

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2003

Two new wineries open in Indiana this summer

Indiana's wine industry continues to expand this summer with the opening of two new wineries in different parts of the state.

The Oak Hill Winery opened in Converse on July 4. Owners Rick and Betty Jo Moulton took their hobby of winemaking to the next level when they recently opened the winery. Their first offerings include wines made from Indiana grown grapes and fruit plus fruit from surrounding states. The fruit wines are made from apples and peaches; the grape wines include reds made from Concord and Baco Noir and whites from Cayuga, Delaware and Seyval varieties.

"It's something we both really love, making and drinking wine," said Betty Jo Moulton. "We already owned a well-suited location for a small winery operation, so we decided to give the business a try after much encouragement from several other local winery owners."

The winery and retail store are located on State Route 18 in Converse, between Kokomo and Marion. The winery building is a carriage house built in 1894.

Free wine tasting is available and tours of the winemaking area are free. The Oak Hill Winery is open 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. daily throughout summer and fall. Call 765-395-3718 for winter hours.

The southern part of the state, near Bloomington, is home to the other winery opening this summer. Carousel Winery will have a grand opening on August 2 and 3 at their location on State Road 37 outside of Bedford.

"We were looking for property to put a vineyard on," said Sue Wilson, owner of Carousel Winery. She and husband Marion came to Indiana from the west coast when vineyards there were beginning to boom. "We saw this property about 10 years ago and told each other 'If it ever comes up for sale...' Then two weeks later, there was a 'For Sale' sign. It was years earlier than we had planned, but we jumped in feet first." First came the vineyard planting on the land, with the development of the winery following several years later.

Carousel will open with eight wine varieties including grape-based wines and fruit wines. The carousel theme is present on the winery's labels; each wine is represented by a different carousel character.

"We wanted a fun theme, something consumers would remember. Even if they don't remember the name of the wine, they can identify the wines by the character on the label," she said. "We worked with a local artist who used to work for Disney. He's been a tremendous help; we're very fortunate to have found him." The artist, Pat Clark, will be present at the grand opening to sign labels. He also will be the first artist featured in Carousel's "Artist on Review." A new artist will be selected each month and will meet with the public on the first weekend of that month.

Winery hours after the grand opening will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The winery is located at 8987 St. Rd. 37 South, Bedford, across from Apple Acres.

With the addition of these two new wineries, the Indiana wine industry has 27 commercial wineries and over 275 acres of grapes. Bruce Bordelon, viticulture specialist at Purdue University, says the outlook for grape harvest is good.

“We had some minor spring frost damage in the center of the state; but the fruit is developing and almost everyone has a full crop,” he said.

Bordelon predicts the recent heavy rains in the northern and central parts of the state will have little effect on the grapes. “There will be more leaf loss this year, but no change in terms of the upcoming harvest.”

Grapes are harvested from late August to early October in Indiana.

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