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WINE COUNTRY

THIS
MONTH

FREE! WINERY MAPS • DINING • THINGS TO DO • CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 2026
SINCE 1981



40 Years of Excellence

Inside

- 50th Anniversary – Judgment of Paris *PART 3*
- Pickleball & Hawaiian Chocolate at Whitehall Lane Winery
- Cocktail Drinkers Guide to Wine
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- Wine, Art, Culinary Excellence at Davis Estates





DAVIS ESTATES

*Discover Quiet Luxury
Through Wine, Art,
and Culinary Excellence*

BY DON SONDERLING

When you visit wine country, you are generally there for a wine-tasting experience which often includes cheese pairings, a beautiful setting, relaxation, and Wine Country hospitality. Visiting Davis Estates in Calistoga offers more than just the expected. It can be described as experiencing “quiet luxury.” The estate provides understated elegance within a relaxed, casual, but refined atmosphere. Guests will enjoy a distinctive, immersive experience where wine, art, culture, cuisine, scenery, and hospitality harmoniously combine into an unforgettable, intimate afternoon.

The first impression upon entering the tasting area is the expanse of vineyards before you. On a beautiful spring day with the vines blooming, or in the fall as the leaves turn colors (and really, any other time of year), it may well take your breath away. This is a special view.

Wines to Savor and Remember

Davis Estates is a “Bordeaux house,” focusing on Bordeaux varieties, especially Cabernet Sauvignon.

Of the wines produced, only two are blends:

- **Zephyr**, which represents a Left Bank focus (predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon)
- **Classic Chase**, representing the Right bank (predominantly Merlot) is named after the owner’s first grandson.

Wineries often draw inspiration from Bordeaux’s historic Left and Right Banks, interpreting these classic styles through the lens of the diverse terroir. Left Bank-inspired blends are typically Cabernet Sauvignon-driven, offering structure, power, and age-worthy complexity, while Right Bank-inspired wines emphasize Merlot and Cabernet Franc, resulting in softer textures, plush fruit, and elegant finesse. Together, they showcase how Old World tradition continues to influence New World winemaking.

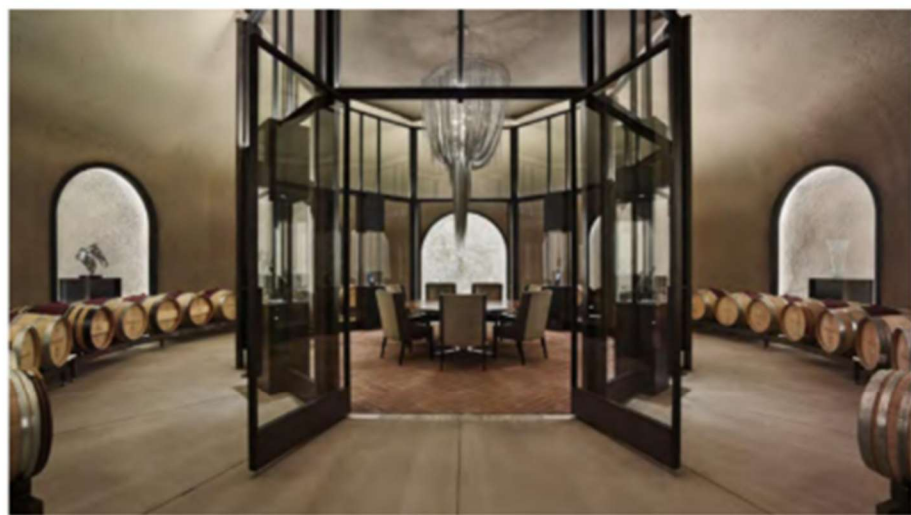
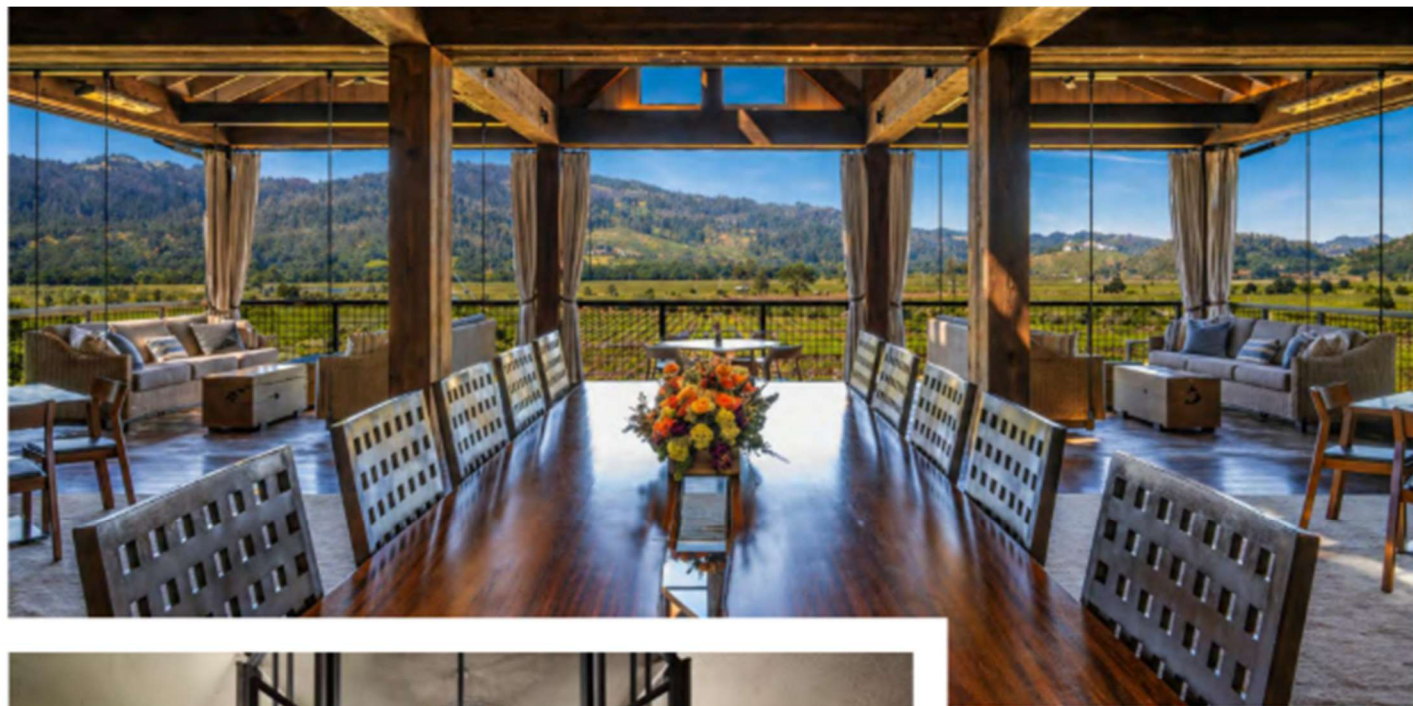
There are several tasting experiences to choose from, something for everyone. You can pick from a current-release tasting, a Cab-focused tasting (comparing the differences in taste among four Napa AVAs), or even more focused, specialized tastings.

