



Red White & Brut!

Discover Kent's award winning vineyards



a taste of Kent

Vina Invicta

The cultivation of vines to make wine in Kent, as in other parts of England, dates back to Roman times. In times past, vineyards were spread widely across the county, as evidenced by surviving place names, such as the Vines in Rochester and the Vine cricket club in Sevenoaks. It is believed that there was once a Roman vineyard at Ightham, while in the thirteenth century the Archbishop of Canterbury owned one of the biggest winemaking operations of the Middle Ages, including a large vineyard at Teynham.



As with other forms of agriculture, viticulture has had its ups and downs over the intervening centuries. Today however, English wine production is emphatically on the up.

English wines, including those from Kent, regularly win awards in international competitions. This success has not gone

unnoticed. Producers from Champagne, with whom the south east corner of England shares both climatic and soil conditions, have recently been eyeing up the county's investment potential. The prospects for growing vines certainly appear much rosier than those of many other forms of agriculture and Kent's current 350 plus acres of vines is predicted to increase further in the coming years.

While the quantity of English wine may be low compared to the major wine producing countries, the quality is these days undeniable. Many of the Germanic grape varieties initially planted in the 1970's are now being replaced by varieties that produce better quality wines, such as Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Bacchus and Ortega.

This is not a result of climate change but rather the ever increasing skill and professionalism of English winemakers. The wines they produce are distinctively English, and proudly so, emphasising their own locality as much as any French 'terroir'.



And Kent is leading the way. At the 2009 English and Welsh Wine of the Year Competition three of the 11 Gold Medals and 12 of the 39 Silver Medals given went to wines produced in Kent. Many also fared well in both The Decanter World Wine Awards and International Wine and Spirit Competition for 2009.

English sparkling wines are a particular success story, with the best even outperforming top-notch champagnes in blind-tasting international competitions. The future for Kentish viticulture looks bright, or as the Romans might have put it – "in vino veritas" - in wine we trust.

This leaflet provides a summary history of viticulture in England as context for modern day wine production in Kent. It includes a circular

Cork comes from the wood of the Quercus Suber or cork tree, a species of Oak native to Spain. New 'plastic' corks were introduced to help conserve the declining number of cork trees.



Head Winemaker, Owen Elias, Chapel Down Winery.

walk that passes close to Meopham Valley Vineyard, set within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Listings for each Kent vineyard specify opening times and facilities for individual and group visitors, along with full contact details. Kent's vineyards – and wines – await.

The wine list

By no means these days are all English wines white and still. Although red wines only amount to some 10% of wine produced, they are much in demand and accompany light meats and game extremely well. Rosé wines are also increasing in popularity while the production of bottle-fermented sparkling wines is one of the major growth areas in UK wineries.



English sparkling wines have been very successful in recent years in international competitions and tastings. At the moment, some 15% of all UK wine produced is sparkling and this figure is expected to rise over the next few years as the popularity of this style continues to increase.



Hand picking grapes at Biddenden Vineyards.

Produced in Kent



The best of food,
drink, products
and services
from the Garden
of England

Produced in Kent, supported through a joint venture between Kent County Council and Hadlow College, is dedicated to promoting and celebrating the best of food, drink and products to be found in Kent. We are committed to providing business and marketing support to raise the profile, provenance and reputation of products from Kent.

We support and promote the land-based and rural sectors within the county and continually look for ways to develop our membership offering, with a strong emphasis on assisting business development, diversification opportunities and joint sourcing projects. Our website aims to bring producers and the buying public closer together.

If you are looking for a farmer, producer or independent shop, or simply would just like to know what Kent has to offer across the seasons, then visit our website at www.producedinkent.co.uk

Produced in Kent publishes a quarterly newsletter that can be found in libraries and tourist information centres, farmers' markets and farm shops. It is also available direct to your door if you sign up as a Friend of Produced in Kent (*for more details please see the website*).

Support Kent – buy local!!
Produced in Kent Limited
Bourne Grange Stables
Tonbridge Road
Hadlow TN11 0AU
Tel: 01732 853170
Fax: 01732 852521
Email: info@producedinkent.co.uk



A short history of wine production in England

It is not known whether vines were grown and wine made in England before the arrival of the Romans but wine amphorae dating from before the Roman conquest have been discovered at sites in southern England.



