



PARIS WINERY

*A Taste of Italy
with Tennessee Hospitality*

“Agri-tourism” pumps tens of millions of dollars into Tennessee’s economy each year. For the second in this three-part series, we visited with Lisa Ciarrocchi of Paris Winery, located on Harvey Bowden Road just off Highway 641 South.

Q. How did you and your husband Roger, find Henry County?

A. We were living in Florida and had to keep fleeing from the hurricanes. Roger is a pilot, so we’d fly up to stay with family in Missouri. We kept admiring Tennessee from the air - the beautiful green, open land. We landed at the Henry County Airport and Don Davenport (we call him the Ambassador for Paris) convinced us to come back and visit. We discovered a town full of charm that we eventually decided to call home.

Q. What made you decide to open a winery?

A. After we purchased the 100 acres off Highway 641S, Roger wanted to plant a little vineyard and make a little of our own wine. He ordered 5,500 vines, which just kept leading us forward. We decided this was an opportunity to do something we love and bring a new, unique destination to Paris. We now have over 6,000 vines with more than a dozen varieties on about six acres - a wide variety of wines with something for every taste.

Q. What in your pre-Paris life prepared you to own and operate a winery?

A. Roger and I have both been self-employed entrepreneurs for most of our adult lives. When we met, we were both in the real estate industry. After we married, we combined our years of

experience and began our adventures of buying, building, rehabbing, renting and selling real estate among other things. Experience is the best teacher.

Q. Roger is Italian, right?

A. Roger is short for Ruggero (pronounced Roo-Jer-O). He was the first in his family to be born here, a first-generation American. He didn’t speak a word of English until he was five.



Diana Gunderson, Roger and Lisa Ciarrocchi

Q. Had he any experience with a winery before operating his own vineyard?

A. As the first-born son of parents whose migration to America was not so long ago, he enjoyed the privilege of watching and helping the family make homemade wines. His parents and most Italian families always had small vineyards and made their own wines. They had a vineyard in Texas for a few years and retail stores in New York City and Connecticut. The family’s history is where the experience lies.

Q. What makes the climate in this area conducive to producing quality grapes?

A. We have kind of the same weather here as in Tuscany, but not like Napa Valley, so it seems we are having more success with Italian varieties than American varieties.

Q. Who has helped you with this endeavor?

A. Our family has been our number one source of support, and we cannot thank them enough. Roger's parents, Biagio and Esther Ciarrocchi have been here several times. They helped us, literally on their hands and knees, plant the vineyard. Our daughter, Diana Gunderson moved here from California and has been invaluable on the marketing side of the business, including the Web site, signage, brochures and label design.

Q. Before opening the winery, were you familiar with the term agri-tourism?

A. Yes, we were. In Italy they have what they call agriturismo-meaning Farm Holiday- which is a main source of income for many areas.

Q. You attended the state agri-tourism conference that was held at Paris Landing. What was that like?

A. It opened my eyes to different farm avenues with tons of information and gave me a chance to meet others doing pumpkin patches, corn mazes, Christmas tree farms,

hunting lodges and other types of agri-tourism. We have planted several hundred white pine trees and would like to have a "pick your own "Christmas tree farm someday.

Q. What are some of your short and long term goals?

A. Finishing the landscaping, sitting areas and pavilions. That will be really great for "Concerts in the Woods," so folks can come out with the family, bring a picnic, relax and listen to some easy going, live music. In fact, we plan to partner with the Downtown Paris Association and host an "Eye-full of Paris Weekend" event out here in September. We're also looking forward to opening a little bistro and gift shop on-site. Little bungalows for over-nighters have also been discussed. With Roger being a pilot and having a runway, we'd also like to do some events specific to small aircraft.

Q. How do you interface with other wineries in the region?

A. We're involved with several existing and proposed wineries and vineyard owners. We've made some good friends. There

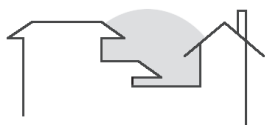
is an alliance that allows us to share tips, advice and suppliers.

Q. We've heard of "golf trails." Is there anything in the offing like that for those who like to plan trips around wine destinations?

A. Trail Blazers is one wine trail followers group here in Tennessee. We also are members of Pick Tennessee products, items made only here in Tennessee and people seek them out. We've also joined other organizations like these that will bring folks to Paris and we are excited about meeting and serving them.

Q. Do you think locals view Paris Winery as a tourist destination?

A. I think so. They are looking forward to a unique place where they can bring their family and friends from out of town. Even if they don't drink wine, I think they feel a sense of pride and want to be a part of this enjoyable, relaxing gathering place that is completely different. I look for locals to visit quite frequently.



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Harold N. Bass, Jr.
Broker/Owner



Great home in a great location. Features hardwood floors & cathedral ceilings. Located close to hospital, shopping, schools and churches. Low maintenance with fenced in yard and private deck. Move-in ready. (MLS# 100013)



3 BR, 2 BA brick home on large lot inside the city limits at the end of a cul de sac. Features many recent upgrades and an abundance of storage. (MLS# 100061)



Secluded home sitting on ±3.8 acres (partially wooded) within walking distance of KY Lake. Full furnished basement with bedrooms on main floor and in basement. Large workshop with lean to, garden space and creek. (MLS# 100178)