

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH WINE

The Romans are widely believed to have been the first to introduce wine making to Britain. By the Middle Ages vines were common place in the English countryside, with the largest producers found in Christian monasteries. The Domesday Survey revealed that by the 11th Century there were 46 vineyards in southern England.

By the end of the First World War, however, English viticulture had almost disappeared, due to a reduction of workforce and dissolution of country estates, and it wasn't until after World War 2 that winemaking in England started to make a comeback.

The modern English Wine industry's founding father was a chemist called Ray Barrington Brock, who studied grape varieties, assessing which would grow and ripen well in Britain. His pioneering research inspired Major General Sir Guy Salisbury-Jones to plant Hambledon vineyard in Hampshire in 1951, which is Britain's oldest commercial vineyard and is included on this trail. As interest in England's winemaking heritage increased, so too did the number of vineyards across in England and Wales.

Whilst originally focusing on Germanic varieties of grapes, particularly popular in the 70's and 80's, English winemakers have increasingly turned their focus to the three grapes most famous for their inclusion in the sparkling wines of Champagne - Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. This is especially the case in the South of England, where the grapes are perfectly suited to both the chalky soils and the climate, which is similar to Champagne.

UK winemakers now produce a range of red, white and rosé wines as well as producing sparkling wine in the traditional method as used in Champagne.

In the last ten years the area of planted vines has more than doubled, with a record-breaking one million vines being planted in the UK in 2017.

The estates included on the WSTA English Wine Trail 2018 produce some of the finest examples of English wine you'll find. Their wines have achieved global acclaim for quality, and have been served at Royal weddings, state banquets, at Number 10 and as far afield as Hollywood. But don't take our word for it go and see it for yourselves. The majority of our English vineyards now offer tours and a growing number have restaurants, cafes and tastings on offer. Pick a vineyard and arrange a visit.



Information included on this map is accurate and up to date to our knowledge, we cannot be held responsible for errors or exclusions and advise checking destination websites before you plan your journey.

WSTA MEMBER WINERIES

1. BOLNEY WINE ESTATE  Haywards Heath
Bolney Wine Estate is a family run vineyard established since 1972. Set in the heart of the Sussex Downs it boasts 40 acres of vineyard, a visitor centre and a cafe/restaurant. A variety of tours can be booked through the website and run year-round.
Address: Foxhole Lane, Bolney, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 5NB
Web: www.bolneywineestate.com
Open: Mon - Sun 9am - 5pm Sun. Tours by appointment.

2. CHAPEL DOWN WINERY  Headcorn
Set amongst 22 acres of vineyards, recognised as an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', the Chapel Down winery has excellent facilities for visitors including a high quality restaurant and a shop stocking a variety of local produce. Guided tours and tastings run March - November, and can be booked through the website.
Address: Small Hythe, Tenderden, Kent TN30 7NG
Web: www.chapeldown.com
Open: Monday - Sunday. Check website for tours/restaurant opening hours.

3. DENBIES WINE ESTATE  Dorking
The Denbies Estate, based in Dorking, Surrey, has been family owned and run since 1984. Denbies vineyard was planted in 1986, and since then has become one of the largest wine producers in the UK. Indoor and outdoor tours are available year-round 7 days a week with extended opening hours on Saturdays.
Address: London Road, Dorking, Surrey RH5 6AA
Web: www.denbies.co.uk
Open: Monday - Sunday. Check website for tours/restaurant opening hours.

4. EXTON PARK VINEYARD  Botley
Exton Park Vineyard is an award-winning English Sparkling Wine producer, with vines planted on the rolling chalk slopes of Hampshire's South Downs National Park. Exton Park is one of the largest vineyards in the country, with a terroir that mirrors that of the most famous sparkling wine region in the world.
Address: Allens Farm Lane, Exton, Hampshire SO32 3NW
Web: www.extonparkvineyard.com
Open: The vineyard can be contacted directly enquiries@extonparkvineyard.com

5. FOX & FOX MAYFIELD  Crowborough
Fox & Fox is owned by husband and wife team, Gerard and Jonica Fox. The vineyard produces limited quantities of top quality English Fizz reflecting the specialness of the High Weald surroundings, embracing its soils, topography and microclimates.
Address: Just off the A627, Mayfield TN20 6HH
Web: www.sussexvineyards.com
Open: Group tours are available by appointment only, booked via the website.

6. FURLEIGH ESTATE  Crewkerne
Furleigh Estate is a family-owned and run vineyard set in Dorset's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just 5 miles from the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site. 'Grand' and 'Classic' tours run on Fridays and Saturdays, and can be booked via the website.
Address: Salway Ash, Bridport, Dorset DT6 5JF
Web: www.furleighestate.co.uk
Open: Friday/Saturday tours run at 14:30, as do Wednesday tours (summer only)

7. GUSBORNE ESTATE  Ham Street
From an ancient coastal escarpment above the Royal Military Canal, Gusbourne craft English wines of distinction, and have won a host of awards including both double platinum at the Decanter World Wine Awards and double gold at the Sommelier Wine Awards. Combining age-old traditions with modern technology and cutting-edge equipment, Gusborne sits between old- and new-world winemaking.
Address: Kenardington Road, Appledore, Ashford TN26 2BE
Web: www.gusborne.com
Open: Tasting room open year-round. Tours by appointment via the website.