While wine consumed before the Romans arrived is thought to have been imported from the Continent, it is generally agreed that they were the first to plant vines in this country.

Wine drinking became commonplace during the Roman occupation. When the Romans started to leave these shores at the end of the fourth century, it is thought that any vineyards that existed would have been attached to religious institutions, such as monasteries. By that time, wine played an important part in religious ceremonies.

The arts of vine growing and wine making were largely lost during the Dark Ages but revived by the 10th century, largely thanks to King Alfred re-establishing the Christian religion. Revival continued apace after the

arrival of the Normans. The Domesday Book (1085/1086) records vineyards in 42 locations, only 12 of which were attached to monasteries.

The climate is thought to have improved for 300 or so years after the Norman Conquest and the South East then became established as one of the main areas for viticulture.



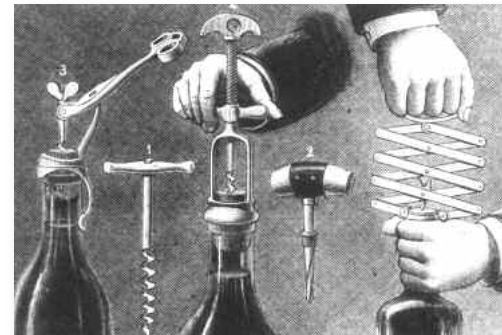
King Alfred the Great (849-99).



However, from the Middle-Ages until the mid-twentieth century, viticulture in England experienced a long period of decline.

Two of the pioneers of its subsequent post-war revival had strong Kent connections. Edward Hyams planted vines for table and wine in Kent in the late 1940's and published "The Grapevine in England" in 1949, with a forward by the creator of Sissinghurst Castle's Garden, Vita Sackville-West.

The English were the first to seal wine bottles, using cork imported from Spain or Portugal.



George Ordish, a Kentish Man, planted a few vines in his garden near Maidstone in 1938 and went on to become an accomplished winemaker and author of the book "Wine Growing in England", published in 1953.



Two barrel-shaped wine bottles, 2nd-3rd century AD (glass).

The development of the modern English wine industry gained pace from the mid-1960's. In Kent, the vineyards at Biddenden and Lamberhurst were planted in the late 1960's and early 1970's and those at Tenterden followed soon after. More than 350 acres in Kent are now planted with vines and all signs indicate that further planting will occur in forthcoming years.

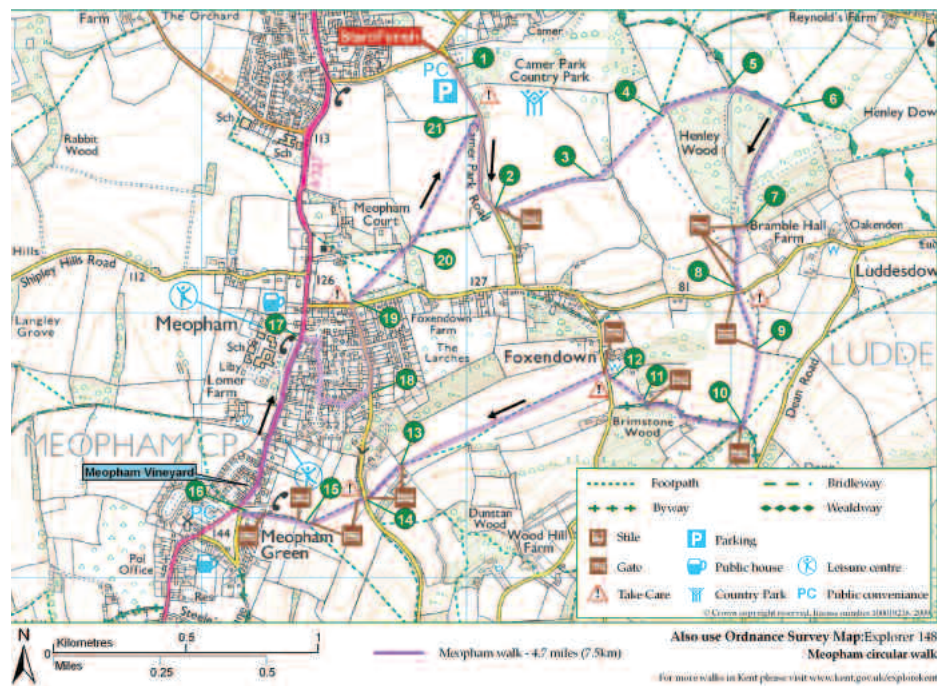
Grape vines in Tenterden.



