

Q&A

LA VIE EN ROSE IN C'VILLE

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU TO THE
CHARLOTTESVILLE ALBEMARLE AREA!

THE EXPERIENCE:

Celebrate French culture & cuisine in the greater Charlottesville area

Whether you are a Francophile at heart or just a fan of *Lupin* and *Emily in Paris*, the Charlottesville Albemarle area is a great place to embrace our deep connections with French wine, food, lifestyle, and history.

CONTACT US:

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WINE

MONTICELLO AVA & WINE TRAIL

Considered the birthplace of American wine and recognized as *Wine Enthusiast*'s 2023 Wine Region of the Year, Monticello AVA encompasses over 50 wineries. Varietals produced in Central Virginia include Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, Viognier, and Petit Manseng, as well as Meritage and Rosé blends.

Vineyards are incredibly scenic and often host live music, food trucks, and special activities like yoga or trivia games. For your planning purposes, focus on one or two wineries that really interest you and build an itinerary including others nearby. [Wineries resources at Visit Charlottesville](#) and [Monticello Wine Trail](#) can provide guidance.

FRENCH WINEMAKERS

Matthieu Finot at [King Family Vineyards](#), Benoit Pineau at [Pollak Vineyards](#), and Damien Blanchon at [Afton Mountain Vineyards](#) were born and trained in France. Today, they are leaders of Virginia's wine industry, each producing award-winning vintages and collaborating and sharing knowledge with other winemakers. Located in the Crozet-Afton area, about 15 miles west of Charlottesville, these wineries offer amazing scenes of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Be sure to visit [Greenwood Grocery](#), along the way, to shop for fine cheeses and local artisanal products.

MAISON SHAPS

[Michael Shaps](#) is also a leader in Virginia viticulture through his own wine label and Wineworks services for other vineyards. Maison Shaps highlights wine from his garagiste-style winery in Meursault, Burgundy, which is managed by his daughter Hanna. Stop by Michael Shaps Winery to sample Michael's wines from both sides of the Atlantic.



PLAN YOUR VISIT:



LAFAYETTE 200:

2024 – 2025 marked the 200th anniversary of the Marquis de Lafayette's return tour of America. [Lafayette 200](#), led by the [American Friends of Lafayette](#) (AFL), highlighted these bicentennial celebrations throughout the United States.

Want to learn more about places Lafayette visited in 1824 and 1825? American Friends of Lafayette has created a public, digital tour of Central Virginia sites related to Lafayette's return visit. It is available via their website and TravelStorys' website [here](#).

DINING

Charlottesville and Albemarle County are “foodie” communities. Downtown, Belmont, and Midtown boast dozens of restaurants and bustle with both upscale and everyday dining options. Great food can be found in unexpected places like former industrial spaces, country markets, and local shopping centers. Check out [Visit Charlottesville's Food & Drink pages](#) for a full list of options.

FRENCH DINING IN DOWNTOWN & MIDTOWN

[The Alley Light](#), [Fleurie](#), and [Petit Pois](#)* serve innovative and memorable French cuisine in the coziest of settings. [Café Frank](#) is a Franco-Italian restaurant with fun selection of spirits and [Orzo Kitchen & Wine Bar](#) highlights dishes from around the Mediterranean. [Bizou](#)*, [C & O Restaurant](#), and [Hamilton's at First & Main](#)* combine French technique with local ingredients.

WINE & DINE

Recently named one of the top wine shops in the nation by *USA Today*, [Crush Pad Wines](#) is a combination of shop, wine bar, and restaurant. In the evenings, pasta can be ordered from [Luce](#) for delivery to your table! Seating is available first come, first serve.

DINING IN HISTORIC SETTINGS

Reserve a chef's tasting menu at [Broadcloth](#) in the Woolen Mills neighborhood. Embrace romance at [The Clifton's 1799 Restaurant](#) or [The Ivy Inn](#). [Marigold by Jean-Georges](#)*, located at [Keswick Hall](#), is Chef Vongerichten's only restaurant in Virginia.

SWEETS FOR THE SWEET

Enjoy delicious baked goods and coffee at [Belle](#), which also serves brasserie style dinner Thursday – Saturday, [Cou Cou Rachou](#), and [MarieBette and Petite MarieBette](#). Visit [Cake Bloom](#) for a Cake & Bubbles experience and [Gearharts Fine Chocolates](#) and [Cocoa & Spice](#) for decadent chocolates handcrafted on site.

