

Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail Launches Passport Program

By Art Charlton

WASHINGTON BOROUGH, NJ – Good times and great wine and beer, all locally produced, await visitors to the new Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail!

To celebrate the launch of the trail, the nine participating wineries and breweries located throughout Warren County, New Jersey, also announced the Grains & Grapes Passport, a promotional program where visitors can earn a custom hoodie by visiting all the trail locations.

"Today's announcement is a new exciting way to explore Warren County," Warren County Commissioner Director James R. Kern III said at Buttzville Brewing Co. in Washington Borough, which hosted the passport program kickoff.

"Our breweries and vineyards bring thousands of visitors from all over the region to our county," added Kern, who joined with fellow Commissioners Jason J. Sarnoski and Lori Ciesla at Buttzville Brewing Co. in downtown Washington to launch the trail. "By working together they can capitalize on each other's successes. Every corner of Warren County wins with the Grains and Grapes passport launch!" Kern remarked.

The Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail is financed by a grant from the NJ Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism, VisitNJ.org, matched with funds from the County through its Explore Warren County Tourism Partnership and the participating trail partners. "We're grateful to the State and the folks at NJ Travel and Tourism for supporting this project," said Art Charlton, Director of the county Public Information Department, which runs the Explore Warren tourism program. "We are thrilled to help bring these breweries and wineries to the attention of residents and visitors," Charlton added.

The Passport program runs from January 1 to April 30, 2024, during which time visitors must obtain passport stamps at all nine participating wineries and breweries on the Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail. Each stamp represents \$7 in spending and three stamps per location are required to complete the passport and receive a custom hoodie with the official Grains & Grapes logo printed on the front and the brewery and winery logos on the back.

Passports are available for \$2 from the nine participating locations on the trail:

Brook Hollow Winery & Event Facility, Columbia (Knowlton Township)

Buck Hill Brewery & Restaurant, Blairstown

Buttzville Brewing Co., Washington

Czig Meister Brewing Company, Hackettstown

Four Sisters Winery, Belvidere (White Township)

Invertase Brewing Company, Phillipsburg

Man Skirt Brewing, Hackettstown

Little Ridge Vineyards, Phillipsburg (Harmony Township)

Villa Milagro Vineyards, Phillipsburg (Pohatcong Township)

Participants must be at least 21 years of age, and have until April 30 to obtain stamps at all locations. Completed passports must be turned in by May 15, 2024 to receive the hoodie, which has the Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail logo on the front and the logos of the nine participating breweries and wineries on the back.

The locations can be visited in any order, and the stamps can be earned in a single visit or with repeated visits to each location.

Warren County has some of the best wineries and breweries in the state, Commissioner Sarnoski noted, explaining, "One of the reasons is, it's so fresh, because a lot of our product is locally grown and produced and processed right here in Warren County. We're very proud of the product we have."

Commissioner Ciesla said that as people visit the Grains & Grapes Trail locations, they'll find "The scenery along the way is breathtaking. There's nothing like it in New Jersey." Moreover, the wineries and breweries are near other attractions, including farms and farm stands, and cultural locations such as the Lackland Performing Arts Center at Centenary University, where visitors can enjoy concerts and shows. "We have so much to offer," Ciesla remarked.

Learn more about the Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail at the website www.explorewarren.org/grains-grapes and keep in touch with the trail on social media by visiting "Warren County Grains & Grapes Trail" on Facebook and "warrencountygrainsgrapestrail" on Instagram.

