

Northern Michigan Wine Guide



RecordEagle/John L. Russell

Wall of Wine: Silvertree Deli of Suttons Bay boasts the largest selection of Michigan wines with at least one wine from every winery in the state.

Destination wine: Wine trails help to grow area tourism

BY REGGIE ONTARIO

What northern Michigan tourist destination was written about over 300 times last year in local, regional and Midwestern publications, more than any other area destination? What brochures are among the most requested at the Traverse City Convention & Visitors Bureau? What is among the most popular destinations that the West Michigan Tourist Association receives daily requests for information?

Northern Michigan Wineries!

Wine trail associations have been a popular way for wineries to promote themselves in California, Australia, and New York. Michigan, one of the

fastest growing wine regions in the country, has now joined other world-class wine regions by developing four wine trail associations: Wineries of the Old Mission Peninsula, The Leelanau Peninsula Vintners Association, The Southwest Michigan Wine Trail and the Southeast Michigan Wine Trail.

The Wineries of Old Mission Peninsula have been organizing joint promotional events for several years. Their annual Blossom Days has been a popular event, where visitors buy a special tasting glass and taste two-barrel samples at each of the four wineries on the Old Mission Peninsula.

“In developing our trail we are marketing ourselves in a way to build brand recognition. When

people say Old Mission we want them to think wine, like when someone says Napa, wine immediately comes to mind,” said Liz Berger, of Chateau Chantal and President of the trail. “I think there are certain things that we can do to market our region collectively while still maintaining our autonomy as individual wineries on the peninsula.”

Many share Berger’s view of wine trails. In California a recent wine glut has brought many wineries together, that in the past were not a part of a collective trail, to promote “local” wines.

Don Coe, managing partner of Black Star Farms, agrees with that concept. Coe played a

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