Work up a thirst

A walk from Camer Park, passing Meopham Valley Vineyard en route

4.7 miles (7.5 km) approx - Allow 3 hours



The walk starts at Camer Park, a 45 acre site of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The route gives walkers the chance to enjoy some spectacular views across the rolling landscapes, as well as the opportunity to explore Meopham village – known as the longest village in Kent. It is also home to Meopham Windmill, which was recently restored to full working order, and to Meopham Valley Vineyard.



How to get there...

Road Map: Multimap website

www.multimap.com. Search for "Camer".

By Car: From M20 or A2 take A227 to Meopham. Turn off on Green Lane following signs to Camer County Park.

Parking: Parking is available at the Visitor Centre.

Train: Nearest station: Sole Street (0.5 miles). National Rail Enquiries: 08457 484950

Bus: 308 (Bluewater - Sevenoaks) hourly, Mon-Sat. 5 journeys, Sun. 416 (Gravesend – Meopham) 4 journeys, Mon – Fri. 3 journeys, Sat. Traveline: 0870 6082608

Route Description

- 1 Exit the car park and turn left to follow the road.
- 2 At junction with footpath turn left to go through kissing gate and continue along field boundary to the right.
- 3 Just after turning a bend in the corner of the field bear right to head through a short wooded section leading to another field. Follow path towards trees.
- 4 Go through gap to enter into another field. Do not follow path straight on but turn right and follow boundary on the right.
- 5 Go through gap in the corner of the field and enter a short wooded section. Follow across track into another field. Follow the track, bearing right.
- 6 Follow track into another field and turn right, keeping to boundary as you continue on. Follow path to corner of field and continue into a wooded section. Bear right at a clearing in the woods to take the well worn path (fairly narrow and winding) to gate.
- 7 Pass through gate and follow path along top edge of field and down to kissing gate in right corner. Admire some good views on the left before passing through gate as the path heads to the road.
- 8 Pass through gate, cross road and go through kissing gate into a field. Follow path ahead, which bears left to corner of field.
- 9 Pass through gate and follow narrow path through a short wooded section and up a short flight of steps to enter into a field. Follow path straight on uphill. There are some good views at the top of this path.
- 10 Go through gate, turn right and follow byway.
- 11 After approximately 200 metres bear right, off the track through gate (follow the footpath arrow markers). Follow path through woodland. Once out of wooded section, cross garden and continue down driveway to road (The footpath runs across private property so please keep to the path).
- 12 Cross road and through gate into a field. Follow path straight ahead across field to gate.
- 13 Pass through gate to leave field and continue ahead. Follow path through 2 more gates and climb a short slope to the road.
- 14 Cross over road and follow path opposite, up a short flight of steps. At the top, pass through gate into field and continue to follow the path uphill. This section is fairly steep.
- 15 Go through gate and turn right to follow the boundary on the right, heading towards a gate. Go through 2 kissing gates to continue on path to the road.
- 16 Emerge from the path at Meopham Green, near the War Memorial. Turn right and head towards main road. Cross over onto pavement and turn right to head to Meopham. Cross over at the traffic lights just after the school and turn left to continue past bus stop.
- 17 On reaching Meadfield Rd turn right and right again into Cheyne Walk. Follow path and turn left into Warwick Gardens. Turn left again as you meet up with Cheyne Walk once more.
- 18 At junction of Cheyne Walk, turn left along Whitehill Road and follow to junction with The Street.
- 19 Cross over road to follow footpath into field. Bear right after the end of the short line of trees on the right - do not follow path straight ahead.
- 20 Follow path into short wooded section and into another field. Follow along boundary for 30 metres before turning left through a gap in the trees into another field. Follow path across field to the road.
- 21 On reaching the road, turn left to make your way back to the car park where you started.