No matter which you choose, your host will explain Davis’s history and vision while discussing the wines, winemaking philosophy, and the vineyards.

An added accompaniment to all tastings is a food pairing designed by Chef Eric Moulton. These small bites are individual plates of edible art, focusing on presentation and flavor. Tastings will vary every 6-8 weeks, depending on the season and fresh, locally available products.

For those of you who love home cooking, your host will provide recipes at the end of the pairing, so when you take home a bottle, you can prepare your own in-home Davis wine-paired event.





The Winemaker

Winemaker Walter Leiva has been with Davis Estates for ten years and follows a philosophy of guiding rather than altering: "where the wine will go." He considers technology a helpful tool but relies on his palate and signals from the grapes during tasting, aging, and harvest. Despite being tech-savvy and using modern tools, Walter combines New World technology with traditional Old World non-interventional methods, resulting in luxury, small-lot wines.

Working with Walter Leiva, French-born winemaker Philippe Melka oversees Davis's Phase V micro-production, ultra-luxury wine project, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah, Cabernet Franc, and Cellarium (a blend). These are wines produced from the estate's best grapes. Acquisition and tastings are limited to Founder's Club members, with tastings in the special "Cellarium" room (accessed by a palm vein scanner). The Cellarium tasting is individually unique.

Where Art, Architecture, and Panoramic Vistas Meet Wine

It's virtually impossible to "do everything" in one visit, so you'll have to plan a repeat trip for new wine releases, new food pairings, and events, especially to experience firsthand the fabric of vistas, art, and architecture that makes Davis so exceptional, giving a deeper understanding of the vision and goal of providing each and every guest with something unique, blending all the senses together.

Mike and Sandy Davis love art and, over the years, have exchanged gifts on special occasions, including original artworks by masters like Picasso, Rembrandt, and Andy Warhol. In the entry hall, impressive art glass by Dale Chihuly lines each side, alongside several Frederic Remington Western-themed bronzes.

There is a barn from 1916 that displays a vintage player piano from the early 1900s, a restored John Deere and Ford

tractor from around the 1930s-1940s, and an industrial ceiling fan known as the "Big Ass Fan," yes, that IS the name. As you let your eyes wander, you'll also notice a jukebox, old saw blades, and old barrels and tables made from wine barrel staves. This is a virtual museum of yesteryear, and if you are a club member, you will have the opportunity to enjoy two parties each year held in this wonderful time capsule.

Touring the estate, you'll take in an array of remarkable features, including landscaping, fountains (note the Kuegel, a cabernet grape floating on a sheet of water over a wine leaf), art, architecture, and innovative technology. And of course, the wine and the story blend this into an amazing fabric.

Davis Estates is a destination not to be missed, whether you are just starting to enjoy "what" Napa wines are all about or are a more serious connoisseur or collector.

Cheers

Don Sonderling is a freelance writer covering California's unique lifestyle of wine, food, and adventure from Santa Barbara to Napa Valley and beyond. He may be reached at: donsonderling@gmail.com.

DAVIS ESTATES

OPEN DAILY, BY APPOINTMENT, 10AM-4PM
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