; Rural Wisconsin

TRAVEL WISCONSIN.COM



TRAVEL WISCONSIN.COM



From Ledge Stone Vineyards



Cook
to

SERVES 6

Polenta with Sausage and SarVecchio Parmesan Cheese

WINE PAIRING: A crisp, aromatic white — Wisconsin Frontenac Gris, Pinot Gris or a Sauvignon Blanc.

- Boiling Water
1 cup
- Golden Raisins
1 cup
- Olive Oil
2 Tbs and some for greasing the pan
- Bulk Sweet Sausage
¾ lb
- Pancetta
¼ lb, diced
- Onion
1 small, minced
- Polenta
2 cups
- Sartori Reserve SarVecchio Parmesan Cheese¹
grated, ½ cup (plus extra for sprinkling)
- Fresh Sage
cut into julienne strips, 1 Tbs
- Egg Yolks
3
- Salt and Pepper
to taste
- Boiling Water or Stock
4 cups

- 1 Heat oven to 375°F, and grease a 9 x 12 inch baking dish with olive oil.
- 2 Pour 1 cup of boiling water over raisins to plump.
- 3 Heat 2 Tbs olive oil in a medium sauté pan over medium-high heat, and add the sausage and pancetta, stirring until cooked but not browned and crisp. Add onion; reduce heat and sweat until translucent. Set aside.
- 4 In large bowl, combine the polenta, SarVecchio cheese, sage and egg yolks. Whisk in salt, pepper and boiled water or stock.
- 5 Drain the raisins and add them to the polenta with about ¾ of the sausage and onion mixture. Stir until smooth and slightly thick. Then pour the mixture into the prepared dish, and top with the remaining sausage mixture.
- 6 Drizzle the pan with a little olive oil, and bake for about 45 minutes or until the sausage is browned and crisp and the polenta is set. Remove from the oven and let stand 10 minutes.
- 7 Cut the polenta into 6 squares, placing one square on each plate and sprinkle extra grated SarVecchio on top. Place a mound of arugula beside the polenta, and drizzle with vinaigrette.
- 8 Serve with an arugula salad dressed with balsamic vinaigrette.

¹ Or Parmigiano Reggiano.

Recipe by Chef Tory Miller, of L'Etoile restaurant in Madison, WI, courtesy of Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.



THIS PAGE, FROM TOP Julie Vernig of Carr Valley Cheese; Harley Davidson Museum, Milwaukee; Harley Courier Bike; Indulge Wine Room, Milwaukee.





The Fox River Valley Wine Trail

A self-guided tasting tour that features five wineries. Overnight at the delightful Astor House Bed & Breakfast, in a beautifully restored 1888 'stick style' house.

foxrivervalleywinetrail.com
astorhouse.com

Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin

Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin Preservation in Spring Green is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Wright was born in Wisconsin and considered Spring Green his home. Taliesin was also his workshop and architectural laboratory for 48 years. Taliesin's many wings and terraces reach out along the brow of the hill, which has a sweeping view of the valley settled by Wright's Welsh ancestors.

taliesinpreservation.org

America's Dairyland

Wisconsin claimed the title of 'America's Dairyland' and put it on license plates in the 1930s. The state is dotted with cheese shops and factories, making it the largest producer of cheese in the U.S. Six hundred types, to be exact, many recognized by American foodies as class acts. Not only is Wisconsin the only U.S. state with the European-style Master Cheesemaker program (a distinction awarded to craftspeople who complete a rigorous 15-year apprenticeship program), its cheesemakers have won more awards in national and international competitions than any other state or country.

eatwisconsincheese.com

Carr Valley Cheese

"The idea," Julie Vernig, Cooking School Director tells me, as I try the Mobay Cheese, "is to taste each layer separately and then together, for three different flavour profiles in one cheese." Carr Valley's take on French Morbier is a layer of sheep's milk cheese and a layer of goat's milk cheese separated by a layer of grape vine ash. Not surprisingly, it won first place at the 2009 World Cheese Competition. The Aged Cardona, a goat's



THIS PAGE, FROM TOP Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin; Historic Astor House Inn in Green Bay; Greg Robinson of Astor House; Madison Cheese Fair.

milk cheese, is sweet with a slight nutty flavour. The Cocoa Cardona is rubbed with cocoa powder, giving it a subtle chocolate flavour. It is one of Carr Valley's 'American Originals,' which can't be found anywhere else in the world. Carr Valley is owned and operated by fourth generation Master Cheesemaker Sid Cook.