For more walks and ideas for great days out in the countryside visit www.kent.gov.uk/explorekent or call **08458 247600**.



The vineyards of Kent

Having read about past and current wine production, why not visit a vineyard to sample the wines at first hand? Many vineyards offer guided tours and tastings, along with other facilities such as well-stocked shops and tempting restaurants. Summary details are provided below.

Collectively, the vineyards produce a range of aromatic, zesty whites, fresh and fruity rosés, distinctive reds and delicious English sparkling wines. Many of the wines have won national and international awards.

For details and to order, visit individual vineyard websites or telephone for an up to date wine list.

1 BARNSOLE VINEYARD

Fleming Road, Staple
Canterbury CT3 1LG

Tel: 01304 812530

Mobile: 07770 482883 / 07929 241986

www.barnsole.co.uk



Family run, award winning 3 acre vineyard established in 1993 and producing 10,000 bottles a year. Visitors are most welcome and car parking, admission, wine tasting and mini tours are free. Tours last about 20 minutes and show

how the vines are tended and the wine made. Advice on vine pruning and care is also provided.

Full guided vineyard tours are available at a charge of £1.50 per person. Larger group tours can be arranged at a discount but preferably by prior arrangement. The vineyard is open every day from April to October 10.30 am - 5.00 pm, and most days in winter, closing at dusk.

2 BIDDENDEN VINEYARDS

Gribble Bridge Lane
Biddenden TN27 8DF

Tel: 01580 291726

Fax: 01580 291933

www.biddendenvineyards.com



Biddenden Vineyards is Kent's oldest family owned vineyard, having been established in 1969. Set on a gentle south facing slope in a shallow, sheltered valley the vineyards are just over a mile from the village of Biddenden. From an original planting of 1/3 acre the vineyards have expanded to 22 acres with ten varieties of grapes producing white, red and rosé still wines and both white and pink sparkling wines.

Admissions and tastings are free to individual visitors. Day tours for groups are available by appointment for a minimum of 15 people and include a walk through the vines and a visit to the winery, followed by a complimentary glass of wine. Prices (2009) are £4.95 per adult and £2.50 for children (10-17 years old).

Evening tours combined with a meal are also available. The prices for evening visits vary depending on choice of menu. Please telephone for further details.

A selection of combined tours with other local attractions are also available, such as "Vines, Wines and Railway Lines" with the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Biddenden is open from 10.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Saturday and 11.00am – 5.00pm on Sundays / Bank Holidays. It is closed on Sundays in January and February and over the Christmas holiday period.

3 THE CHAPEL DOWN WINERY

Tenterden Vineyard, Small Hythe
Tenterden TN30 7NG



Sales Office -Tel: 01580 763033

Fine Wine and

Food Store/Tours – Tel: 01580 766111

www.englishwinesgroup.com



English Wines Group is the largest producer of English wines in the country producing the Award Winning Chapel Down range of wines. The company currently sources grapes from across the South East of England in addition to the well established vineyard on site.

The vineyard at Tenterden extends over 25 acres. Visitors are welcome to wander round the vines or browse in the Chapel Down Fine Wine and Food Store during opening hours (10am -5pm).

Guided tour of the winery and tasting run daily (subject to availability) and last approximately 1 hour. The tour guide explains the history of English wine, the methods used and the grapes grown. Visitors also learn about the processes behind the production of still and sparkling wines in the Winery, followed by a tasting. Standard Tours currently cost £7.00 for adults, concessions are available and under 12's are free.

Group (minimum of 10 people) and bespoke tours are available by prior arrangement by calling the Chapel Down Fine Wine and Food Store.

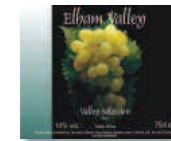
The Chapel Down Fine Wine and Food Store is open daily from 10am-5pm, selling a wide range of quality British food and drink including over 30 British cheeses and luxury gift items.

4 ELHAM VALLEY VINEYARD

Breach, Barham
Canterbury CT4 6LN

Tel: 01227 831266

www.familyinvestmenthomes.com



Set within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the 2 acre vineyard was established in 1979 and grows Müller Thurgau, Reichensteiner and Seyval Blanc. The Vale of Elham Trust took over the vineyard in 1995 as a day centre for adults with learning disabilities.

