

Wine events of the season

BY DICK ALLEN

It all started 20 years ago when Kathy and Chris Telgard and a few of their friends decided to launch the Leland Wine Festival. Their vision was to jump start the summer season for the Leland business community, give a boost to the emerging northern Michigan wine region and have some fun. They have succeeded on all accounts and for the nearly 4,000 attendees the festival marks the start of summer.

What the Telgards didn't realize was they were starting a trend. Today there are numerous festivals and events that celebrate the region's budding wine industry. The popularity of these festivals stems from the ability of the participants to sample wines in moderation from several different wineries. Most festivals have between 12 and 20 wineries present, with winemakers and other winery staff on hand to answer questions.

In addition to wine these festivals feature regional cuisine prepared by locally owned restaurants. The food is often served in appetizer portions giving participants the opportunity to sample several items and pair them with the wine. Chefs are often on hand preparing these foods in front of attendees adding additional flavor to the festival.

Each wine festival has its own character and personality. Many have music, some offer jazz while others offer blues or soft rock. Some festivals have beer; hand-crafted locally made micro brewed beers, while others have artists displaying their works. Many of the northern Michigan festivals are at harbors or near water.

While each festival is unique, they all have a common denominator — fun. Wine festivals are a lot of fun, ask anyone that attends, because more than likely they will be bringing others with them next year, maybe you. Don't wait for an invitation though from your friends, with eight wine festivals in the next year there is plenty of opportunity to seek



Photo/Rick Coates

The Leland Wine Festival was the first of a number of wine festivals and is now a tradition.

one out on your own.

LELAND WINE FESTIVAL *JUNE 11* Leland Harbor

If you look on a calendar the start of summer usually is around the third weekend of June, unless you live in or near Leland, then the summer starts the second Saturday of June with the Leland Wine & Food Festival. This is the 20th year that organizers from the Leland business community have put the festival on.

This year's festival will feature 14 wineries from throughout Michigan along with 10 Leelanau Peninsula restaurants. Ron Getz and friends will grace the music stage with blues and jazzy style tunes.

Another popular attraction to the festival is the commemorative Leland Wine & Food Festival poster. The poster will be on sale and the artist Eloise Fahs will be on hand from noon until 3 p.m. to sign prints.

Tickets for the Leland Wine & Food Festival are \$8 and available only at the event. Participants receive a wine fes-

tival glass and two tasting tickets. Additional tasting tickets are \$2 each. Wine samples require 1 to 3 tickets depending on the cost of the wine. For additional information on the festival call (231) 256-7747.

Festival comes a brand new two-day wine festival at Bay Harbor outside of Petoskey. The festival is part of the famed Concours d'Elegance that features and invitational show of vintage and classic cars, boats, motorcycles and



Photo/David L. Fox

BAY HARBOR CONCOURS **FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL** *JUNE 17 & 18* Bay Harbor

There is no rest for those on the wine festival trail because right after the Leland Wine

even float planes from all over the country.

"Good wine and food are integral to the lifestyles of our entrants and audience," said David Draper, chairman of Bay Harbor Concours d'Elegance. "We want to give those who

come to Concours another reason to spend time enjoying the whole day. More importantly we wish to promote the local wineries of the Leelanau Peninsulas."

The "Food & Wine Experience" begins at 4 p.m. and continues to 10 p.m. on Friday and from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Friday night will feature the sounds of Doc Woodward and on Saturday Leo Creek featuring Drew Abbott lead guitarist from the Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band.

Friday night anyone owning a classic car, boat or motorcycle is encouraged to bring it.

There is no charge to attend either the car show or to enter the wine and food tent. Tasting tickets are available, for a nominal fee, for participants wishing to sample wines from the Leelanau Peninsula and craft brews from Shorts Brewery. Tasting tickets are also available to enjoy food from the Crow's Nest, Galley Gourmet, The Inn at Bay Harbor, Stafford's and The Bay Harbor Golf Club.

For additional information visit:

www.bayharborconcours.com or www.lpwines.com or call (231) 938-1811.

MILL RIVER WINE, HOPS & FOOD FESTIVAL *JULY 3*

Thunder Bay Resort, Hillman (between Gaylord and Atlanta)

Jack Matthias of Thunder Bay Resort has been offering Michigan wines with his Elk Viewing dinners. The events have been so successful he has decided to add a wine festival this year. The fun begins at 2 p.m. and will continue until 10 p.m. when the fireworks start. Admission is \$10 and includes a commemorative event wine glass and a couple of tasting tickets. The festival will feature over 30 different wines from Michigan wineries and craft brews from the Short's Brewing Company of Bellaire. Music and comedy will be provided Mike Ridley. Several

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