

HONORS

75

BEST WINERIES
TO VISIT *in*

CALIFORNIA

MENDOCINO
SONOMA VALLEY
NAPA VALLEY
BAY AREA
PASO ROBLES
SANTA BARBARA

California has thousands of winery tasting rooms, but the 75 here offer new and unforgettable experiences. They're pairing wines with smoked trout, tacos or local cheeses; putting guests in the vineyards on bikes, tractors and six-wheeled army trucks; and pouring tastes of wines you'll never find anywhere else.

BY MEGAN KRIGBAUM

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To make the most of any winery visit, always call a week or two ahead to find out tasting and touring hours and whether you'll need an appointment.



75 BEST WINERIES TO VISIT in CALIFORNIA

BAY AREA

61 Dashe Cellars
Mike and Anne Dashe's urban winery in Oakland puts in-cellar tastings and incredible Zinfandel within easy reach of San Francisco—it's a 15-minute BART ride. *55 Fourth St., Oakland; dashecellars.com.*

62 Donkey & Goat
Jared and Tracey Brandt source grapes from Mendocino and nearby El Dorado county, then they make natural wines in Berkeley using old-school winemaking techniques. The small winery is open to the public only on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, but most guests get to taste with the winemakers. *1340 Fifth St., Berkeley; donkeyandgoat.com.*

SANTA BARBARA

63 Au Bon Climat
Although Jim Clendenen has been making phenomenal wine in Santa Barbara since 1982, he only opened a tasting room two years ago, pouring new releases of all of his wines and a section of older library bottlings. *813 Anacapa St., Santa Barbara; aubonclimat.com.*



64 Beckmen
new! The owners of Beckmen hope its visitors will stay a while. Outside the tasting room are picnic tables, a quiet duck pond and a new patio where guests can open a bottle of Grenache from the tasting room. *2670 Ontiveros Rd., Los Olivos; beckmenvineyards.com.*

65 Brewer-Clifton
The single-vineyard tasting (\$20, including cheese pairings) gives guests the opportunity to taste through six Santa Rita Hills Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs. The rotating lineup always includes a couple of older vintages, to give a sense of how both *terroir* and bottle age play a role in wine. At right: tag-team winemakers Steve Clifton (left) and Greg Brewer. *329 N. F St., Lompoc; brewerclifton.com.*



66 Foxen
Visitors to Foxen's solar-powered winery and tasting room can try five fantastic single-vineyard Burgundian and Rhône varieties for only \$10, then drive up the road to the Foxen 7200 tasting shack and try its Bordeaux varieties. *7600 Foxen Canyon Rd., Santa Maria; foxenvineyard.com.*

67 Kunin
Winemaker Seth Kunin spends his weekends pouring samples of his Central Coast Zinfandel and Rhône varieties and chatting with visitors in his surf-shack-style spot, less than a block from East Beach. *28 Anacapa St., Santa Barbara; kuninwines.com.*

68 Loring Wine Company
new! This July, Brian Loring moved his tasting room from the Lompoc Wine Ghetto (an industrial park composed of 19 wineries and tasting rooms) to Buellton, next door to the famed Hitching Post II restaurant. Try a flight of the diverse single-vineyard Pinot Noirs from around the state. Another sensational Pinot Noir maker, Peter Cargasacchi, also shares the tasting bar. *420 E. Hwy. 246, Buellton; loringwinecompany.com.*

69 Margerum
A Santa Barbara wine pioneer, Doug Margerum pours tastes of small-production, Rhône-variety wines that are near impossible to find elsewhere. The space is adjacent to the

Wine Cask, a beloved wine shop and restaurant that Margerum founded and co-owns. *813 Anacapa St., Santa Barbara; margerumwinecompany.com.*

70 Palmina
Owned by Steve Clifton (also of Brewer-Clifton winery) and his wife, Chrystal, Palmina is inspired by the couple's love of Italy and Italian varieties grown in Santa Barbara, like Dolcetto and Arneis. Wines are available on tap, so visitors can take samples home in refillable bottles or growlers, as well as olive oil, vinegar and other Italianate products. *1520 E. Chestnut Ct., Lompoc; palmina.wines.com.*

71 Qupé
Long referred to as the grandfather of the Santa Barbara wine scene, Qupé winemaker Bob Lindquist has been making wine since the late 1970s. He now shares a tasting room in Los Olivos with his son Ethan, creator of Ethan wines. Since both father and son produce wines from Rhône varieties, it's fascinating to compare their styles. *2963 Grand Ave., Los Olivos; qupe.com.*

72 Sanford
An important stop for wine-history buffs, Sanford is one of the oldest wineries in Santa Barbara. Its bi-level tasting room sits smack-dab in the middle of the gorgeous La Rinconada Pinot Noir

vineyard. *5010 Santa Rosa Rd., Lompoc; sanfordwinery.com.*

73 Stolpman
Peter Stolpman has two great little tasting rooms: one in downtown Los Olivos, and a newer one in the Lompoc Wine Ghetto, where he makes his spectacular Syrahs. The tasting room is really just a table adjacent to the tanks on the winery floor. *1700 Industrial Way, Lompoc; stolpmanvineyards.com.*



PASO ROBLES

74 Justin Winery
new! Justin recently overhauled its farmhouse-style tasting room, adding a zinc-topped bar and 1,900 square feet. Plus, there's a new outdoor tasting bar and kitchen where guests can have lunch. The lamb *barbacoa* tacos are excellent with Justin's full-bodied reds. *11680 Chimney Rock Rd., Paso Robles; justinwine.com.*

75 Tablas Creek
Entering the Tablas Creek tasting room feels like stepping into an enormous wine barrel. The space, decorated with a modern wooden sculpture and floored in cork, looks into the cellar where the all-Rhône-variety wines are aged. *9339 Adelaida Rd., Paso Robles; tablascreek.com. ●*