Elham Valley's still wines are available in the on-site tea shop, which also features hand made crafts, including items from the vineyard's own pottery workshop. Vineyard tours and tastings can be organised by arrangement and various events are held, including a craft fair – for further details, tel: 01227 832022.

The vineyard is open year round Tues-Fri from 10.30am – 4pm and at weekends from 11am-5pm.

5 GUSBOURNE ESTATE VINEYARD

Appledore

Tel: 01233 758666 / 0791 9131233

50 acres of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier are expected to produce their first harvest and resultant sparkling wines in 2010 or 2011. Plans are also being put in place for a winery and visitor facility.



6 HARBOURNE VINEYARD

Wittersham
Tenterden TN30 7NP



Tel: 01797 270420

www.harbournevineyard.co.uk



The Harbourne Vineyard was planted in 1979 and is a small English vineyard owned and run by Laurence Williams. All the wines produced are grown, made and bottled by

Laurence at the vineyard. Only hand picking and manual basket presses are used. Traditional methods and minimal intervention are employed throughout the grape growing and winemaking processes.

The long growing season of this part of Kent allows the grapes to assimilate the delicate flavours and aromas that are the hallmark of Harbourne wines.

No insecticides or fertilisers are used and all the skins pips and prunings are put back onto the land. The vines are always hard pruned to reduce crop and ensure good quality.

In the winery manual basket presses are used to gently squeeze the juice from the hand-picked and selected grapes. The wines are produced as naturally as possible. All Harbourne wines are suitable for vegetarians and vegans and are GMO free. We particularly specialise in long period bottle ageing, with fantastic flavours developing in the bottle in wines that are not considered to age well! These are real wines, which have character and individuality.

The shop is usually open each afternoon but if making a special trip, telephone in advance. In addition to wines, the shop also has a wide selection of containerised grape vines.

7 HUSH HEATH ESTATE

Cranbrook TN17 2NG

Tel: 020 7479 9500

www.hushheath.com

Centred on the Tudor, timber-framed Hush Heath Manor, planting of the vineyards at Hush Heath Estate started with 4 acres in spring 2002, since when a further 8.5 acres have been added. The classic Champagne varieties of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier are grown at the only UK vineyard dedicated to the creation of Rosé sparkling wine.

The Estate's Balfour Brut Rosé 2005 was awarded a Gold Medal and the Trophy for best UK wine at the 2009 Decanter World Wine awards.

The Estate is not open to visitors but Balfour Brut Rosé is available from the online shop.

8 LAMBERHURST VINEYARD

The Down, Lamberhurst TN3 8ER

Tel: 01892 890412

www.lamberhurstvineyard.net

Lamberhurst Vineyard was established in 1972 on north facing slopes, making the harvest a couple of weeks later than south facing vineyards. The varieties grown include Bacchus, Early Pinot Noir, Rondo, Regent and Ortega.

Guided tours (including tasting) take an hour and a half – telephone for details. In addition to the vineyard and shop, Lamberhurst also offers a bistro, "Vino" beauty treatments, conference facilities and public house - the Swan at the Vineyard.



9 LEEDS CASTLE VINEYARD

Maidstone ME17 1PL

Tel: 01622 765400

Fax: 01622 735616

www.leeds-castle.com



The vineyard at Leeds Castle may actually be situated on the same site as the one recorded in The Domesday Book in 1086. Each year around 10,000 bottles of still and sparkling white wine are made from a blend of Müller Thurgau, Seyval Blanc, Reichensteiner and Schönberger grapes. These are sold in the Leeds Castle shops and restaurant.

The vineyard can be seen as part of a visit to the castle. For opening times and prices, visit the Leeds Castle website.

10 MEOPHAM VALLEY VINEYARD

Norway House, Wrotham Road,
Meopham DA13 0AU



Tel: 01474 812727

Email: david.grey@lineone.net

www.meophamvalleyvineyard.co.uk



A 2 hectare, family run, south east facing, vineyard planted in 1991. No herbicides or insecticides are used at the vineyard. Grape varieties include Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Madeleine Angevine, Reichensteiner, Triomphe and Leon Millot. Meopham Valley's wines are sold on the website, from the vineyard shop, where visitors can taste before they buy and from Farmers' Markets at Meopham, West Malling, Rochester and Penshurst.

