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Virginia to Uncork Wine Month in October

-Virginia's 100+ wineries are a boom for tourism and taste buds-

Media Only

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RICHMOND, Va. – Virginia is for Lovers, especially wine lovers. Wine in Virginia is bigger than ever, with more than 100 wineries across the state. To celebrate Virginia's vineyards and the wine industry's positive impact on tourism, Virginia is dedicating October as Wine Month.

"Food and wine travel are hot trends with the traveling public," said Alisa Bailey, president and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation. "With more than 100 wineries, incredible independently-owned restaurants, and unique inns and lodges, Virginia is uniquely positioned to capitalize upon the public's desire for epicurean travel. What better time to kick off Wine Month in Virginia than October when our fall foliage will be in its regalia."

Wineries across Virginia are holding festivals to celebrate Wine Month. Highlights include the *Virginia Wine Festival*, the largest on the east coast, September 30 – October 1 in Leesburg, with 57 wineries, an art show, and music from Virginia's Crooked Road. Visitors can sample German cuisine and award-winning wines at AmRhein Winery's *Oktoberfest* on October 7. Bring along the breath mints for the *2006 Virginia Wine and Garlic Festival*, October 14 - 15 at Rebec Vineyards. Soar up, up, and away October 20 – 22 at the *Shenandoah Valley Hot Air Balloon and Wine Festival*, featuring 17 Virginia wineries. And in central Virginia, sample wines from nearly 20 wineries at Powhatan's *Festival of the Grape* on October 28.

Virginia boasts several unique wine trails across the state that make visiting wineries easy and fun. Some of Virginia's best wineries are easy to find on trails such as the *Blue Ridge WineWay*, the *Monticello Wine trail*, and trails in Bedford, Loudoun, central Virginia, the Northern Neck, and the Shenandoah Valley. All Virginia wineries that are open to the public are marked from the road with a designated Virginia Wine Tour road sign.

"Visiting a Virginia winery is not just about the wine, it's about the experience," said Ann Heidig, president of the Virginia Wine Association. "You don't need to be an expert in wine to come out and enjoy yourself while tasting Virginia wine in beautiful settings across the state."

During October, visitors to www.VirginiaStompingGrounds.org can register to win a trip to Wine Camp Weekend at Lansdowne Resort. The Virginia Tourism Corporation will award one lucky winner a weekend for two at the resort, a food and wine pairing seminar with renowned sommelier Mary Watson-Delauder, and directions for a driving tour of nearby wineries, complete with picnic basket lunch.

For more information on Virginia Wine Month go to www.VirginiaStompingGrounds.org or call 1-800-932-5827 to request a wine guide and an official Virginia travel guide.

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