

★ VIRGINIA WINEWORKS ★

Michael Shaps thinks “out of the box.” When he decided that he was going to become a winemaker, instead of heading to California for an enology program, he moved to Burgundy, France to study. He worked with two French wineries while working on his degree, and remained there an additional year after graduating in 1991.

Back in the United States, Michael researched wine making potential and realized that Virginia offered an opportunity for him to be a part of a growing industry.

Since 1995, he has been winemaker and winemaking consultant for several Virginia wineries. With each, his wines have earned multiple medals in competitions.

In 2000, while working with King Family Vineyards, he began producing wines under his own label, *Michael Shaps*. That first red wine won two gold medals and the white received outstanding praise. Since then, his own wines have continued to win medals and recognition, including the Virginia Governor’s Cup award.

By now, he was ready for another “out of the box” move. With the legislative turmoil surrounding Virginia farm wineries for the past several months, and the tremendous start-up cost in establishing one, Michael visualized a facility where he could produce his own wines and also consult for new wineries as their wines were being produced in his building with his equipment.

His is not the only custom crush facility in the United States, but it is unique to Virginia. His plan is to continue producing excellent wines for himself and either with or for others. He is working from the former Montdomaine winery building south of Charlottesville. It is not fancy, is an older building, has been vacant for many years and is ideal for his use. It was build into a hill, and provides the space and production conditions he needs.

He is not planning anything fancy, and calls it the “anti-winery”. He is not interested in a destination showplace winery with a

Highlights

- ☛ Multiple gold medals winner
- ☛ International Winemaker
- ☛ Custom Crush - Unique in Virginia
- ☛ www.michaelshapswines.com

gift shop in the tasting room. His concept is to provide winemaking facilities for independent growers (vineyardists who are not winery owners) who want wine from their own grapes, and winemakers who need a place to produce and bottle their wines.

A few Virginia wineries have provided such a service on a very small scale in the past, allowing a winemaker to bring fruit to their winery for processing. This has been a service for a new winery or, occasionally, for a winemaker without a winery who wants to produce under his own name, such as Michael did.

He and business partner Philip Stafford are anticipating a tremendous interest in their services. They began last year with three clients and already have about a dozen this year. Along with being a Virginia winemaker, Michael is also a partner in a French winery. (Check the shaps-rouchersarrazin link on his “Contact Us” page, then click on “English Version”.)

As a parallel venture with wine production, he looks forward to holding seminars and winemaking classes at his building. He is already a popular speaker for wine conference seminars, recently co-presenting for four at the Wineries Unlimited annual event earlier this month.

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2006 Wineworks Red

We were impressed with Michael's 2006 Red and the unusual blend of grape varieties. We were even more impressed after talking with Philip Stafford.

Their winery produces two distinct lines - the *Michael Shaps* Vinifera varietals and *Wineworks* - a value label, designed to offer excellent quality, readily accessible wines at reasonable prices.

For the 2006 vintage they worked with wines available from nearby collaborating wineries and carefully sampled and blended varieties to produce a Bordeaux blend - 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 30% Cabernet Franc - with an additional 15% of Virginia's Norton, yielding a wine with a complex earthy aroma and spicy overtones. There was minimal oak aging in a mix of new and neutral French oak barrels to add a hint of oak to the finish.

This selection is ready to enjoy now, or may be aged for a couple of years. Michael and Philip's philosophy is to market ready-to-enjoy wines under their *Wineworks* label. We thought the wine very approachable. Smooth tannins were present, giving structure to the wine, but not overwhelming. We concurred with Philip that this is a light red wine to be served at around 65° to 70° F (about 15 to 20 minutes in the refrigerator) for serving on a warm day.

The *Virginia Wineworks* wines have not yet been entered into competitions, even though the *Michael Shaps* label has a reputation for garnering gold and best of show awards. They do plan to participate in competitions in the future.

This selection works well with everyday meals, and we paired it with an easy to prepare dish for company.

2006 Wineworks White

The *2006 Wineworks White* wine story is a reflection of the red wine creation- it was sourced from collaborating wineries and blended and finished at *Virginia Wineworks'* facility. Future plans are to continue partnerships with available wineries and/or vineyards to produce *Wineworks* label wines.