Shop opening times are generally Fridays and Saturdays 11am until dusk but the vineyard also opens on Sundays when work allows. *Tours of the vineyard can be booked on the website - the tour includes wine tasting on the hoof.*

11 THE MOUNT VINEYARD

The Mount, Church Street
Shoreham, Sevenoaks TN14 7SD

Tel: 01959 524008

Fax: 01959 525809

www.themountvineyard.co.uk

Planted in 2004 by the Moulton family the vineyard is situated on a gentle slope down to the crystal clear River Darent.

Four white and three red grape varieties are grown in 10 acres of 17,500 vines which should see 30 tons of grapes picked in 2010. The vineyard is open a few days a year for customers on an appointment basis. Moulton's Recession Red received a Gold Award in the 2009 UK Vineyards Association English & Welsh Wine of the Year Competition.

12 SANDHURST VINEYARD

Hoads Farm, Sandhurst
Cranbrook TN18 5PA

Telephone / Fax: 01580 850296

www.sandhurstvineyards.co.uk



The vineyard at Sandhurst covers 25 acres of a family-run, mixed farm of 350 acres which also includes 55 acres

of hops and grassland, as well as cherries and plums. White and red grape varieties are grown and turned into wine at the Chapel Down winery.

The wine is sold from the shop at Hoads Farm as well as through Farmers' Markets, Agricultural Shows, Craft Fairs, and at some local pubs and restaurants. Visitors are welcome to walk round the vineyards and other parts of the farm at any time although booking is essential for groups requiring a guide, for which a charge of £2.50 per person is made, including a tutored wine tasting. Sandhurst also produces its own beer, using rare hop varieties grown on the farm, while the farmhouse also doubles up as a B&B.

13 TERLINGHAM VINEYARD

Hawkinge, Folkestone CT18 7AE

Mobile: 07771 601736

www.terlinghamvineyard.co.uk

Terlingham Vineyard has six varieties which were planted in 2006, three for sparkling: Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, Chardonnay; two for red: Rondo and Dornfelder and a white, Bacchus.

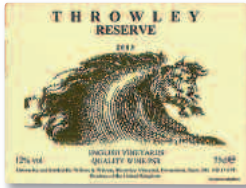
The 1.5 hectare site lies 3 miles inland with views over the countryside rolling down to Folkestone, the sea and France in the distance. The vineyard is open a few days a year for customers on an appointment only basis.

14 THROWLEY VINEYARD

The Old Rectory, Throwley
Faversham ME13 0PF

Tel: 01795 890276

www.throwleyvineyard.co.uk



Set on a secluded south-west facing slope of the North Downs, Throwley's three and a half acre vineyard has won two

International Gold medals for its Ortega dry white and the sparkling Pinot Noir/Chardonnay. The grapes are turned into wine at the Carr Taylor winery.

The wines are available locally through outlets such as Macknade Fine Foods at Faversham, various local restaurants and at selected wine retailers in London. Visits can be arranged but only by prior appointment.

