

The Round Barn Winery

Savor the flavors of this family-run winery, brewery and distillery in Baroda, Michigan.

Summer Cocktail Recipes

Round Barn Breeze

Ingredients:

- 3 parts pineapple juice
- 2 parts Round Barn Farm Market Cranberry Wine
- 1½ parts DiVine Rum
- Splash of bitters

Preparation:

Shake and garnish with pineapple and orange slices.

CRAN-Tini

Ingredients:

- 3 parts Round Barn Farm Market Cranberry Wine
- 1 part DiVine Vodka

Preparation:

Shake with ice, then strain into martini glass. Garnish with a twist of lime.

If your spirit of adventure focuses on, well, spirits, then The Round Barn in Baroda, Michigan is a perfect destination for you.

Boasted as Michigan's largest, this turn-of-the-century, high-beam Amish barn was originally built in 1881 and features a winery, microbrewery and distillery, all rolled into one. Round Barn was one of the first facilities in Michigan to produce all three beverage categories. Founded by the Moersch family, Round Barn celebrates the season with tastings, live music and bottling your own wine come harvest time.

No matter what your palate, a visit to The Round Barn will teach you about vintages and set you on the path to becoming an educated spirits connoisseur.

Fertile ground

Located in Southwest Michigan among the Midwest's richest fruit belt, The Round Barn is part of the Lake Michigan

Shore AVA (American Viticultural Area). Interestingly, the lake effect climate parallels the same micro-climate as the Alsace and Burgundy regions of France, making the area conducive to fertile grape growing.

You could say winemaker Matt Moersch grew up in the business, picking grapes as a boy with his brother, Christian. Their father, Richard Moersch, founded The Round Barn in 1992, bringing more than 25 years of winemaking experience to production. After apprenticing with his father, Matt sharpened his fermenting, brewing and distilling skills through extensive training in France, Germany, Hungary and California and became The Round Barn's winemaker and distiller in 2002.

The Round Barn Winery, a member of The Lake Michigan Shore Wine Country, is known for its diversity of wines from Sauvignon Blanc to Merlot to Chardonnay.

"We try to change the varieties of grapes we grow," says Matt. "Our newest creation, Black Walnut Cream Wine, took more than four years to develop and has quickly become one of our most popular."

The Round Barn Winery, Brewery & Distillery
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ROUNDBARNWINERY.COM



Grapes are dumped into the de-stemmer during winemaking weekend.



One of many events Round Barn Winery hosts during the season.



Round Barn winemaker Matt Moersch tests wine from the barrels.

Brew for you

With more than 30 years of fermentation experience and an award-winning reputation, The Round Barn's line of hand-crafted brews delivers satisfyingly bold taste.

Brew master Christian Moersch describes his brews as "lighter in style and easy to drink," with 20 different varieties such as Amber Ale, Cocoa Stout, Kölsch Style, and many more.

A "DiVine" distillery

The Round Barn also produces bourbon, rum and vodka under the DiVine Spirits label.

"Our DiVine Bourbon is made of corn, malted barley and just a touch of rye to give it a nice spicy kick on the finish," says Matt. "We only produce a handful of barrels each year."

The family's winter travels south contributed to the production of a light, tropical silver rum. "This smooth, flavorful rum is distilled twice and aged in stainless steel at a cool temperature to give it a fresh fruit character," Matt adds.

Perhaps the crème de la crème is their DiVine Vodka, the Midwest's first ultra-premium estate vodka, only one of four vodkas in the world made from grapes. "DiVine Vodka was born out of our passion to create a domestic ultra-premium vodka from grapes, instead of grains or potatoes," Matt explains. "The result is an award-winning, refreshingly crisp, yet remarkably smooth vodka."

There are two locations in the area to taste all of The Round Barn products: The Baroda Tasting Room & Estate and Union Pier Tasting Room. Check The Round Barn's website, ROUNDBARNWINERY.COM, for specific hours.

Epicenter of events

Throughout the summer and fall, The Round Barn hosts a variety of free events. Every Saturday (3-6 p.m. ET) and Sunday (2-5 p.m. ET) from May through October, enjoy Jammin' in the Vineyard, featuring musicians from around the Midwest on an open air live music stage. Sip world-class wines and grab a picnic lunch or dinner from The Round Barn Café.

Celebrate the 21st Annual Harvest Party on Saturday and Sunday, August 24-25, with live music, dancing, hand-crafted wine, micro-brews, DiVine cocktails, hayrides, a bounce house, and grape stomping, too.

The Round Barn is known for its weekend winemaking program, which allows people to experience the winemaking process and literally enjoy the fruits of their labor.

"People love an opportunity to make their own wine, and some couples have been coming for 10 years," says Matt. "It's a total immersion experience, which includes everything from hand-picking the grapes to dumping the grapes into the crushing machine to creating your own blend. Everyone who participates gets a case of 24 bottles for their efforts."

Dates for this year's White Winemaking Experience are Saturday, September 28, at a cost of \$475 per couple. The Red Winemaking Experience takes place Saturday, October 12 or Sunday, October 13. Cost is \$525 per couple. Bottling events are scheduled for Spring 2014.

And the most challenging part of winemaking? Matt Moersch claims it's the natural elements.

"From the amount of rain to picking and pruning by hand, we're always at the mercy of Mother Nature and hoping for a good crop," he says. **LB**



Above top: Weekend winemakers pick grapes for their own vintages. Above bottom: Filling a carboy with fresh juice from the press during Round Barn's winemaking weekend.