The blend for this selection is 65% Viognier and 35% Vidal Blanc. Viognier is a relatively new, popular and well publicized white wine in Virginia. To combine this varietal with a hybrid standard is a bold move. Michael's knowledge of varietals and their taste characteristics is showcased in this blend. The wine is dry and crisp with a good acidity level to stand up to a myriad of food pairings. The crisp, citrus overtones reflect cool fermentation in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks, a process designed to highlight characteristic fruit flavors.

This selection is ready to enjoy now. Plan to serve at cool room temperatures - refrigerate overnight and remove about 15 to 20 minutes prior to serving.

We asked Philip about the label on their *Wineworks* selections. We were convinced that Michael was the worker on the right. Philip disagreed and explained that they were looking for a graphic depicting people working hard to produce an affordable, value-driven product. The poster they selected is a 1930's art form print of wine production.

Again, this *Wineworks* label wine has not yet been entered into competition. Our Wine of the Month Club members are the first judges!

We think the Fresh Tomato and Zucchini Tart on page 3 is a fun patio combination for spring weather dining.

Black Bean Lasagna

Serves 10

8 oz tomato sauce
15 oz can of black beans, drained
14 oz stewed tomatoes with juice, coarsely chopped
8 oz mushrooms, sliced
1 large onion, chopped
9 oven-ready, no boil lasagna noodles
6 cups fresh spinach, chopped
24 oz cottage cheese
4 oz Parmesan cheese, shredded
8 oz mozzarella cheese, shredded

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Mix tomato sauce, black beans, and stewed tomatoes in a bowl.

Spray skillet with nonstick cooking spray and cook mushrooms and onions until translucent.

Spray 13" x 9" x 2" baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Layer three to four oven-ready, no-boil lasagna noodles in bottom of baking dish. Cover noodles with half of tomato and bean mixture; cover with a layer with half of spinach, half of mushroom mixture, then spread with half of cottage cheese.

Sprinkle with half of Parmesan cheese.

Repeat layers. Cover tightly with foil and bake in preheated oven for 60 minutes.

Uncover and bake an additional 15 minutes, top with mozzarella cheese and return to oven for five minutes.

Let stand five minutes before serving with a salad and Virginia Wineworks Red wine.



**Virginia Wine of the Month Club
Membership**

**Virginia Wines!
The Perfect Way
To Celebrate Spring
1.800.826.0534**

Fresh Tomato and Zucchini Tart

Serves 6

1 (9") refrigerated pie crust
5 oz Gruyère cheese, shredded and divided
4 oz Parmesan cheese, shredded and divided
Fresh chopped basil
4-5 plum tomatoes, thinly sliced rounds
3 zucchini, thinly sliced rounds
Sea salt
Olive oil

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Spray tart pan with nonstick spray. Place pie crust in pan and fit crust to the edges of pan. Spread half of the Gruyère and Parmesan cheeses on bottom of crust. Sprinkle basil over cheeses to taste.

Sprinkle tomatoes and zucchini with sea salt; drain on paper towel for five minutes.

Layer tomatoes and zucchini alternately in an overlapping pattern on top of cheeses and basil starting at the outer edge of the crust.

Spread remaining Gruyère and Parmesan cheese over tomatoes and zucchini.

Start in the opposite direction for the second layer of tomatoes and zucchini. Fill in tart completely.

Drizzle with olive oil

Bake in preheated oven for 20-25 minutes.

Remove from oven, dust with additional Parmesan cheese and serve immediately. Pair with Virginia Wineworks White wine.

The recipes featured to accompany month's wine selections are adapted with permission from the Junior League of Norfolk-Virginia Beach, Inc's [Toast to Tidewater, Celebrating Virginia's Finest Food & Beverages](#). Available through The Virginia Shop at 434.977.0080.

Wine of the Month Club Ambassadors

Festival season is back!

Share your enjoyment of Virginia Wines at
Virginia Wine Festivals,

Call 1.800.826.0534 to volunteer.

