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## California Wine Road Trip: 5 Wineries With Stunning Architecture

Dan Q. Dao Contributor 

Travel



MacRostie Wines Porch At Dusk BRUCE DAMONTE, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

The appeal of California's wine country has never been about just the wine. In recent years, architecture's become a major draw to the region, with beautifully trimmed restaurants, hotels, and wineries that merge into the backdrop of rolling hills, vineyards, and the Pacific Ocean.

That design ethos is the theme of author Heather Sandy Hebert's 2019 book *The New Architecture of Wine*, which features 25 excellent West Coast wineries whose aesthetic is as much a draw as the juice. Featured properties range from those influenced by the old-world estates of Europe to minimalists that celebrate the topography of California.

Thinking of planning a winery trip to California? We checked in with Hebert for insights on some of the highlights from her book. From [Sonoma](#) to [Napa](#), here are five excellent California wineries with stunning architecture.



Quintessa Pavillions MATTHEW MILLMAN, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

## Quintessa Pavilions

“The Quintessa Pavilions are a pure expression of the wine country terroir—small, nearly transparent structures that nearly disappear into the landscape,” Hebert says. Built in 2003 with an emphasis on sustainability, this Napa winery and residence makes use of reclaimed and locally-sourced materials to blend in seamlessly with the natural surroundings of its 280-acre estate. Seated atop the picturesque Dragon’s Hill, the property offers uninterrupted oak trees, vineyards, and lake below—the ideal setting for its salon tasting flights, which include a private guided tasting of three wines.



Epoch Estate Barrel Room CASEY DUNN, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

## Epoch Estate

Founded in 2004 by geologists Bill and Liz Armstrong, this expansive estate focusing on wine made from Rhône varietals comprises three vineyards: Paderewski, Catapult, and York Mountain. There’s plenty of history here both in terms of the wine—York Mountain was established in 1882 as America’s first bonded winery—as well as the design, which includes reconstructed rock walls and a refurbished farmhouse. “I love the meticulous attention to every detail of the rich history of the new tasting room at Epoch,” says Hebert. “And the counterweight provided by the simple contemporary language of the production winery.”



Occidental Wines Entry At Dusk BRUCE DAMONTE, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

## Occidental Wines

Legendary winemaker Steve Kistler’s Pinot Noir project emphasizes winemaking in its truest and purest form. After 35 years in the California wine industry, Kistler sought to create Old

World-style Pinot Noir from the far western reaches of Sonoma. Occidental, an 85-acre property comprising three estate vineyards, is his magnum opus. The sleek yet warm winery was designed by husband-wife duo Richard Schuh and Amy Nielsen. “Occidental Wines is pure and elegant—as close to a true architectural expression of both the wines and winemaker as I’ve ever seen,” explains Hebert. Make a reservation for a 60-90 minute vineyard tour and seated tasting in the private tasting room.



Progeny Winery MATTHEW MILLMAN, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

### Progeny Winery

Hebert says the experience at this Mt. Veeder estate is “utterly unique—it’s almost spiritual.” Founded in 2007 by husband-wife team Betty and Paul Woolls, the 260-acre winery boasts nearly 360-degree panoramic views from the mountains above to the valleys below. Progeny now welcomes visitors to a newly-constructed Hospitality Center where they can taste through all of the Reserve Wines in a 75-90 minute tasting with an optional cheese pairing and small plate pairings prepared by estate chef John Gerber. The two buildings that comprise the Tasting Room are designed such that visitors immediately connect the angular roofs with the mountains above, while an entry corridor redirects their gaze towards the nearby vineyards.



Ram’s Gate Library ADRIAN GREGORUTTI, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

### Ram’s Gate Winery

Opened in 2011, this Sonoma winery produces incredible cool-climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Designed by award-winning architect Howard Backen, the property bridges the natural California landscape with a re-imagining of the classic Carneros farmstead. “The beauty of

Ram’s Gate is the sense of community is engenders—designed around a central courtyard, the design is timeless,” says Hebert. Tastings are offered by appointment Thursdays through Mondays—inquire about picnics that can be arranged at the nearby lake.



MacRostie Wines Tasting Room BRUCE DAMONTE, FROM THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE: 25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES BY HEATHER SANDY HEBERT, REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GIBBS SMITH

## MacRostie Winery

“The simplicity of form and the lightness of being at MacRostie Wines made me want to stay there all day,” Hebert says. “I hear a lot of people do.” A stone’s throw away from the picturesque town of Healdsburg, this iconic Sonoma winery produces award-winning single-vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The brainchild of architecture firm Gould Evans, the winery’s design centers on light, views, and local raw materials. The property’s centerpiece, called the Estate House, reflects this ethos with gorgeous natural woods, leather, and ample glass windows atop a charming hill. Lounge with a glass of wine on one of many patios, taking in the sunset views of the surrounding vineyards and Mount Saint Helena beyond.

