

# VERMONT *maple syrup*

By Margaret Davis

## A BIT OF NORTH COUNTRY IN NORTH CAROLINA

### Maple Syrup season is almost here!

If you ever spent time in the Northeast, you might remember the sweet smell of sap permeating the air as the syrup was being boiled during maple season. Maybe, you had a family member who was a sugar maker in New England, or you visited Vermont and your best memory is the taste of sugar on snow. YUM!

If you see a delivery truck with a Green Mountain Maple logo driving around your neighborhood, you're probably wondering how Vermont Maple Syrup ended up here in North Carolina and, especially, at Biltmore Lake. This is the story of how Don and Margaret started a local business selling Vermont Maple Syrup in the mountains of North Carolina.

Harvesting maple syrup is a lot of work. It takes 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup and each Sugar Maple tree produces about three gallons of sap a day and the sugar season is only three months long. Sugar maple trees are hardy, but they shouldn't be tapped until they are at least 40 years old. They can live 300–400 years, reach 70–110 feet tall and grow anywhere from 1–2 feet in diameter.

In Vermont, the sap will start to run from the Sugar Maple tree around February and continue well into April providing the weather conditions are just right. For the sap to run, the days must be warm, above 32 degrees during the day and freezing conditions at night.

Our business started out like this. We moved to Asheville in 2011. We had both retired after a 30-plus year career in Child Protection with the Vermont State government. After retirement, we needed a change of scenery and what better place than the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina.



Becoming restless in retirement, Don decided we needed to get back to work. He wanted to share Vermont's natural gift of maple syrup with our new community in North Carolina and started Green Mountain Maple. We teamed up with friends, Randy and Louise Calderwood who own a sugar shack in Craftsbury, VT, and we began selling at area Farmer's Markets in Asheville.

Local businesses started calling us, wanting our maple on their menu. Today, we are partners with independently owned restaurants, Bed & Breakfasts and co-op grocery stores in Western North Carolina. We sell at fairs and festivals and we have an online store. Today, we sell almost everything produced on the Vermont farm here in the South.

Along the way, we decided it would be fun to have a business model where we delivered our syrup door to door just like in the old days. We wanted to meet our customers face-to-face.

We purchased a 1961 International Harvester Metro. These step-vans were used in the '60s as delivery vans and some were used as paddy wagons. Our second delivery vehicle is a 1965 Ford Econoline also known as the Ford Falcon Deluxe Club Wagon. Wherever we go, the reaction is the same; we are photographed, flagged down, tailed and tracked on social media. The fun part of our business is the people we meet.

We started delivering to Biltmore Lake after resident and Vermont maple syrup enthusiast, Doug Sherry spread the word about the great taste. Doug used to live in Vermont and was pretty excited to find pure Vermont maple right here in Asheville.

Our customers love our vans, our maple syrup, maple cream and our maple candy. If you see us, flag us down. You can buy right off the truck or order online—we will deliver directly to your door. It's a pleasure driving out to the lake and being a small part of your community.

Life really is too short for fake maple syrup!



Vermont is the nation's leading producer of maple syrup with operations that generated more than 2 million gallons in 2020. The season begins in February and runs through mid-April. For more information on Green Mountain Maple products, visit **GreenMountainMaple.net**.

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