

PLANNING YOUR WINERY TRIP (AND WHAT TO DO ONCE YOU GET THERE)

More than one million people are expected to visit Pennsylvania's wineries in the coming year. And whether you're a wine expert or a novice, a first-time visitor or a regular, Pennsylvania's 120-plus wineries and 11 wine trails are ready to offer an exciting wine experience like no other.

To help you get ready to experience them (it's actually quite simple), we've assembled the following tips. As always, if you have any questions about planning your Pennsylvania winery visit, feel free to e-mail us at info@pennsylvaniawine.com.

PLANNING A WINERY OR WINE TRAIL TRIP

- 1. PLAN AHEAD** – Before hitting the road, create a detailed plan, including directions. Our **interactive map** of Pennsylvania's wineries will help you get on the right track.
- 2. CHOOSE THE RIGHT TIME** – As expected, weekends are the busiest time to tour a winery. If you don't mind mingling with a few extra people, that's fine, but if you'd rather avoid the crowds, consider planning a visit during the week. If you choose to go on the weekend, consider planning your visit during the earlier part of the day. Call ahead to check the hours of operation.
- 3. DO YOUR HOMEWORK** – A quick visit to the winery's website will provide valuable information on the history and people behind the wine, but also offer insight on the winery's policies. Find out if the winery has a tasting policy (charge for samples or free sampling), or if they allow you to bring your own lunch (or if they serve food). Also, if you're travelling in large groups (eight or more), always call in advance. Winery links can be found on our **PA Wineries page**.
- 4. MAKE STOPS ALONG THE WAY** – During the planning process, consider combining your winery visit with a stop at a local restaurant, museum, shopping outlet, outdoor recreation spot or historic attraction. At the very least, if you're not bringing your own food, at least make time for a nice lunch or dinner. Wine and food are meant for each other and it's a great way to get a good taste of the local culture.

WHAT TO DO ONCE YOU ARRIVE

- 1. RELAX!** – It doesn't matter if you're a wine expert or a novice, a winery tour is about having fun and enjoying the experience. There are no pop quizzes and no one will fault you for not knowing how to pronounce "Chambourcin."
- 2. ASK QUESTIONS** – No one knows everything about wine, so don't be afraid to ask questions – even simple ones.
- 3. TASTE!** – There's no sense in driving to a winery and not trying some wine, especially when it's free (unless you're the one doing the driving, in which case, taste responsibly). Exploration is key, so be open to trying new varieties of wine. You never know when you might find your next favorite bottle.
- 4. KEEP IN TOUCH** – Most wineries have a mailing list or e-mail list, which they use to let customers know about new offerings or upcoming events. Sign up for these alerts because your next free weekend might just overlap with that summer music and tasting festival.
- 5. HAVE FUN** – If you forget everything else, at least remember to have a good time. That's what visiting a Pennsylvania winery is all about!