



## CARDEN PARK

HOTEL, GOLF RESORT & SPA

CHESHIRE

October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011

### **CHESHIRE VINEYARD GOES AGAINST THE GRAIN TO ENJOY SWEET SUCCESS**

ONE of Europe's most northerly commercial vineyards has enjoyed success in the face of adversity this year, producing three tonnes of sweeter than ever grapes.

The three-acre Carden Park vineyard, in the grounds of the luxury four-star hotel, golf resort and spa of the same name, near Chester, has also yielded red grapes for the first time.

While there has been no shortage of grapes harvested in the UK this year, some vineyards, even those furthest south, have struggled to achieve usual quality levels due to the cooler and wetter spring disrupting the flowering season.

However, although its harvest was smaller than last year's, the quality of the fruit picked at Carden Park this year has been much higher. Its white Seyval Blanc grapes have produced a sugar content level of 10.4 %, compared to last year's 7.5%, which has been better than many from more southerly locations.

The sugar level directly equates to the final alcohol level produced, meaning the wine produced from the crop this year will be of a higher quality. Seyval Blanc is particularly well suited to the British climate and produces a light, nutty and crisp sparkling wine.

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Carden Park estates manager Peter Pattenden said: “It was a difficult flowering season everywhere this year due to late frosts in many places and lots of rain. This meant the size of our crop was reduced but we were able to achieve a much better sugar content due to the plants naturally trying to catch up on a slow start and an unseasonable warm lead up to the harvest.

“We have also been celebrating our first harvest of red grapes of the Pinot Noir variety. The vines were only planted in May 2009 and will be used to produce a rosé wine made entirely from grapes grown at Carden.”

The crop is harvested every year around late October, when their sugar content is at the perfect level for transforming the fruit into wine.

Peter and a 14-strong team picked and packaged the grapes over two days from more than 4,000 vines on the south-west facing slopes

The Carden Park vineyard has gone from strength to strength since its revival in 2006 following a six year break. The vineyards were re-established when property entrepreneur Steve Morgan bought back the hotel he had previously sold to De Vere.

The fruit was then transported to Halfpenny Green Vineyards in Staffordshire, where it will be pressed before beginning the fermentation process using champagne yeast in a classic process called "methode champagnois", which gives the wine its sparkle.

It takes 18 months from picking the grape to producing a wine that is ready to drink.

Hotel general manager Hamish Ferguson, who helped pick the fruits, said: “After a tough growing season we are delighted with the fruits of our hard work. It’s testament to Peter and the ground staff’s dedication that the quality of our product has improved year on year and we look forward to eventually serving the wine produced from this year’s harvest in our restaurants and bars.”

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The wine will be bottled in spring next year and then matured for a further nine months before the two delicious vintages – called Carden 'Old Gold' and Carden 'Old Gold' Brut Rose - can finally be purchased.

Carden 'Old Gold' is named after the famous 'Old Gold' of Wolverhampton Wanderers and is exclusively sold at Carden Park and Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club, also owned by Steve Morgan, who is executive chairman of UK housebuilder Redrow Homes.

Since 2006, the estates staff at Carden Park have worked tirelessly to revive the fortunes of the vineyard, which was originally planted in 1988, but subsequently ceased production in 2000. May to September is the main growing season, but it requires year-round care to keep the vines in peak condition and free from disease. From a humble first harvest in 2008, which produced 560 bottles, to a bumper crop of 20 tonnes over the last three years, the hard work has paid off.

Part of the 1,000 acre Carden Park estate, the vineyards are open to visitors and hotel guests can sample the 2009 vintage currently on sale. The wine makes an ideal Christmas gift for lovers of local produce.

For more information about facilities at Carden Park Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa visit [www.cardenpark.co.uk](http://www.cardenpark.co.uk) or call 01829 731000.

You can also follow Carden Park on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn at:

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**Picture caption:**

- 1) Hotel general manager Hamish Ferguson helped to pick three tonnes of grapes at the Carden Park Vineyard
- 2) The Carden Park Vineyard

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**Editor's notes:**

- Located amid the beautiful Cheshire countryside on 1,000 acres of estate, the privately-owned Carden Park Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa is managed by De Vere Hotels & Resorts. With 196 superb rooms and suites, a 'four bubble' rated Spa, two Championship golf courses, award winning restaurants and highly acclaimed conference and meeting facilities, Carden Park is unrivalled as a venue for pleasure and business pursuits.
- Winner of the Visit Chester and Cheshire 2010 award for Excellence in Business tourism, the hotel offers 18 function rooms, including the Carden Suite catering for up to 400 guests, indoor & outdoor 'team-building', include the Kong aerial ropes course and the new Segway Safari, corporate golf opportunities and complimentary parking for up to 700 cars.
- Carden Park is a member of Hospitality Action, a charity which helps people in the industry when they need support. The resort is also a holder of the Gold Award from the Green Tourism Business Scheme and the Golf Mark for its junior and beginner friendly golf facilities.
- Located just off the A41, close to the village of Broxton, Carden Park is 14 miles from Chester railway station and approximately 40 minutes by car from Manchester International Airport.

Issued for & on behalf of Carden Park Hotel, Golf Resort and Spa by Active PR. Press information from Kate Logan tel: 07545 504053 , email: [katalogan@activepr.co.uk](mailto:katalogan@activepr.co.uk); or contact Linda Bright, tel: 0771 002 0026, email: [linda@activepr.co.uk](mailto:linda@activepr.co.uk).

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