On St. Vincent de Paul

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Francois Marie Bissot, Sieur de Vincennes.

Today, Vincennes is a service, educational, industrial, and agricultural center. Its chief industries produce automobile seats, steel parts for bridges, magnetic wire, glass products, and electronic parts. Two major highways, two railroads, and the Wabash River link Vincennes and cities in the Midwest and Southeast. Coal is the most important mineral found in the area. Oil is produced immediately across the Wabash River in Illinois. Vincennes is the seat of Knox County, a productive agricultural area. Major crops include corn, soybeans, wheat, and potatoes. Good Samaritan Hospital helps make Vincennes a regional medical center. The city is the home of Vincennes University, a community college.

Vincennes has many historical buildings and memorials. These include George Rogers Clark National Historical Park, which honors Clark’s victories in the Revolutionary War in America (1775-1783). Also in Vincennes are the Territorial Capitol, used by William Henry Harrison while he served as the first governor of the Indiana Territory; and Grouseland, a mansion built by Harrison.

The community established by the French settlers came under British control in 1763 as a result of the French and Indian War. The British built Fort Sackville at Vincennes in 1777, during the Revolutionary War. In 1778, Virginia troops and local French volunteers commanded by George Rogers Clark occupied Fort Sackville. The British recaptured the fort, but Clark and his forces attacked again and gained control of Vincennes in 1779. Clark’s efforts in the West helped the United States win a huge area of land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River called the Northwest Territory.

The Indiana Territory, established in 1800, was formed from part of the Northwest Territory. Vincennes served as its capital from 1800 to 1813. The city was incorporated in 1856. It has a mayor-council form of government.

**Vincent de Paul, Saint**

Vincent de Paul (1581-1660), a Roman Catholic leader, founded two important religious orders. In 1633, he and Saint Louise de Marillac established the Daughters of Charity (now often called the Sisters of Charity), the largest Catholic order for women worldwide. Vincent de Paul founded the Congregation of the Mission for men in 1625. Members of this order are called Lazarists or Vincentians. The early Vincentians directed seminaries and organized conferences and retreats to train young priests. They also traveled to villages as missionaries. Today, Vincentians staff many Catholic schools and universities.

Vincent de Paul was born in southwestern France to peasant parents. He was ordained a priest in 1600 and served as pastor and chaplain in Paris and Lyon, where he organized help for the poor. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society was founded in Paris in 1833 to carry on his work for the poor. Today, there are more than 1 million society members in 120 countries. Society members visit the poor and work to supply them with food, clothing, and other necessities. The feast day of Saint Vincent de Paul is September 27.

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**Vinegar** is a sour liquid used for seasoning and for preserving foods. The name *vinegar* comes from a French word meaning *sour wine*. But many kinds of vinegar are made from substances other than wine. Vinegar is produced by the action of yeast and bacteria on agricultural products, including fruits, grains, and such sugar solutions as honey and molasses. Different kinds of vinegar take their names from the material used. For example, wine vinegar comes from grapes, cider vinegar from apples, and malt vinegar from malted barley.

**Making vinegar** involves several steps. First, the raw material is made liquid and its sugar content is adjusted to the level desired by the producer. Fruits are crushed. Grains are soaked in water in a process called *mitting*, which releases their sugars. Water is added to honey or molasses to *dilute* (weaken) the sugar concentration.

In the second step, the sugars in the liquid are turned into alcohol. This process is called *fermentation*. The liquid undergoes fermentation in a barrel or tank that air cannot enter. Yeast added to the liquid begins the fermentation process, which lasts two or three days.

In the third step, the alcohol is converted to *acetic acid* and water in a process called *acetification*. Acetic acid gives vinegar its sour taste and its preservative quality. Bacteria of a variety called *acetobacter* in combination with air causes acetification to occur. The speed of the acetification process depends largely on the rate at which the alcohol is exposed to air. The method of acetification used today allows the alcohol rapid exposure to the air and usually requires only one or two days. In this method, the alcohol trickles through a bed of wood shavings, corn cobs, or other coarse material that has been packed into a vessel called a *generator*. Air pumped up from the bottom of the generator comes into contact with the liquid as it trickles through the bed. The liquid may flow through the generator several times before all the alcohol has turned into acid. After acetification, the vinegar is filtered to remove impurities. It is then pasteurized and bottled for sale.

In the traditional method of acetification, the alcohol partly filled an open vessel such as a barrel. Only the liquid’s surface came into contact with the air. Acetification took weeks or months to complete by this method.

**Uses of vinegar.** Vinegar is sold for use both at home and by commercial food processors. It is used...