

# VIRGINIA

## LIVING



## Fruit Bubbles

### HARD CIDER LIFTS SPIRITS

Artisanal hard cider traditionally has been made in the New England region as well as the Great Lakes area and the Pacific northwest. You can also find hard cider in Virginia, where Dugspur-based Foggy Ridge Cider sells three different types of the fermented beverage, along with an apple-brandy blend. Foggy Ridge is owned by Chuck and Diane Flynt, who bought a farm in Carroll County and, 11 years ago, started growing heirloom apples. Diane Flynt, 55 and a former banker, apprenticed with cider makers in England before buying the farm. Chuck was previously in the textile business.

These days, the couple manages a 12-acre orchard with 1,000 trees and 30 varieties of heirloom apples from England, France and America, most chosen for their flavor and taste, not appearance. According to the Flynts, the apples are “ugly and hard to grow

but full of the tannin, acid and aroma needed for cider.” The farm’s apples produce 80 percent of the juice that goes into firm’s First Fruit, Sweet Stayman and Serious Cider blends. “We’ve had really good fruit and some great years,” says Diane Flynt, who notes that the firm’s cider is cited in the latest—and last—*Gourmet* magazine.

And the products? Serious Cider “is our driest cider and made with our highest-tannin apples,” says Diane. “It has the sweetness level of brut champagne—it’s extra-dry.” She recommends it as an aperitif. First Fruit is made with early-season apples, including Hewe’s crab-apple. “It’s very food-friendly,” says Diane, “and is great with lighter dishes such as fish or chicken.” Sweet Stayman is mostly made with the old-fashioned Virginia Stayman apple. “It’s off-dry, like a dry Riesling wine, and excellent with spicy Asian dishes or spicy chili.”

Foggy Ridge cider, which has an alcohol content of 8 percent, is sold by retailers around the state in 750 ml bottles for \$15.

[FoggyRidgeCider.com](http://FoggyRidgeCider.com)



↑ Featured in *Virginia Living* December 2009 Issue

**FOGGY RIDGE**  
CIDER