

## Vines & Wines

# Va. wines stand up to world's best

For those of us who missed the first Virginia Wine Summit, we missed more than just a wine tasting and educational opportunity.

"An historic event for Virginia wine," said Bartholomew Broadbent, noted importer and lecturer and Richmond resident who selected the Virginia wines for the Oct. 2 event, which kicked off Virginia Wine Month.

Historic? Perhaps. For sure, Virginia wines made yet another statement, a positive message to those who have not given these wines a chance.

Among the several sessions, a blind tasting was held for 160 attendees and included seven wines and one cider that were tested against eight comparables from around the world.

The tasting at the Richmond Marriott was led by four experts: British wine expert Steven Spurrier, who also was the guest speaker; Anthony Giglio of Food & Wine magazine; Master of Wine Jay Youmans, who chose the non-Virginia wines; and Broadbent.

Virginia wines stood their ground, and then some.

"They were of high quality, witness the success rate, and were very representative of their grape varieties," Spurrier said last week via email.

That success rate, by all accounts, had Virginia



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entries coming out on top in five comparisons, scoring even on two and not winning an eighth.

Here's a look at how the Virginia wines fared in voting by attendees and the panel, the general cost of the wines and where they are available locally and the cost (most can be purchased at the wineries):

### Clear victories went to:

- ♦ Barbourville Vineyards' 2009 Cabernet Franc Reserve (\$23) over a 2010 Bernard Baudry Les Grezeaux Chinon (\$23) from the Loire Valley of France. Available: Once Upon a Vine (both locations), Vino Market, Private Stock, Libbie Market (both locations), Kroger (Gayton, East Ridge; others can special order). \$20.49-\$24.99.

- ♦ Potomac Point Vineyards' 2009 Heritage Richmond Reserve (\$27), a Bordeaux-blend style wine, over a 2008 Chateau du Tertre Margaux from France (\$39), which was selected because of its similar grape makeup.

- ♦ Keswick Vineyards' 2009 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (\$49) over the

2009 Chateau Montelena Cabernet Sauvignon (\$37) from Napa Valley. A unanimous decision for Keswick.

- ♦ Barbourville Nebbiolo 2008 Reserve (\$32) over the 2008 Vietti Castiglione Barolo from Italy (\$39). A unanimous selection for Barbourville over one of the top nebbiolo producers in the world. Available: Libbie Market (Ridgefield), Once Upon a Vine (MacArthur). \$28.99-\$31.99.

- ♦ Foggy Ridge Cider's Sweet Stayman Cider (\$15.99/750 ml) over Crispin's Original Hard Apple Cider from Minnesota (\$7.99 four-bottle pack). Available: Libbie Market (both locations), Once Upon a Vine (both locations). \$15.99-\$18.99.

### A draw:

- ♦ DelFosse Vineyards' 2008 Petit Verdot (\$18) and the Italian 2009 Casale del Giglio Petit Verdot from Italy (\$18). The DelFosse was judged a "classically greater wine," but the Casale del Giglio's appealing character garnered an equal appreciation.

- ♦ Ducard Vineyards' 2010 Signature Viognier (\$24) and Guigal 2010 Condrieu (\$39). The panel was divided with three preferring the Guigal and Spurrier preferring the Ducard. The audience was divided but leaned toward the Ducard.

### A loss:

- ♦ Barren Ridge's 2007

### Upcoming:

#### Saturday and Nov. 4:

Harvest Wine Trail Tour of Cooper Vineyards, Grayhaven Winery, James River Cellars, Lake Anna Winery; passport ticket, \$15. Souvenir wineglass, tasting at the four wineries and a chance to win prizes upon completing the trail. [www.HOVawinetraill.com](http://www.HOVawinetraill.com).

Touriga Nacional (\$18) to Quinta do Crasto 2009 Touriga Nacional (\$70) from Douro, Portugal. And people say Virginia wines are expensive.

The summit, created at the encouragement of Gov. Bob McDonnell and first lady Maureen McDonnell, was an all-day event that is scheduled to return in 2013.

"I think it worked very well," Spurrier said. "There was a sellout attendance, and all the classes were well-attended. The atmosphere was both constructive and cheerful, and everyone there seemed to learn and be part of the experience. I was very flattered to be asked, and it seems now that the concept of a summit is launched; long may it continue."

As for the state of Virginia wine, Broadbent said: "Virginia isn't the underdog. It's standing up to the best in the world."

Amen.

