



Good barbecue's not all they do in Texas' Hill Country

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By **Jerry Shriver**, USA TODAY

Prohibition nearly wiped out Texas's wine industry, but it re-emerged in the 1970s and now embraces 163 wineries in four regions. The prime sectors, because of their climate and proximity to Austin, are the Texas Hill Country American Viticultural Area and, within that, the 110-square-mile AVA of Fredericksburg. About 30 wineries are located within them, as are many of the state's best BBQ joints. Mediterranean grapes such as Pinot Grigio, Viognier, Tempranillo and Syrah grow well here.

Be sure to stop at: Since its founding in 1992, **Becker Vineyards** in Stonewall (beckervineyards.com) has grown to embrace a tasting room with a stone fireplace and a 19th-century bar; a B&B; lavender fields; and a reception hall. Pioneering **Fall Creek Vineyards** in Tow (fcv.com), dating to 1975, is close to scenic Lake Buchanan and Fall Creek's 90-foot waterfalls. The tasting room at **Lost Creek Vineyard** in Sunrise Beach (lostcreekvineyard.com) was destroyed by flooding last year, but a new version opened this summer, and the adjoining Tree House Bistro makes its debut this month.

Restaurants featuring area wines: At **Silver K Café** in Johnson City (830-868-2911, silverkcafe.com), diners are often serenaded by Texas musicians while supping on Hill Country cuisine — think meatloaf, tortilla soup, chicken-fried steak and dry-aged beef.

Suggested lodging: **The Cotton Gin Village** in Fredericksburg (830-990-5734, cottonginlodging.com) balances rusticity with elegance in its B&B log cabins, set amid an 1870s village. Adjoining Cabernet Grill-Texas Wine Country Restaurant is purely elegant without the rustic, however.

Nearby attractions: In addition to those BBQ joints (which seldom serve wine) and the music clubs of Austin, the other must-visit sites are **Lake Travis**, outside Austin, and the **Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park** in Johnson City, which offers an expansive view of U.S. and Texas history.

Information: gotexanwine.org