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Obama celebrates with Prosecco
January 21, 2009

Michele Shah

President Barack Obama celebrated his inauguration with Virginia wine – and Prosecco.

At one of many dinners on 19 January, attended by outgoing president George W Bush and former president Bill Clinton, guests worked their way through 100 bottles of Prosecco Conegliano Valdobbiadene.

They were also served two wines from Virginia: Barboursville Vineyards Cabernet Franc Reserve 2006 and Barboursville Vineyards Octagon 2005.

At the dinner, homage was paid to Thomas Jefferson, America's third president and a wine connoisseur, who designed James Barbour's estate house at Barboursville, where construction began in 1814.

It is about 20 miles north of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, where he began planting vineyards in 1807.

The Barbour estate is now the property of Italian wine magnate Gianni Zonin.

'We are honored that our Prosecco, a symbol of the Italian lifestyle, from the foothills of Conegliano Valdobbiadene, has been selected to celebrate Barack Obama's inauguration,' Franco Adami, president of the Consorzio Conegliano Valdobbiadene, said.

He added, 'Jefferson would have been delighted to see three presidents enjoying these bold red Virginian wines.'

In 1976 Gianni Zonin purchased Barboursville and pioneered the first post-phyloxera plantings in Virginia. There are now more than 110 vineyards in the state.

Barboursville Vineyards today includes a historic residence, around 82ha of vineyards and a production of 450,000 bottles.



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