

Texas Monthly

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Five Ways To Celebrate Texas Wine Month

THE COMMON THREAD: DRINK WINE.

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It's October, which means it's Texas Wine Month, a chance to appreciate some of the fine wines from the Lone Star State. Here are the five ways you can celebrate the spirit:

1. TOUR THE WINERIES

Many of the wineries are offering specials on tastings and winery tours. In Fredericksburg you can take advantage of the Saturday wine shuttle that runs from the Visitor Information Center downtown. The [290 Wine shuttle](#) picks up guests every thirty minutes and drops them at a wide range of wineries along its route. You can check individual wineries for details to devise your own tour, or hire a tour service and let someone else do the work for you. Most of the state's vino tourism is centered in the Hill Country, which can seem daunting to navigate, but you can often find tour operators willing to take you to some of "best kept secrets."

Top picks include:

[Cellar Rat Wine Tours](#), 325-374-8921,

Heart of Texas Wine Tours , 512-755-0937

Hill Country Wine Tours , 830-329-9463,

George's 290 Wine Tours , 830-456-5197

It's also worth noting that the **Hill Country Wine Trail** is offering a special **Texas Wine Month Trail pass** , which includes complimentary tastes and purchase discounts at participating wineries through the end of the month.

2. TEXAS WINE MONTH EVENTS

Take advantage of some of the month's special events throughout the state. While most of them are concentrated in the Hill Country, you'll likely find something that fits your calendar and interests.

October 17 : Outdoor Movie Night at Duchman Family Winery

October 19 : **San Saba Pecan Jam on the Square** with Alamosa Wine Cellars, Pillar Bluff Vineyards, Texas Legato, Fiesta Winery, Wedding Oak Winery & Brennan Vineyards

October 19 : VIP "Wine Library" Cellar & Barrel Tasting & Live Music at **Becker Vineyards**

October 20 : Flat Creek Estate **Grape Jam Wine & Music Fest** including Stone House Vineyards, Pilot Knob Vineyards, Inwood Estates Winery, and Flat Creek Estate Winery

October 21 : Wine for the People Texas Wine pairing at Austin's Whip In featuring wines from Hilmy Cellars, Lewis Wines, and Dry Comal Creek Vineyards & Winery

October 25 : **"Science Fair" and Four-Course Wine Dinner** with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Viticulture and Fruit Lab at Flat Creek Estate

October 26 : **Fredericksburg Food & Wine Fest**

October 26 : Wine Tasting Techniques Class & Live Music at **William Chris**

Vineyards

All Season: **Perissos Vineyards** Hayride Wine Tours through the Vineyard

3. HIT YOUR LOCAL WINE SHOP

Too far to make a Hill Country trek? Head to your local wine shop or order directly from the winery to enjoy Texas wines in your own home.

Value-Driven Picks:

McPherson Cellars Roussanne 2012 (White) or La Herencia 2011 (Red Blend)
~\$12-\$14

Duchman Family Winery Vermentino 2011 (White) ~\$13. Sangiovese 2011 (Red)
~\$14

Fall Creek Vineyards Chenin Blanc 2012 (White) ~\$8

Llano Estacado Winery Cellar Reserve Tempranillo 2011 (Red) ~\$17

Splurge-Worthy Picks:

Bending Branch Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Newsom Vineyards 2010 (Red)
~\$100

Pedernales Cellars Texas High Plains Tempranillo 2010 (Red) ~\$40

William Chris Vineyards Enchanté 2011 (Red blend) ~\$42

Inwood Estates Winery Chardonnay Dallas County 2012 ~\$40

4. DOWNLOAD THE APP

Texas Wine will soon be mobile through the Texas Wine mobile application from *Texas Wine and Trail* magazine. Slated to launch sometime by the end of the month, the new app locates Texas wineries, restaurants that list local wines, and is a place to buy Texas wines directly from participating wineries.

5. MAKE SURE YOU'RE DRINKING TEXAS WINE...

Since it is Texas Wine Month, it's important to make sure you're actually drinking Texas wines. Not many consumers are aware that not all wines made in Texas are actually produced with grapes grown in other states such as California. While some wineries are committed to using 100 percent Texas fruit, not all Texas wineries do, which means you have to be a little more savvy about picking a Texas wine off the shelf.

By law, a winery cannot designate a wine as a Texas "appellation" wine if it isn't made with at least 75 percent Texas fruit. If it has less than that, wineries are not allowed to sell it outside of the state. Instead, they have to either clearly mark the wine as American Appellation, which means the grapes come from more than one state, or they can mark the back of the bottle as "For Sale In Texas Only." Rather than give a long list of which wines are and are not made with Texas fruit, we'll give you a few quick indicators to look for on wine labels.

If the front or back label includes:

- Texas (Appellation) = Texas Wine
- Texas Hill Country (Appellation) = Texas Wine
- Texas High Plains (Appellation) = Texas Wine
- Specific vineyard name in Texas, i.e. Reddy Vineyards or Lost Draw Vineyards = Texas Wine
- Specific vineyard name or designation outside of Texas, i.e. Paso Robles = Not a Texas Wine
- For Sale in Texas Only = Not a Texas Wine
- American Appellation = Not a Texas Wine

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