carrvalleycheese.com

Harley-Davidson Museum & Iron Horse Hotel, Milwaukee

The \$30-million, 100,000- square foot Harley-Davidson Museum, with 450 vintage motorcycles, provides a fascinating tour of the garish, outlandish and beautiful world of motorcycles that non-biking visitors can also appreciate. The nearby Iron Horse Hotel, (a reference to the motorcycle as the modern iron horse), is geared to the high-end motorcycle enthusiast and buzzes with a crowd that ranges from bikers to business executives. In a converted warehouse in the historic tannery district, its renovated interior captures the sensibility of the great American industrial era and has its details worked out like a theme park.

theironhorsehotel.com

Indulge in Milwaukee

The menu at Indulge Wine Room in Milwaukee offers flights of wine with playful names like 'Dude, Where's my Chard?!', the 'White-Cha-Ma-Call-It' and 'Que Syrah. Shiraz.' These downplay the excellent wine list, which includes 60 wines by the glass. The wines are paired with Artisan Plates, selections of creamy Wisconsin and European cheeses, charcuterie and locally-produced condiments and chocolate. The interior of the stylish urban wine room has walls of exposed Cream City brick, an imposing front room tasting table, hand-welded metal tables with granite table tops and dark leather tiles on the walls. Refreshingly, the approach to wine in this very chic space is extremely easygoing.

getindulge.com

From Executive Chef Jason Gorman at The Iron Horse Hotel

SERVES 4-6

Chanterelle Mushroom Blintzes

SUGGESTED WINE PAIRING: California Brogan Cellars 2006 Pinot Noir. The earthiness of this wine pairs well with chanterelle mushrooms.

Blintzes (Crêpes)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Eggs
3, large | 1 Whisk eggs and milk in mixing bowl. Add flour and salt, then whisk in melted butter. Strain if necessary to remove any clumps of flour. |
| Milk
10 oz | |
| Flour
6 oz | 2 Heat a small, non-stick pan and spray with Pam. Ladle out 1 oz of crêpe batter and swirl around to coat the entire bottom of pan. Cook for about 1 minute and flip, cooking for an additional 30 seconds and turn out onto a parchment lined sheet tray. |
| Kosher Salt
¼ oz | |
| Butter
1 oz, melted | |



Apricot Pepper Jam

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| Yellow Peppers
finely diced, 4 oz | Sugar
5 oz | 1 Combine the yellow peppers and apricots in a blender with boiling water. Purée. |
| Dried Apricots
finely diced, 5 oz | Banyuls Vinegar ²
¼ cup | 2 Add the rest of the ingredients to the mixture and simmer in a pan for 15 minutes. |
| Boiling Water
2 cups | Garlic
3 cloves, roasted | 3 To serve the blintz, spread the jam in the center of a plate and place the blintzes on top. Garnish with flat leaf parsley and a sprinkle of aged Parmesan cheese. |
| Jalapeno
½ a pepper, diced | | |

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Chanterelle Mushroom Blintzes; The Iron Horse Hotel lit up at night; Smyth Restaurant, The Iron Horse Hotel, Milwaukee.



Chanterelle Mushroom Filling

- | | |
|---|--|
| Chanterelle Mushrooms
chopped, 8 oz | 1 To roast the garlic, toast the cloves (along with the 3 called for in the apricot jam recipe) in a dry skillet until they are very soft. Cool and squeeze the garlic out of its skin. |
| Vidalia Onions
thinly sliced, 4 oz | 2 Sauté the mushrooms until cooked through. Remove from pan and cool. |
| Garlic
6 cloves, roasted | 3 Sauté onions until caramelized. Remove from pan and cool. |
| Soft Goat Cheese ¹
4 oz | 4 Combine the mushrooms, onions, garlic paste and goat cheese in a bowl, and season to taste with salt and pepper. |
| Kosher Salt and Pepper
to taste | 5 Spoon 3 oz of filling into each crepe, place in a Teflon pan with 1 tsp of salad oil, and place in a 325°F oven for about 4-5 minutes. |



¹ Chef Jason Gorman uses Wisconsin Hidden Springs Creamery Lavender Honey Goat Cheese. ² Or cider vinegar.