Other useful websites

www.englishwineproducers.com

www.englishwineweek.co.uk

www.kentdowns.org.uk

Where to find Kent wines? A selection of outlets



Hotels, Pubs and Restaurants

Ardennes of Faversham
Tel: 01795 534288

Bell Hotel, Sandwich
Tel: 01304 613388

The Coastguard, St Margaret's Bay
Tel: 01304 853176

George & Dragon, Headcorn
Tel: 01622 890239

The Hengist, Aylesford
Tel: 01622 719273

Howfield Manor, Chartham Hatch
Tel: 01227 733892

Iffin House, Canterbury
Tel: 0870 3210 565

Little Silver Country Hotel, Tenterden
Tel: 01233 850321

The Marquis at Alkham
Tel: 01304 873410

The Mulberry Tree, Boughton Monchelsea
Tel: 01622 749082

Plough at Stalisfield Green
Tel: 01795 890256

Richard Phillips at Chapel Down, Tenterden
Tel: 01580 761616

Secret Garden, Mersham, Ashford
Tel: 01233 501586

Smiths Court Hotel, Cliftonville, Margate
Tel: 01843 222310

Thackeray's, Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 511921

Woods Restaurant & Wine Bar, Tunbridge Wells
Tel: 01892 614411

Independent retailers

Broadview Garden Centre, Hadlow College
Tel: 01732 853211

The Little Stour Farm Shop, Wingham
Tel: 01227 721199

The Old Dairy, Langley, Maidstone
Tel: 01622 861113

Taywell Farm Shop, Goudhurst
Tel: 01580 211881

Visitor attractions

Hever Castle, near Edenbridge
Tel: 01732 865224

Howletts & Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks
Tel: 01303 264647

Leeds Castle, near Maidstone
Tel: 01622 765400

Penshurst Place, Penshurst
Tel: 01892 870307

The wine making process

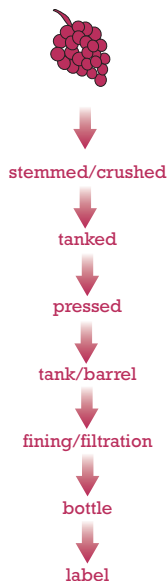
Wine is simply the fermented product of the grape. The quality of the grapes when harvested represents the maximum potential of any wine. However to capture the finesse and character of all grape varieties you also need to have expert winemaking techniques and equipment. Each country, region, vineyard and winemaker develop their own 'house' techniques but the basics of wine making remain the same.

the basic steps

Red Wine Process

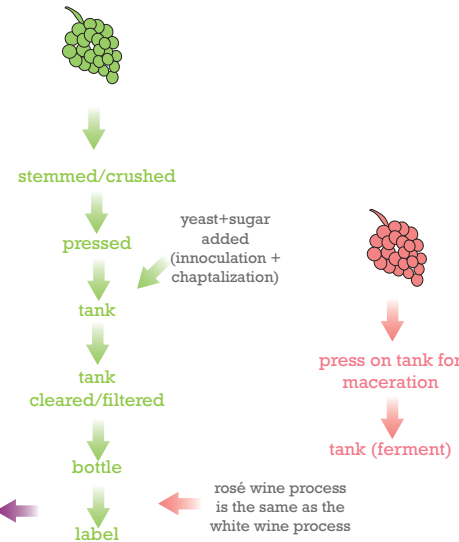
For red wines grapes are destemmed and crushed and pumped straight into a tank where they ferment on their skins. Red wine ferments are hotter (26 – 30°C) and shorter (4 – 7 days) than white wine ferments. This is to extract the tannins and colour from the skins. During this short period the wine is regularly 'pumped over' (pumped from the bottom of the tank to the top) in order to break up the 'crust' of floating skins and to maximise the wine's contact with them – this also helps extract colour and tannin.

Once fermentation has finished, the wine and skins are pumped into the press. After pressing, the wine can be transferred either to tank or to barrel for maturation where it will usually go through a malolactic fermentation. Finally the wine is stabilised and filtered before bottling.



White Wine Process

White grapes may be destemmed and crushed or placed directly into the press as whole bunches. The juices are transferred to a tank for fermentation where yeasts are added ('inoculation') and sugars are added sometimes ('chaptalization') dependent on the style of wine to be produced. Fermentation can last anywhere between 2 – 4 weeks at temperatures of between 12 – 24°C. After fermentation the wines are racked, cleared and filtered ready for bottling.



Rosé Wine Process

Rosé wines are made either from red grapes only or from a blend of red and white grapes. The red grapes are macerated for a short time (usually 24 hours) to extract a small amount of colour and so as not to extract tannins, before being pressed off to tank and inoculated for fermentation to begin. White grapes would usually be crushed or loaded into the press as whole bunches and the juices pumped to the tanks for fermentation. Rosé wine then follows the white wine route.

