

Other Wineries

The western United States is justifiably famous for the fine wines that originate there. But that part of the country doesn't have a lock on the production of highly drinkable vintages. Here are some other American hot spots where you can drink locally and really enjoy it.

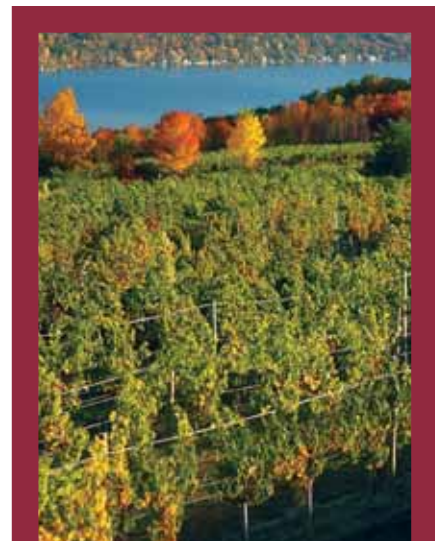
TEXAS Texas has been the breeding ground for good bordeaux blends, Italian varietals, Mediterranean-style wines, and Texas *viognier*, among others. Messina Hof Winery & Resort (979-778-9463, messinahof.com) is a long-standing, highly regarded operation on the Texas Bluebonnet Wine Trail. Visit the winery and you'll get a good indication as to where the Lone Star scene is. Be sure to taste Messina Hof's signature offering: Messina Hof Paulo Port. For more information on the area, check out texaswinetrail.com.

For another taste of the Texas food and wine scene, head west. The Buffalo Gap Wine & Food Summit (periniranch.com/summit), held at the Perini Ranch in April, will give you a celebration of wine and food, Texas style. If you can't make the summit, you can pay a visit to the famous Perini Ranch Steakhouse and even stay in the Perini Ranch Guest Quarters. Or just order some of their mesquite-smoked peppered beef tenderloin online and bring a little Texas-ranch cuisine back home (periniranch.com).

YADKIN VALLEY WINE TRAIL Twenty-eight wineries operate along this trail in North Carolina. The growing conditions and climate there are similar to what can be found in Burgundy, France. Several grape varieties do well throughout Yadkin Valley. Chardonnays, rieslings, cabernet francs, sauvignon blancs, and merlots rank among the favorite wines

produced in the area. Be sure to visit Shelton Vineyards (336-366-4724, sheltonvineyards.com), the largest family-owned estate winery in North Carolina. Tours and tastings are available seven days a week. For more information, check out yvw.com.

FINGER LAKES More than 100 wineries are scattered around the picturesque Finger Lakes in upstate New York. The region's temperature and elevation are similar to those in Germany's Rheinpfalz area, so it's no wonder that rieslings do particularly well in the lakes. Among locals, a favorite producer is Dr. Konstantin Frank, whose Dr. Frank's Winery (607-868-4884, drfrankwines.com) makes some of the most popular wines in the area. Pay a visit to the vineyard and sample his Salmon Run Chardonnay or slightly fruity Coho Red. For more information, check out fingerlakeswinecountry.com. **CL**



From top left counterclockwise: Perini Ranch mesquite-smoked peppered tenderloin, Messina Hof's restaurant; a selection of wines from Shelton Vineyards; view of the vineyards of Dr. Frank's Winery