

## Wine, summer and song at Chino Valley vineyard

by **Michael Senft** - Jun. 26, 2008 12:00 AM  
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Escape the summer heat for a romantic afternoon at Granite Creek Vineyards. The Chino Valley winery is holding its Summer Music Saturdays series throughout the summer. Visitors can enjoy a picnic lunch and sample Granite Creek's award-winning wines while listening to light acoustic and jazz music.

"Our picnic area is beautifully landscaped with peacocks roaming the grounds and a picturesque view of the vineyards," said Robin Hoult, who founded the vineyards with her husband in 1974. "And we're about 15 degrees cooler than Phoenix."

On Saturday, Northern Arizona singer-songwriter Pat Beary will perform with fiddler Ines Vitols. Inspired by **Tom Waits** and Elvis Costello, Beary has been a coffeehouse and bar fave around the Prescott area for several years. Other upcoming performers include jazz pianist Jonathan Best and a special Fourth of July weekend barbecue with the itinerant blues band Shri.

Visitors to the summer event can make reservations for a picnic lunch provided by Granite Creek.

"We have a local restaurant that puts them together for us, so we need advance notice, however," Hoult said.

But the star attraction at Granite Creek is the wine.

"First and foremost that's what we do," Hoult said. "We are the only certified organic

vineyard and winery in Arizona, in fact we're one of a handful in the entire country."

For \$8 visitors can sample any of the currently available wines - from the award-winning Grand Canyon Cuvee, a Cabernet Sauvignon/Syrah blend, to the Wild Grape Blush, which is made from a strain of Native American grapes.

"We have six different wines available right now, but we are in the process of bottling our next release which will be available soon," Hoult said.

Located on a territorial Arizona homestead, the vineyard provides a look back at the early days of Arizona. The historic buildings from the original homestead are still standing, and are in use today.

"The farm has actually been in continuous production since 1911. We've converted one of the buildings into a museum showing the history of the Chino Valley area. It even had the first gas pump in Chino Valley, which we now have on display," Hoult said.

"With all the historic buildings and the tree-

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lined grounds, it's filled with tranquility and nostalgia. It's just a lovely way to spend an afternoon."

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