

Catch some lymin' time at The Jam

For years Crossing Vineyards and Winery celebrated "Summerfest," a food and wine pairing event that featured local produce, fruit, breads and "institutions" like Ely's Pork Products and Cramer's Bakery.

In 2007 Crossing decided to try something new, fresh and fun. Crossing Vineyards' wines had been served successfully with everything from foie gras to funnel cake. But could "PA's finest" hold its own when paired with the rich, exotic cuisine of the Caribbean?

The result of the experiment: a sold-out success, Crossing Vineyards' "Caribbean Jam 2007."

Back by popular demand this summer "The Jam" promises another kicked back evening ...not your grandma's summer picnic...with great Caribbean food, wine tasting, authentic island music, and, for the very brave, hula-hoop and limbo contests.

The word "lymin" means "relaxing" in West Indian. So if you're up for some quality "lymin' time," check out Crossing Vineyard's second annual Caribbean Jam on Saturday, July 19 from 5 to 9 p.m.

The Jam was inspired by a winter visit to the often overlooked island of St. Croix. A U.S. possession since 1917, St. Croix has been a less-than-favorite destination for American visitors. An unfortunate incident which resulted in the deaths of some tourists in the '70s and the cataclysmic Hurricane Hugo in 1989 damaged the tourism industry there.

Largest of the more than 50 islands and cays that comprise the United States Virgin Islands, St. Croix is located in the heart of the Caribbean Sea. The Island is 1,700 miles south of New York, 1,100 miles south-south-east of Miami, 100 miles southeast of

San Juan, Puerto Rico, and forty miles south of both St. Thomas and St. John. St. Croix is 22.7 miles long and is 6.6 miles at its widest point.

St Croix has a close to ideal climate, spectacular snorkeling and gorgeous beaches. It is also famous for its cuisine. Crucian food is down-to-earth and trendy, yet steeped in tradition. Today's Crucian cooking has evolved from a unique intermingling of cultures--Spanish, British, Dutch, French, Maltese, Danish and American, with a strong African influence.

Well-known Crucian chef Burton

The featured white tasting wines will be: Vintner's Select White, Riesling, Chardonnay and Viognier.

The reds for sampling will include Crossing Vineyards' Blush and Le Nouveau, light, fruity wines that pair well with Caribbean cuisine. And for the wine drinker who can't get out of his "Cabernet comfort zone," the heartier, Vintner's Select Red will also be offered.

All Crossing Vineyards wines will be available for sale by the glass or bottle.

Live music will be performed by "The Ector Brother's Caribbean Steel Band," a group with a fresh island sound. Leading the way with steel drums and vocals is Eman Ector, accompanied by his brother Gerard, both natives of Trinidad.

So if you're up for a fun, different summer evening, grab your flowered shirt and flip-flops and enjoy

the best of the Caribbean right in your Bucks County backyard.

For more information on Crossing Vineyards and Winery's "Caribbean Jam," visit www.crossingvineyards.com or call 215-493-6500, ext. 19. Crossing Vineyards is located at 1853 Wrightstown Rd. in Washington Crossing. Caribbean Jam tickets can be purchased in advance for \$50 in the Tasting Room, on-line or by phone.

To learn more about St. Croix, visit www.gotostcroix.com.

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Through the grapevine

Christine Carroll

Peterson helped Crossing put together an authentic Caribbean buffet for the 2007 Caribbean Jam. His influence can again be felt in the 2008 menu.

For starters, "jammers" will be served black bean hummus with plantain chips; mini cuban sandwiches and beef kebabs with spicy pineapple marinade. Entrees will include Caribbean jerk-rubbed grilled chicken with jicama and watermelon slaw and coconut shrimp skewers with papaya salsa. Served with them on the buffet will be: avocado salad with cilantro dressing; red rice and pigeon peas; sweet potato fries with chili lime sauce and steamed callaloo with collard greens. Be sure to save room for dessert: banana rum cake with caramel sauce.

Crossing Vineyards' award winning wines will again be available for sampling, with a spotlight on "whites and lights."