Sparkling Wine Process

Nearly all English Sparkling wines are made according to the traditional 'Champagne' method where the wines undergo a secondary fermentation in bottle. After fermentation of the base white wine (see above) the winemaker will create his own blend from the various tanks of still wines to produce the desired style (this can occasionally be single variety as well, as in the case of a blanc de blancs for example). The base wine is then inoculated with the addition of a yeast/sugar mixture using yeasts capable of operating at high pressure. This step is called the 'tirage'. The bottle is then sealed with a crown cap and left on its side for a minimum of 9 months (in practice this can often be 3 or more years). This second fermentation raises the alcohol by 1 – 1.5% alcohol by volume (abv) and the carbon dioxide given off dissolves into the wine producing the fine bubbles or 'mousse'. After maturation in bottle the wine is riddled and disgorged to remove the yeast deposit and a real cork and wire muzzle are added. The bottles are now ready to be labelled.

Quality Wine Scheme

The Quality Wine Scheme was introduced to help to raise the quality of English wine and provide a comparable quality standard to other European producers. These include the 'Appellation Controlée' scheme in France and 'Qualitätswein' system in Germany. Wines are analysed to ensure that they comply with Quality Wine specifications, tasted by an expert panel, and the wine making process is inspected by the Wine Standards Board Inspector. Wines that pass are labelled 'English Vineyards Quality Wine Pstr'.

Regional Wines are also tasted by a wine panel. These wines may contain hybrid varieties which are not permitted in Quality Wines. Permitted alcohol levels are also lower in Regional Wines. UK Table Wines have not been through the Quality or Regional Wine Schemes.



timeline

1ST-4TH CENTURIES AD

The Romans occupy Britannia and introduce vines for making wine – it is commonly believed that there was a Roman vineyard at Ightham in Kent



449-590

Invasions by Jutes, Angles and Saxons results in vine-growing consolidating in the west country.

1280

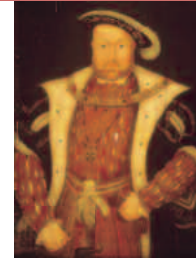
A Canterbury calendar shows pruning vines for March, treading grapes for September, and drinking wine for January.

THE MIDDLE AGES

"Kent vineyards extended from Thame to London and southward by Tonbridge and Sevenoaks to Tenterden and district and the marshes"
(HM Todd, *Vine Growing in England, 1911*)

1509

When Henry VIII succeeds to the throne, there are 139 sizeable vineyards in England and Wales



1580

Vineyards are known to exist in Mid Kent at Wardens and Fyll in Egerton, Boughton Malherbe and Hool Mill, Harrietsham



Edward Hasted wrote – "There was a vineyard at Godinton (near Ashford) in Captain Nicholas Toke's time from which was made wine of an extraordinary fine sort and flavour".

1752

Records indicate a vineyard within the perimeter of Tonbridge Castle

1797

19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

Long period of decline of British viticulture

Two Kent men, Edward Hyams and George Ordish, help to spark a viticultural revival

1930s-1950s

The English Vineyards Association is formed and by 1972 has 300 members

1967

think **English**
drink

1986

Of 411,000 litres of English wine produced, a quarter was made in Kent from 124 acres / 50 hectares of vines

The UK has more than 400 vineyards producing a total of over 2 million bottles of wine a year

2009

Kent has 42 vineyards, covering 144 hectares / 356 acres, accounting for 13% of the UK's hectareage and making it the number one county for English wine.





Red White & Brut!

Discover Kent's award winning vineyards

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the content of this leaflet is accurate and up-to-date at the time of printing, no liability can be accepted for any errors, omissions or misrepresentations of fact contained herein.

This is one of a series of themed brochures promoting Kent's local produce and distinctive landscapes. If it has whetted your appetite to visit Kent, information on where to stay and what to see is available at www.visitkent.co.uk

Researched, written and produced by

Dave Hughes of Tourism Plus

Tel: 01622 727472

e-mail tourismplus@btconnect.com www.tourismplus.co.uk

By courtesy of the author, Stephen Skelton MW, 'The Vines and Wines of Great Britain and Ireland' - the most recently published and comprehensive book on UK vineyards, published in 2001 ISBN 0-571-20045-1 – has been used as a source of information in producing this leaflet.

Designed by Nakedvine Ltd, Chatham, Kent.

Tel: 01634 847171 www.nakedvine.co.uk



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