Upcoming Virginia Wine Events

April 5 - Danville Wine Festival - Danville,
"Community Market"

Info: 434-432-1063

**April 19: Northern Neck Wine Trail Wine
Festival and Farmers' Market**, Rice's Hotel
and Hughlett's Tavern, Heathville

Info: 804.580.3377

www.northernneckwinefestival.com

**April 19 & 20 - Monticello Trail Wine Festi-
val**, Ruckersville

Info: 866-339-9463 .

[www.monticellowinetrail.org/sections/events.
html](http://www.monticellowinetrail.org/sections/events.html)

**April 19-20: 8th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing
Festival**, Waynesboro

Info: 540.649.1915

www.vaflyfishingfestival.org/winetasting.html

**April 26 - 2nd Annual Lake Country Wine
Festival**, Clarksville

Info: 434.374.2436

www.kerrlake.com/events.htm

**April 26 & 27 - Great Grapes Wine, Arts &
Food Festival** - Reston Town Center

Info: 800-830-3976.

www.uncorkthefun.com click on Reston

April 26 & 27 - James River Wine Festival

Innsbrook Pavilion - Richmond,

Info: 804-353-1525.

www.jamesriverwinefestival.com

For information on this month's individual winery events, visit your favorite winery's web site for special dates.

Our suggestion: call ahead before traveling long distances to attend an event - verify that the date and place are when and where you anticipate them to be.

Shopping List for Wine of the Month Club Favorites

| Month | Winery/Vintage Selection | 3-Pack | 6-Pack | 12 Pack/Case 10% discount |
|----------------|---|----------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| April 2007 | Chester Gap Cellars 2005 Viognier Chester Gap Cellars 2005 Merlot | Sold Out Sold Out | | |
| May 2007 | Rappahannock Cellars 2006 Noblesse Rouge Rappahannock Cellars 2006 Vidal Blanc | Sold Out 51.00 | 102.00 | 183.60 |
| June 2007 | Ingleside 2006 Pinot Grigio Ingleside 2005 Sangiovese | Sold Out Sold Out | | |
| July 2007 | Willowcroft 2004 Merlot Willowcroft 2006 Muscat-Ottonel | Sold Out 48.00 | 96.00 | 172.80 |
| August 2007 | Doukénie NV Mandolin Doukénie 2005 Cabernet Franc | 45.00 Sold Out | 90.00 | 162.00 |
| September 2007 | Kluge 2004 Simply Red Kluge 2006 Rosé | 66.00 48.00 | 132.00 96.00 | 237.60 172.80 |
| October 2007 | Veritas 2006 Saddleback Chardonnay Veritas 2005 Claret | Sold Out Sold Out | | |
| November 2007 | Naked Mountain 2005 Scarlet Oak Red Naked Mountain 2003 Chardonnay | 60.00 Sold Out | 120.00 | 216.00 |
| December 2007 | Virginia Sparkling Wine Three Fox 2006 Il Volpe | Sold Out Sold Out | | |
| January 2008 | DelFosse 2006 Grand Cru Olivier DelFosse 2006 Chardonnay | 63.00 57.00 | 126.00 114.00 | 226.90 205.50 |
| February 2008 | White Hall 2006 Petite Manseng White Hall 2006 Syrah | 45.00 45.00 | 90.00 90.00 | 162.00 162.00 |
| March 2008 | Wineworks Red, NV Wineworks White, NV | 42.00 42.00 | 84.00 84.00 | 151.20 151.20 |

We offer an exclusive shopping opportunity for your favorites from our last several months of Virginia Wine of the Month Club selections. Order any previous Club features for yourself or as an elegant surprise for anyone on your gift list. When ordering a gift, please add a note with the information you wish to have included on a card inserted into the package. Complete the order form on this page and mail or fax to us.

Order Form

| Circle # bottles | Description | Price |
|------------------|---|---------|
| 3 | 6 12 | |
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| 3 | 6 12 | |
| 3 | 6 12 | |
| | Subtotal | |
| | One case - 12 bottles- of mixed wines, 10% discount | |
| | VA Residents Only Add Tax @ 5% | |
| | Shipping/Handling: | |
| | 3 pack/mix or match | \$10.00 |
| | 6 pack/mix or match | \$12.50 |
| | 12 pack mix or match | \$15.00 |
| | Total | |

Please circle the appropriate payment choice:

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 Checks payable to: Virginia Wine of the Month Club

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