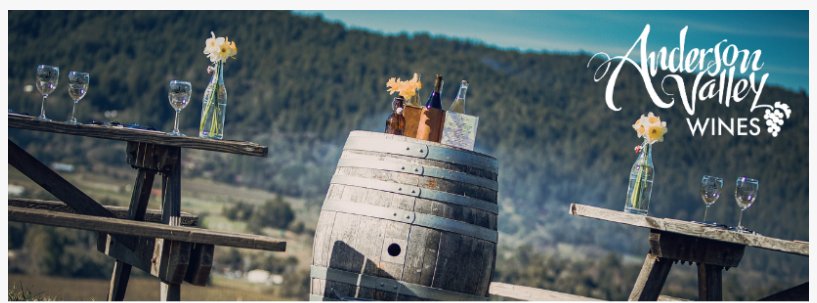


Why This California White Wine Region & Annual Event is Worth Paying Attention

This small region in Northern California was built upon plantings of white wine grapes and is now known as a leader in sparkling, Pinot Noir and Gewürztraminer

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[Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association, www.AVWINES.com](https://www.AVWINES.com)



Wine tasting overlooking vineyard in Anderson Valley

Why These California White Wine Producers Are Worth Paying Attention

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As a region with historic roots in white wine production, we love setting aside a weekend to celebrate the grapes, the wine styles, and some featured food pairings for our higher acidic wines”

Courtney DeGraff, Executive Director

Anderson Valley is one of the most notable white wine producing regions in the New World. Pioneers were visionary in planting Alsatian varieties like [Gewürztraminer](#), Riesling, and Pinot Gris beginning in the 1960s and the following decades.

A Brief History of White Wine in Anderson Valley

Dr. Donald Edmeades, aided by UC Davis researchers, planted Gewürztraminer in 1963 on 24 acres near Philo and was quickly followed (1967) by the Husch family, the first to plant Pinot Noir in the Valley. Those Pinot vines, and both wineries, are still around today. Brad Wiley planted

2.5 acres to Riesling in 1973, which makes a noteworthy wine by winemaker Ashley Holland.

In 1981, John Scharffenberger arrived with a revelation: Anderson Valley has the perfect climate for sparkling wine grapes. His notion is affirmed when just a year later Champagne Louis Roederer bought a 580-acre parcel of land to set up a California sparkling house. Milla Handley (one of the earliest woman winemakers in California) and Navarro were also quick to join the scene, adding sparkling wines to their portfolios. Pinot Noir played a small role, but Chardonnay

dominated the blends.

Roederer Estate's 1988 Brut was the first domestic sparkling wine produced by Louis Roederer, who is often credited with revolutionizing the sparkling wine industry in California. Lichen Estate is now significant in its own right for California-style sparkling from Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir, and fifty percent of tasting rooms now offer sparkling.

With Pinot Noir starting to dominate the landscape, in 2005 winemakers decided to celebrate the Alsace-style varieties that helped launch the Valley into the modern era with the first Alsace International Varietals Festival. Today in its 17th year and relaunched as the Winter White Wine Festival it captures the changing landscape and remains a rally cry for saving white wine in the region.

Tickets are now on sale for Anderson Valley's 17th annual [Winter White Wine Festival Weekend](#), February 17-18, 2024. Tickets for the full weekend VIP Passport are \$145 (early bird \$125) and include food and wine tasting experiences at up to eight different wineries. A one day pass and four wine and food stops is \$95.

While we can count dozens of reasons to be here in Mendocino County, we have tried to narrow it down to six very good reasons to explore white wine in AV February 17-18, 2024.

Anderson Valley is Producing THE best Gewürztraminer in the New World

- Husch Vineyards still has their original vines producing spectacular examples of the variety. Enjoy their white wines paired with a bento box of bites.
- Lula Cellars is the closest winery to the Pacific and their cool climate Gewürztraminer will taste even better with the paella they prepare for all guests.
- Navarro Vineyards is a significant player in the U.S. Gewürztraminer market. Begin with the non-alcoholic grape juice they do and try it next to the dry version and the late harvest Edelzwicker.

Library Whites Are Rare

- Handley Cellars is known to pull out some rare aged Gewürztraminer for this event, paired with appropriate nibbles. Enjoy touring their gardens and art galleries, too.
- Breggo is back! It's an exciting time in Anderson Valley when longtime favorite Doug Stewart of Lichen Estate is thrilled to announce he has reacquired his original winery, Breggo. Launched in 2005 and heavily awarded over the winery's first three vintages, Stewart sold Breggo to Cliff Lede in Napa and they renamed it FEL. Come visit the new tasting room (in the former Phillips Hill Winery) and taste through the Breggo library, some of the best wines ever made in the Valley.

Alsatian Wines and Food Pair up for Surprising Delights!

- Goldeneye Winery - pulling specialty flatbreads from their brick oven that will pair perfectly with their flight which features a Gewürztraminer. Goldeneye never disappoints!
- Brashley Vineyard is our new kid on the block and winemaker Ashley Holland pays tribute to owners Bram and Ashley (another one!) home in the Finger Lakes by making a Riesling there.

Chef Sean will have a plethora of chef nibbles.

We have Winemakers with Napa Roots but they love Anderson Valley

- Meyer Cellars' Matt Meyers hails from Silver Oak royalty invites visitors to indulge in Chardonnay, bites from his estate chef, a round of disc golf or a tour around the fermenting cellar
- Twomey Cellars find their beloved Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc the perfect complement to their portfolio of Burgundian Pinots and Chardonnays, along with tasty chef made bites to pair.

Walk Through the Vineyards, Inhale the View and Taste the Wines

- Walk the vineyards and visit the geese at Toulouse Vineyards. The views will impress as well as the Alsatian whites they will pair with something yummy like a bratwurst from the Alsace region.
- At SEAWOLF Wines, the view to the ocean does not disappoint and neither will the Hog Island oysters winemakers Jesse and Emma serve with their mountain grown 2023 Sauvignon Blanc.

Sauvignon Blanc Lovers Rejoice at the Array of Sauvignon Blanc Produced in AV

- In addition to the SEAWOLF SB mentioned above, try the Philo Ridge version paired with local music and bites. Also, try their Chardonnay and Viognier in downtown Boonville.
- Just down the street, Foursight Wines is known for their yummy Sauvignon Blanc and chef-prepared cuisine prepared by beloved Chef Kim Badenhop, plus library Semillon pours.
- Navarro Vineyards and Pennyroyal Farms Sauvignon Blanc will pair beautifully with Pennyroyal's cheeses and local charcuterie.

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About the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association (AVWA)

The AVWA was founded in 1983 – the same year as the appellation. Made up of 25 vineyard, 66 winery and 63 associate members, the nonprofit organization operates with the goal of supporting the region's premier grape growers and wineries, as well as promoting the region's distinguished wines.

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