8. HAMBLEDON VINEYARD  Petersfield
Hambledon Vineyard is England's oldest commercial vineyard, and across their estate grows Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier – the three grape varieties most commonly used in the production of Champagne. Hambledon's 100,000 vines are pruned by hand September and October each year, with presses and a winery on-site, minimising the time between picking and pressing.
Address: Hambledon, Hampshire PO7 4RY
Web: www.hambledonvineyard.co.uk
Open: Tours run Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday - booked via the website.

9. HATTINGLEY VALLEY WINES  Alton
Established in 2008, Hattingley Valley is a family owned winery located in Hampshire producing quality English sparkling wine, which is produced using the traditional method. A key element of their style is the subtle use of oak barrels alongside ageing on lees in stainless steel tanks.
Address: Wield Yard, Lower Wieldmall Hythe, Nr Alesford, Hampshire SO24 9AL
Web: www.hattingleyvalley.co.uk
Open: Tours April - September, and must be booked in advance via the website.

10. HUSH HEATH ESTATE  Staplehurst
Hidden deep in the Garden of England, Hush Heath Estate comprises 400 acres of perfectly manicured vineyards, apple orchards and ancient oak woodlands rich with wildlife, flora and fauna. Recent expansion has seen another 30 acres of Pinot Blanc, Bacchus, Pinot Meunier, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay planted.
Address: Five Oak Lane, Staplehurst, Tonbridge TN12 0HT
Web: www.hushheath.com
Open: Vineyard tours between April/October, winery tours from November/March.

11. NYETIMBER  Pulborough
All Nyetimber's wines are produced from the 170 hectares planted across West Sussex and Hampshire, which were the first in the UK to be devoted exclusively to the 'holy trinity' of Champagne grapes - Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir. The chalk seam that supplies Champagne grapes with the perfect green sand and chalky soil is the very same that runs under the lee of the South Downs.
Address: Gay Street, West Chiltington, West Sussex RH20 2HH
Web: www.nyetimber.com
Open: Nyetimber run open days throughout the summer, booking via the website.

12. RATHFINNY ESTATE  Seaford
Rathfinny occupies a perfect south-facing slope, just three miles from the sea, and its climate, chalk soils and aspect make it ideally suited to the production of wine in a region that is already producing some of the best, award winning English sparkling wines. The winery is capable of producing over one million bottles of Sussex Sparkling wine annually.
Address: Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5TU
Web: www.rathfinnyestate.com
Open: Tours/tastings run June - September and must pre-booked via the website.

13. RIDGEVIEW WINE ESTATE  Burgess Hill
Ridgeview Wine Estate is a second-generation family company situated in the South Downs National Park, producing world class sparkling wines that are exported around the world. Situated at the foot of picturesque South Downs, the vineyard is in the perfect spot for producing sparkling wine.
Address: Fragbarrow Lane, Ditchling Common BN6 8TP
Web: www.ridgeview.co.uk
Open: Tours are conducted year-round, and can be booked via the website.

14. SIMPSONS WINE ESTATE  Canterbury
The Simpsons vineyards occupy glorious positions on the sunny, sheltered slopes of the North Downs of Kent, protected from the whimsy of the English climate by ancient woodland and anchored in the iconic chalky soils so highly revered in the world of both still and sparkling wine.
Address: The Barns, Church Lane, Barham, Canterbury CT4 6PB
Web: www.simpsonswine.com
Open: Tours and experiences can be booked via the website.

PLACES OF INTEREST

ARUNDEL CASTLE	Restored and remodeled medieval castle
ASCOT RACECOURSE	One of the leading UK racecourses
AVEBURY STONE CIRCLE	Neolithic monument containing three stone circles
BRIGHTON PAVILLION	Built as a seaside palace for King George IV
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL	One of the oldest Christian structures in England
DOVER CASTLE	A medieval castle known as the "Key to England"
HEVER CASTLE	Former seat of the Boleyn family
JURASSIC COAST	UNESCO World Heritage site
PLUMPTON COLLEGE	Britain's Centre of Excellence in Wine education
PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD	Home of three historic warships
STONEHENGE	Famous prehistoric monument
WINDSOR CASTLE	The oldest and largest occupied castle in the world

The WSTA represents over 300 companies producing, importing, exporting, transporting and selling wines and spirits in the United Kingdom.

WSTA members range from major retailers, brand owners and wholesalers to fine wine and spirit specialists, logistics and bottling companies.

We campaign for a vibrant and sustainable wine and spirit industry, helping to build a future in which alcohol is produced, sold and enjoyed responsibly.



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