

# Harrisburg native and well-known chef to be part of National Museum of African American History and Culture

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Chef Joe Randall, who lives in Savannah, Georgia and grew up in Harrisburg, will have his cookbook on display at the new Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. The museum opens Sept. 24. *(Photo by Harry E. Walker)*

## Basignani Winery's pavilion, brick oven complements what remains of its Old World charm

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Gallery: Basignani Winery



A 2011 photo of the building that houses the production area and tasting room (on the right) and storage building (on the left). The look of the place has changed dramatically with the addition of the events pavilion, which you can see in the slideshow. *(Facebook)*

[Basignani Winery](#) is one of Maryland's oldest, having opened in 1986.

While it has upgraded some aspects of the home winery in Sparks, in Maryland's Baltimore County, the winery still retain many elements from the past, with a tasting room filled with knick-knacks and old empty bottles that owners Lynne and Bert Basignani brought back from their trips abroad.

Those provide a rustic, cozy feeling inside, with two tasting bars and peaked ceiling, the bottles lined up on shelves on all four walls amid family pictures. The tasting room is open 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays.

The main vineyards stretches over the hill when you walk outside the tasting room, and visitors are permitted to walk through the vines and park themselves on the grass. Covering around 8 acres, it's home to Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Seyval, Burdin, and Villard. The Seyval, [Burdin](#)

and [Villard](#) make up the white blend called Elena.

Three acres of Chardonnay vines are planted at a site just off Belfast Road in Sparks, and Seyval, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Nebbiolo grow in what's called the Montbray Vineyard near Silver Run, Carroll County, not far from the Pennsylvania line. Basignani's Nebbiolo is new; it sells for \$43/bottle and offers the most potential for aging.

Most of Basignani's wines sell in the high teens, although its signature Lorenzino Reserve red blend is priced at \$29.50. The producer's dry reds and Chardonnay, along with a delicious port called Sinistra, are among its signatures. It also produces enough sweeter wines to satisfy those who are looking for them.

**READ MORE:** [When, why to decant: Basignani Winery pours its heart into an explanation](#)

The property outside the tasting room always was expansive enough to allow visitors to stretch out on blankets, with some tree-shaded property located near the Basignani residence and more ground available around the vineyards. But several years ago the owners chose to convert a bit of that property into an events pavilion, which included a brick oven for pizza.

Now, any Friday night events, which the winery holds a couple times a month throughout the summer, involve pizza from that oven that's then kept hot throughout that weekend. Basignani holds its share of weekly and annual events, including movie night and what's called Friday Night Cafe. [Click on the events pulldown](#) to view the 2017 schedule.

Bert Basignani's grandparents were home winemakers and, per the website, chose to follow that tradition. In 1972, while still a student at Towson State University, he bought 10 acres of farmland in Butler, Md., with the idea of

eventually planning a vineyard. In 1974, he married Lynne and together they planted 60 vines, 10 each of six different varieties.

By 1984, he had planted another 6 acres on adjoining land that he and Lynne had acquired. Two years later, they opened a winery with the family name and it remains one of the state's "old guard" of wineries that also includes [Boordy](#), [Elk Run](#), [Fiore](#) and [Linganore](#). One other member, [Woodhall](#), [closed abruptly](#) in early June.