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I am an NYC-based writer covering travel, food & drink, and culture for GQ, Food & Wine, Paper, Vice, Architectural Digest, Punch, and Eater among others. I was most recently the Deputy Digital Editor at Saveur, and previously served as Assistant Food & Drink Editor at Time Out New York. In May 2018, I was named winner of The Spirits Business' annual Alan Lodge Young International Drinks Writer Award. Originally from Houston, Texas, I graduated from high school at the age of 16 before studying journalism at NYU. Beyond my editorial work, I have 10 years of experience in the hospitality industry as a barista, bartender, and consultant. In 2019, I worked with the Sunflower Mission, a non-profit educational organization empowering students in Vietnam, to create a scholarship for those studying hospitality and culinary-related fields. Follow me on Instagram at @danqdao. **Read Less**

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## Ten Of The Most Beautiful Tasting Rooms In Napa Valley



**Michelle Gross** Contributor

Travel

*Connecting countries, cultures and cuisine, one flight at a time™*



Tasting room at RH Yountville RH YOUNTVILLE

Harvest season is now well underway in California's [Napa Valley](#), and with an estimated 400-wineries that span across the region's roughly 35-mile stretch between Napa and Sonoma, choosing where to go can be just as persnickety as the very grapes that grow here. From the cooler climates found in Carneros that turn out some of the areas best chardonnay's and pinots in the south to [Calistoga's](#) fabled zinfandel's, cab sauv's and slightly warmer climate to the north, there's really no going wrong when it comes to picking a great place to spend a day delighting in some amazing new world wine.

With so many wonderful options to choose from depending on your personal preference and palate, from a beautiful 18th-century style chateau in Carneros to sipping sparkling wine alfresco at Domaine Chandon and a sexy new tasting room in the heart of downtown Yountville, here are ten of the most beautiful tasting rooms and experiences you can't miss on your next trip to wine country.

### Artesa



Artesa's beautiful new tasting salon in the heart of Carneros ARTESA

Catalan for 'artisan,' Artesa's Spanish-inspired tasting salon and adjoining patio space overlooks the rolling hills of Carneros and is easily one of the most beautiful places to enjoy a flight of wine. [Artesa](#) specializes in Pinot's and Chardonnay along with a vintage estate sparkling and highly limited cabernet, tempranillo and albariño. Artesa offers a flight of five exclusive single vineyard wines in their Tasting Salon and Terrace as well as one of several Barcelona-inspired food and wine pairing experiences by appointment only.

## RH Yountville



RH Wine Vault RH YOUNTVILLE

Restoration Hardware is having a major design moment right now, and a can't miss is their beautiful new indoor-outdoor wine, dining and design concept called [RH Yountville](#)

that opened last year. The formal garden café was built around 100-year-old olive trees with design elements like lavish crystal glittering Rococo chandeliers, tricking fountains and a soaring glass roof. Steps away is the wine tasting room which is housed in a stone building constructed in 1904 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Stag's Leap Wine Cellars



Stag's Leap Wine Cellars SARA MATTHEWS

One of Napa's most prestigious wineries, [Stag's Leap Wine Cellars](#) FAY Outlook & Visitor Center offers a spectacular view of the estate vineyards and a tasting experience that matches the world-class wines being produced here. The winery offers several seated tastings (reservations needed) of their Estate wines including ARCADIA Vineyard Chardonnay, FAY, S.L.V. and CASK 23 Cabernet Sauvignon. Stag's of course is also known as the winery that produced the 1973 S.L.V. Cabernet Sauvignon that beat the best of France at the famous 1976 Paris Tasting or Judgment of Paris, mementos of which are featured prominently in the foyer.

## Domaine Chandon



The entrance to Domaine Chandon in Napa Valley COURTESY OF CHANDON

Set directly in the heart of Yountville, [Domaine Chandon's](#) sprawling campus has emerged as one of Napa's trendiest spots to sit, sip and celebrate thanks in part to an impressive collection of sparkling and still wines as well as the ethereal setting and backdrop to drink

it all in. Easily one of the most beautiful wineries in Napa, larger parties can post up in their very own cabana on the main lawn or grab one of the communal tables inside (no reservation necessary for parties ten and under).

## Prisoner Wine Company



The Prisoner Wine Company tasting room THE PRISONER WINE COMPANY

[Prisoner Wine Company](#) opened their first US tasting room last year and from the stunning vaulted ceilings, skylight to the open-view kitchen and striking modern furniture and design, this is one of the sexiest additions to Napa's tasting landscape. The Yard, an outdoor courtyard and culinary garden grows herbs and produce used in wine pairings served at the winery. With a retro meets futuristic feel, salvaged iron and wood from the original San Francisco-Oakland Bay and accents that include a life-size skeleton installation and a diesel tank repurposed as chandelier, this is another one of the most beautiful places to stop and sip right now.