CHARCUTERIE & SHARED PLATES

[Peck](#) and [Graze Craze](#) specialize in cheese boards to go. [Ethos Wine & Tea](#)*, [Feast](#)*, [Mona Lisa Pasta](#)*, [Tilman's](#)*, and [Wich Lab](#)* create stellar sandwiches. [Mas Tapas](#), [Bang](#), [Oakhart Social](#), and [Zocalo](#) feature small plates and shareable entrees.

* Open for lunch

EVENTS CALENDAR:



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SHOPPING

YVES DELORME & CASPARI

Founded in 1845, the French linens company, [Yves DeLorme](#) is known for its luxury home accessories inspired by nature. The shop here offers both the latest styles and older patterns at discounted prices. Caspari's fine stationery and paper goods capture garden chic, textile art by Pierre Frey and Scalamandre, and collections from the New York Botanical Garden, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Visit [the flagship store](#) on Charlottesville's Downtown Mall.

BOOKSTORES

Charlottesville rivals much larger cities as a hub for [independent booksellers](#). Downtown you will find 2nd Act Books, The Beautiful Idea, Blue Whale Books, Commerce Street Books, Daedalus Bookshop, Hello Comics, and New Dominion Bookshop. Head to smaller communities of Crozet and Scottsville to explore Bluebird & Co. and Baines Books & Coffee.

ALONG IVY ROAD

La vie est faite de petits bonheurs, especially in your home and with the people you love! Discover home accessories and lovely keepsakes with French flair at [Pour la Maison](#), [Be Just](#), [Kenny Ball Antiques](#), [Helen Storey Antiques](#), and [Comer & Co](#). Look for international groceries and wines at [Food of All Nations](#).

FARMERS MARKETS

Held most Saturday mornings, [Farmers Market at Ix Art Park](#) and [Charlottesville City Market](#) are the quintessential community events. Go to people watch and shop for fresh produce, homemade gifts, and takeaway food.

APPLE ORCHARDS

It's apple season! Enjoy stunning views and buy seasonal treats at [Carter Mountain Orchard](#), its sister property [Chiles Orchard](#), and nearby [Henley's Orchard](#). Pick-your-own apple season usually lasts until early November, but these orchards' farm shops remain open well into December offering pre-picked apples, cider, and other goodies to take home.



VIVE LAFAYETTE

Generations of Americans have been motivated by Lafayette's wartime service and contributions to Franco-American relations.

[James Rogers McConnell](#) was one of several UVA alumni who volunteered for France before the U.S. joined allied forces in World War I. McConnell first enlisted in the ambulance corps. He then flew with the Lafayette Escadrille, a squad of adventurous American flyers who served under French command. He was shot down in March 1917, and is buried in Paris. [The Aviator](#) statue, located at UVA near Clemons Library, honors McConnell. Its sculptor Gutzon Borglum is best known for his work at Mount Rushmore.

"The Allied Spy" at [Unlocked History Escape Rooms](#) lets you experience the real-life heroics of special agent Virginia Hall. Hall worked undercover in France during World War II, supporting French Resistance forces and reporting on German activities. She organized thousands of fighters on the eve of D-Day invasion.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

TRAILS AT MONTICELLO & JAMES MONROE'S HIGHLAND

Set aside time to hike the [Saunders-Monticello Trail](#) or [rustic trails at James Monroe's Highland](#). Both trail systems are free and open to the public. These trails allow you to experience landscapes almost unchanged since the 19th century.

HISTORY

THOMAS JEFFERSON'S MONTICELLO

Thomas Jefferson is perhaps the original Francophile in chief. As Minister to France (1784 – 1789), Jefferson was able to experience French architecture, food, wine, and fashion in person. He also discovered people and modes of thought that greatly influenced his way of life, for the rest of his life. Learn more about Jefferson and France [here](#) and be sure to visit [Monticello](#), his mountaintop home. Consider taking the special [From Slavery to Freedom Tour](#) to better understand deeply entwined and complicated histories of Sally Hemings, James Hemings, and Jefferson's time in France.

JAMES MONROE'S HIGHLAND

James Monroe and Gilbert du Motier met as young men serving under Washington during the Revolutionary War. They remained lifelong friends, and it was President Monroe who invited Lafayette to return for a tour in 1824 – 1825. As Minister to France (1794 – 1796), negotiator of the Louisiana Purchase, and Secretary of State (1811 – 1817), Monroe maintained strong relationships in France for decades. Visit [Highland](#) to learn more.

JAMES RIVER BATTEAU COMPANY

Head to the small town of Scottsville for a cruise in a traditional batteau. Developed in 1775, the poled, flat-bottomed [James River batteau](#) transported tobacco and other goods to Richmond until the 1840s. Today, sunset cruises offer charcuterie and live music – all part of the ambiance that combines history and natural beauty.