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## Sounds to Complement Red and White at Long Island Wineries

By AILEEN JACOBSON JAN. 23, 2014



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The weather was frigid and the vines around the [Raphael](#) winery in Peconic were bare, but flames crackled in a fireplace inside the spacious beamed tasting room as more than 100 people gathered on a recent Saturday afternoon to sip wine and listen to Rob Europe, a guitarist and singer, perform along with several other musicians.

The listeners included a retired couple from nearby Laurel who learned online about the winery's Fight Cabin Fever Concert Series; a group of eight relatives and friends celebrating a birthday; and a couple from Smithtown who happened on the music and decided to linger.

"It's a fun thing to do instead of sitting at home," said Julie Petrocelli-Vergari, part of the family that owns the winery. "Without music, people wouldn't stay." In fact, she said, it's likely that few people would show up at all.



At the Raphael winery, Rob Europe, bottom center, performed recently as patrons sipped on wine. Gordon M. Grant for The New York Times



Katherine Edwards  
Re: FW: Inquiry about the  
Hi Kristen,  
I apologize for not getting

quiet period.

Times Topic: Long Island Arts



As part of the upcoming Live on the Vine event, Morris Goldberg, left, will be at the Hotel Indigo in Riverhead with his group Ojoyo, and Alex Sipiagin will be at Macari Vineyards in Mattituck.

This year, the festival's central music component, which started out seven years ago as Jazz on the Vine, has been renamed Live on the Vine and encompasses a greater range of genres, including blues, rock, soul, country, bluegrass and Latin, said Kathryn Simos, the festival coordinator.

"The committee got together this past summer and looked at ways to expand the audience," Ms. Simos said. It was a "no-brainer," she said, to add more genres. "We're trying to create a larger festival and bring in more businesses," she said.

In addition to the wineries, the venues now include a few theaters, hotels and restaurants, with more than 100 performances scheduled (compared with 75 in 2012 and 86 last year). State grants totaling \$261,000 allow the festival to advertise beyond Long Island, she said, including in New York City buses and subways. All local businesses benefit, she said, including limousine companies, inns, stores and restaurants.

Steven Bate, executive director of the [Long Island Wine Council](#), one of the festival's founding organizations, said, "Music draws people out here who are not necessarily coming for the wines." Once in the area, "they do a tasting and join a wine club, so it's a new source of customers."



In 2012, Mr. Bate said, the festival had 10,000 visitors, though last year only about 6,000 people came because of bad weather. An extra week in March was added to this year's schedule to allow for possible makeup concerts. Most events cost \$20, including a glass of wine, and there are discounted tickets for those attending multiple events.

Festival organizers, looking to expand, hope to draw 100,000 visitors in five years' time, said Patricia Snyder, executive director of [East End Arts](#), a nonprofit cultural organization that also helped create Winterfest, which she said had been very successful. The [Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau](#) has also been "a key partner" since its inception, she said.

Among the better-known performers this year, Ms. Snyder said, are [Johnny Winter](#), the blues-rock musician who turns 70 next month (Suffolk Theater in Riverhead on Feb. 7, a preview night, with tickets at \$45); [Alex Sipiagin](#), a jazz trumpeter who has played on [Grammy](#)-winning recordings (Macari Vineyards in Mattituck, Feb. 8); and Morris Goldberg, who was featured on Paul Simon's "Graceland" album, and his group [Ojoyo](#) (Hotel Indigo in Riverhead, March 1).

Mr. Europe, who played at Raphael, will appear during the festival at [the Inn and Spa at East Wind](#) in Wading River on March 8. He has performed at several local wineries, pubs and restaurants, he said during a break, and likes that customers at wineries seem to pay more attention, allowing him to play more "lighter folk music" rather than loud rock and blues. "And obviously it's a lot more beautiful" than other settings, said Mr. Europe, who is 23 and lives in East Marion.

Christine Battelli, music coordinator at [Martha Clara Vineyards](#) in Riverhead, which offers free afternoon music year-round and has its own evening concert series, said that the afternoon music is often mellow, while evening events often involve larger groups and dancing. Its Live on the Vine performers are New Life Crisis, described as a mash-up band, on Feb. 16 and Something, a Beatles tribute band, on March 8.

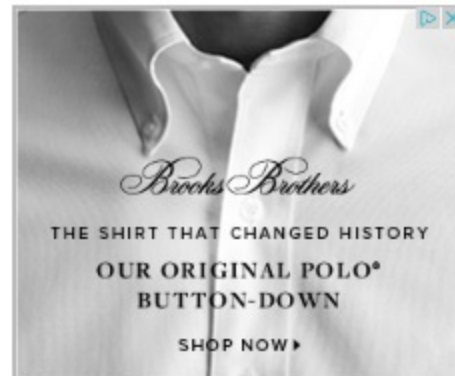
At Raphael, Mr. Europe started with "My Creole Belle," a country blues song by Mississippi John Hurt, and moved later to "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right" by Bob Dylan (with Chris Hurley of Cutchogue on harmonica) and "Dead Flowers" by the Rolling Stones.

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Among his listeners were Pam and Phil Millen, retired airline workers from Laurel who said they had searched online that morning for something to do. They said they would not mind the \$20 charge during the festival. “A glass of wine with music — you can’t beat it,” Ms. Millen said.

Maryann Giannettino of East Islip was celebrating her birthday with friends and relatives at a table covered with a huge spread of food they had brought. (Raphael allows outside food, though not all wineries do.) They had bought three bottles of wine.

“You feel like you’re on a little mini-vacation,” Ms. Giannettino said. Both she and Andrea Agostino of Centereach, her cousin and the mother of 13-month-old Avagrace, also at the table, said they would probably not attend Winterfest events because of the \$20 charge. “That’s for tourists,” Ms. Agostino said.

Even though Nick and Stephanie Camizzi live in Smithtown, they were more or less tourists, since they planned to stay overnight in Greenport. “It’s an escape,” Ms. Camizzi said. They had left their three daughters, aged 25, 19 and 17, at home. “The music was a little bit of a surprise,” Mr. Camizzi said, and motivated them to stay longer.

Ms. Camizzi said she was looking forward to the events during Live on the Vine. “When you come out here, you’re looking for some action.”

“Live on the Vine: The Long Island Winterfest,” Feb. 8 to March 16. Information: [liwinterfest.com](http://liwinterfest.com). For other winery music events: [liwines.com](http://liwines.com).

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