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Kent's Vineyards Unite to Launch the UK's First County-Wide Wine Tourism Campaign: The Kentish Wine Way

***England's largest and most awarded wine region unveils a unified
destination brand to drive visitor growth and economic impact***

Kent, UK – 11 August 2026 – Visit Kent, together with Kent's vineyards and wine tourism businesses from across England's largest and most awarded wine region, has launched THE KENTISH WINE WAY. Designed to unlock the economic potential of Kent's thriving viticulture sector, this first of its kind county-wide campaign is set to establish the county as the definitive destination for wine tourism in the UK.

Created to capitalise on the growing popularity of wine tourism, the initiative positions Kent at the forefront of the UK's rapidly growing wine tourism sector and sets a new benchmark for destination marketing in the English wine industry. Viticulture is increasingly recognised as a major driver of economic growth across the UK. Kent's wine tourism sector is forecast to generate a 21% rise in full-time equivalent roles by 2028. Through THE KENTISH WINE WAY, Visit Kent and the county's vineyards are seeking to harness that opportunity

and further strengthen Kent's position as one of the UK's most important food and drink tourism destinations.

Councillor David Wimble, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects, said:

"The launch of The Kentish Wine Way is a landmark moment for Kent and for the English wine industry. This is the first time that vineyards across an entire county have come together under one collective identity to champion a single destination and showcase the full breadth of their visitor offer. This initiative enables us to harness the enormous economic potential of our viticulture sector and create a world-class tourism proposition. The Kentish Wine Way firmly cements Kent's position as the premium destination for wine tourism in the UK and demonstrates the ambition, collaboration and innovation that has made our county the home of English wine."

THE KENTISH WINE WAY positions Kent's flourishing viticulture sector at the heart of the county's visitor economy and aims to drive increased visitor numbers, longer stays and greater economic impact across Kent. THE KENTISH WINE WAY invites visitors to discover everything the county has to offer, from vineyard tours and tastings to cellar door experiences, exceptional food and drink offerings, music and arts programmes, luxury accommodation and the stunning landscapes that make Kent one of England's most celebrated destinations.

Kent's credentials as the UK's leading wine destination are unrivalled. The county is home to around 120 commercial vineyards and more than 1,300 hectares under vine, making it the largest wine-producing county in Great Britain, accounting for more than a quarter of the country's total vineyard hectarage. Benefiting from chalk soils and a favourable climate with more sunshine hours than anywhere else in England, Kent has become the powerhouse of English wine production. Earning a reputation that increasingly rivals some of the world's most renowned wine regions, Kent's producers have won more national and international wine awards than any other county in England, producing some of the country's finest sparkling and still wines.

Set amongst some of Britain's most breathtaking countryside, Kent's vineyards offer visitors spectacular landscapes, heritage, gastronomy and world-class wines in one destination. From boutique producers and family-run estates to internationally acclaimed wineries, the county offers a wine tourism experience unlike anywhere else in the UK.

The county's exceptional transport links and close proximity to both London and mainland Europe make Kent perfectly positioned in attracting both domestic and international visitors seeking authentic and memorable experiences.

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About THE KENTISH WINE WAY

The KENTISH WINE WAY is the UK's first county-wide wine tourism destination campaign, created by Visit Kent and Ashford Borough Council, in partnership with vineyards and wine tourism businesses across the county.

About Kent's wine industry:

- 120 active commercial vineyards in Kent
- 1,312.36 hectares under vine – the largest of any GB county, 28.65% of total GB hectareage
- Kent is the greatest source of sector growth in UK. GB vineyard plantings are up 510% since 2005; Kent has seen the largest new plantings of any county over the past five years (363ha), ahead of Essex (258ha) and West Sussex (188ha)
- England's most awarded wine region: 278 major wine awards won by Kent wineries since 2020
- An estimated 5.08 million bottles of Kent-grown wine produced in the 2025 harvest, plus a further c.1.47 million bottles produced under contract
- Dominant grape varieties among Kent producers: Pinot Noir (92%), Chardonnay (80%), Pinot Meunier (72%), Bacchus (64%)

Kent's wine tourism offer (vineyards with a cellar door):

- 100% of participating vineyards offer tastings; 92% offer tours; 80% have a shop; 80% host events; 76% offer corporate hospitality; 68% offer catering; 52% offer self-guided visits; 32% offer overnight stays

The economic impact of Kent's viticulture sector:

- The tourism industry is an important sector providing more than 82,265 jobs and contributing over £4.1 billion to the Kent economy.
- These jobs account for 11% of all jobs in Kent (2024 figures)

- Wine tourism is the newest and most exciting sector in hospitality, many of the new roles are expected to come from the cellar door.
- Wine tourism is anticipated to generate a 21% rise in full-time equivalent roles by 2028.
- As of 2024 there were an estimated 20,500 jobs in the food and drink production industry in Kent, accounting for 3.1% of all jobs in the county
- There were 6,045 tourism related enterprises in Kent in 2025 accounting for 9.2% of all enterprises.



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