

Vineyard Reveries

Summer nights come alive at Truro Vineyard's Wine, Art, Appetizers, and Music events.

by rob conery | photo by don sylvor

It's deep twilight over Truro Vineyards.

A conversational hum buzzes from the pavilion. The diners are dressed Cape Cod evening casual as a cabernet franc is poured and sumptuous food is presented. A gentle southwesterly breeze washes over the proceedings and the band begins to play.

From June 30 through September 1, Truro Vineyards hosts Wine, Art, Appetizers and Music (WAAM) events every Wednesday night on their outdoor dining pavilion. The vineyard started the WAAM events in the summer of 2009. "The first week we had 10 people, the next we had 25, and after that, they all sold out," says co-owner Kristen Roberts. "It's a friendly and fun environment. By the end of the evening, everyone leaves as friends."

To arrive here is to ease into a timeless agrarian tableau. Down a curving, shell-covered drive to a big house, the Truro Vineyards property has a charm and a history as rich as the soil which nurtures the grapes. The handsome Federal style house was constructed in the early part of

the 19th century; in 1930, it famously inspired Edward Hopper to create his painting, *Rich's House*. In 1992, the property became a full-time vineyard, and in 2007, the Roberts family—Kristen, Dave, Kathy, David, Amy, and Stephanie—purchased the vineyard.

Thousands of vinifera vines grow in rows throughout the vineyard's six acres, producing chardonnay, cabernet franc, and merlot grapes. Supplemental grapes brought in from farms in Massachusetts and California allow Truro Vineyards to round out their selections, which each year include around a dozen varieties of diverse character and flavoring. Selections range from crisp whites to full-bodied reds, and the company offers a signature Lighthouse Series of collectible, keepsake bottles. All of their reds, which include the cabernet franc, the 2007 Maritime Red, and the Triumph—a cabernet sauvignon and merlot blend—are aged up to 25 months in oak barrels, then bottle-aged. Whites range from chardonnay and sauvignon blanc to vignerons. With winemakers Matyas Vogel



and David Roberts, Jr. at the helm, Truro Vineyards is able to produce about 9,500 cases of hand-crafted, sustainably harvested wine each year.

For the WAAM events, co-owner Kristen Roberts sits down and chooses five wines for each week's event. Her personal favorite is the cabernet franc. "Not a lot of people talk much about it, but it's one of the oldest grapes in the world, and it's what we grow the most of," says Roberts. Next, she consults local chefs like Tony Pasquale of Wellfleet's Feast Catering to plan the menu, which changes weekly, as does the art and musical accompaniment for the evening.

At the final 2009 WAAM event, the evening began with a light and elegant pairing of a crostini of braised fennel and orange with shaved grana padana, paired with the 2008 Chardonnay. Served tapas style, the appetizers arrived at a relaxed pace, and throughout the evening, easy spaces between courses provided time for guests to enjoy themselves and savor the wines.

Next up was the smoked bluefish pâté with the 2007 Cabernet Franc. "The smoked bluefish recipe has a great story," says Pasquale. "I got it from an old fisherman. I mean, this guy was the real deal, had a peg leg, even wore an eye patch." A departure from a traditional pâté, which is usually mostly just bluefish and cream cheese, this recipe incongruously includes a tarragon reduction and red wine. The fisherman is long gone, but the recipe lives on. "That's what I really enjoy about it," says Pasquale, "discovering things. What's here [on Cape Cod] now and what was here." A sweeter note came in the form of poached pears with gorgonzola and

roasted spiced walnuts and the pistachio cranberry biscotti paired with cranberry red, served mulled, as the closer.

The evening was a feast for the visual and aural senses as well. Jobi Pottery of Truro was on hand with some of their ebullient, crafted wares. Hand-made in the original 1950s molds and hand-painted, the colorful, shimmering bowls and plates, many with fish themes, are whimsical and fun. The Ticks, a local all-female band known as a hard-charging, pop-punk dance machine, toned things down: They dubbed themselves, for the night, The Acous-Ticks. Emma Dubner and Sue LaVallee strummed guitars while Julia Randall worked the drums with soft brushes, lending a laid-back, string-band vibe to the proceedings, lively without drowning conversation. The Ticks, who have played everywhere from the Paradise Rock Club in Boston to the bawdiest dive bars imaginable, were delighted with their Truro Vineyards experience. "It was the loveliest venue ever," said LaVallee, "what lovely ambiance." Asked her favorite part, she laughs. "The wine. Definitely the wine."

With the art, the music, the food, and of course, the wine, the evening was a complete pleasure. The sun set, having melted through the silhouetted vines full of harvest-heavy grapes, over the hills and into Cape Cod Bay. The band played their final number and people began to file out, each with a commemorative glass in hand, and many with fine bottles of wine tucked under their arms.

TRURO VINEYARDS

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The winery is open for tours and tastings from Memorial Day through Columbus Day. WAAM events are held each Wednesday from 6-8 p.m. Call for reservations.

Cape Cod's Rob Conery is a freelance writer, an avid fisherman, and a lover of good wine.