

Armistice Day & Century Farm, Celebrate 100 Years with Johnson Estate –*Winery to honor veterans and military with free tastings beginning November 11th. Winemaker's Dinner, November 17th*

Armistice/Veteran's Day Centennial: One hundred years ago, on the “eleventh hour, of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918”, after four years of Europe’s bloodiest war, Ferdinand Foch, Commander in Chief of the Allied forces, accepted Germany’s request for an armistice. We now celebrate this day as Veteran’s Day. At the signing of the formal treaty of peace on June 28, 1919 Foch famously declared: "This is not a peace. It is an armistice for twenty years". His words proved prophetic: the World War II started twenty years and 64 days later.

Special Maréchal Foch Wine for Armistice Day. Free Tastings for Military. Centennial Dinner

The winery will be releasing a special label of its popular Maréchal Foch wine as a centennial celebration of the Armistice/Veteran’s Day and to recognize Johnson Estate’s Century Farm designation. The 2017 vintage red wine is velvety-and smooth, slightly off-dry, and has become the tasting room’s best-selling wine. We offer this special Veteran’s Day commemorative vintage in honor of all who serve and have served at the front lines of our nation’s battles; from Bunker Hill to this day. Beginning on Veteran’s Day, November 11th and throughout the month of November, veterans and those currently serving in the military may enjoy free tastings in the winery. The winery will also be hosting a multi-course “Centennial” dinner featuring French cuisine on November 17th. The dinner will naturally feature Maréchal Foch wine as well as additional wines from the Estate’s wine library. Reservations may be made online for this event (tickets are \$65/person).

**The Maréchal Foch Grape**

Dr. Eugene Kuhlman (1858-1932), who was a renowned French plant scientist and viticulturalist, named his favorite grape variety creation after Ferdinand Foch (or *Maréchal* - French for Marshall – *Foch*) to show his gratitude for the ending of World War I. Foch was a short, energetic, very accomplished man, so perhaps it is not altogether a coincidence that this name-sake grape variety is early ripening, small and very rich. Kuhlman developed this variety in Alsace in the late 1800’s; it was introduced to America in 1921. While the natural plant-breeding crosses details were lost with his death, it is fairly certain that “Maréchal Foch” is the result of a cross between Riesling and Oberlin Noir, which in turn is a cross between Gamay and a wild American grape parent. From the Gamay comes the Beaujolais flavor, from the Riesling the light aromas, and from the wild American parent, vigor and disease resistance. Dr. Kuhlman may have felt that this particular grape, which had helped to liberate France and his home in Alsace from the scourge of Phylloxera in 19th century, should be named after General Foch who, with American help, liberated France and Alsace from German armies at the dawn of the 20th.

NY Agricultural Society Designates Johnson Estate as a Century Farm

Earlier this year Johnson Estate was awarded the NY Agricultural Society’s “Century Farm” award. The winery’s founder’s father, Frederick William Johnson, purchased the farm and vineyards from the original settler family 110 year ago. His farm, known as Sunnyslope Farm, was originally a diversified fruit farm with grapes, apples, cherries, peaches, and pears which enabled him to weather the Depression. His son, and the winery’s founder, Frederick Spencer Johnson was a Navy veteran who served as a pilot during World War II and founded the winery in 1961. The winery is now owned by a third generation, Fred and Jennifer Johnson. The NY Agricultural Society, established in 1823, has long supported the state’s agricultural endeavors and was instrumental in the creation of the State Fair, the NYS Dept. of Agriculture, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension program. The Society recognizes century and bicentennial farms each year at its annual meeting.

Johnson Estate Winery, with 115 acres of vineyards, is the oldest estate winery in New York and is a founding member of Lake Erie Wine Country. For more information please visit www.johnsonwinery.com, www.facebook.com/johnsonwinery, or call 716-326-2191 or 1-800-Drink-NY.