## Domaine Carneros



Domain Carneros tasting room AVIS MANDEL

Inspired by an 18th century Château in Champagne, France, there's really not a bad seat in the house at [Domaine Carneros](#). Sip from your own private table on the terrace or in

the grand salon, just be sure to make a reservation well in advance here. Bonus if you love a glass of sparkling wine as The Art of Sparkling Wine tour is an absolute delight.

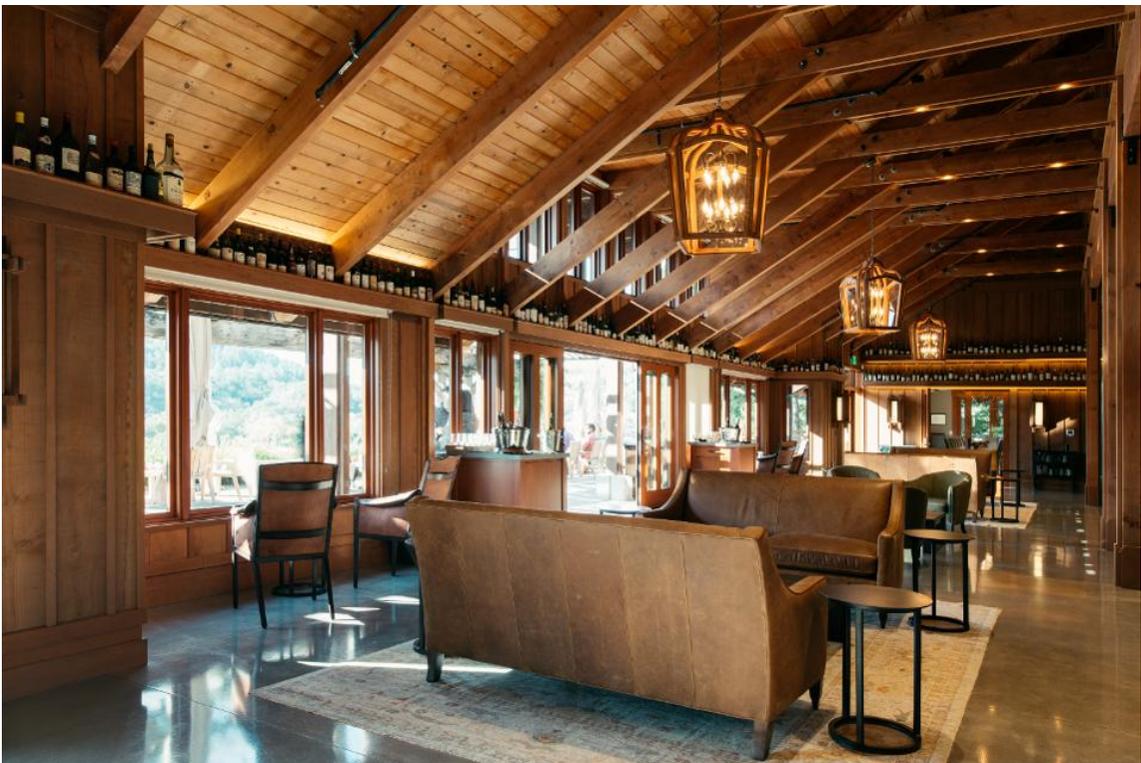
## Etude



Etude GABRIEL PHOTOGRAPHY

**Etude** was founded on the principle that winemaking begins in the vineyard, so it only makes sense that you sip on Etude’s “Study” of specially curated estate Pinot’s on the wineries beautiful garden patio. Formerly a Remy Martin brandy distillery, wine club members have the added benefit of going a tasting in the Angel's Loft winery lounge where you can oversee how the grapes are being processed as you taste.

## Joseph Phelps Vineyards



Joseph Phelps - Oval Room View JOSEPH PHELPS

**Joseph Phelps** is best known for its flagship Napa Valley blend of red Bordeaux varieties and the best place to try it is the Insignia Retrospective Tasting. Only offered once a month, the focus is on five library vintages of Insignia (currently 2004-2008) and the current or new release of Insignia. Guests who take part in this experience are also invited to visit the barrel room to taste from a live barrel of upcoming Insignia vintage.

## Sterling Vineyards



Sterling Vineyards Tasting Room STERLING VINEYARDS

Set 300-feet above sea-level, take a quick ride up the aerial tram to [Sterling Vineyards](#) where a gorgeous Mediterranean-style tasting room with some of the best views over Calistoga awaits. Modeled after the Greek island of Mykonos, Sterling is well known for its impressive Iridium Cab Sauv.

## Quintessa



Quintessa QUINTESSA

Tucked away in Rutherford, [Quintessa](#) offers three 250-square-foot minimalist wood and glass private tasting pavilions in the heart of their vineyard making this one of the most idyllic vistas to sit and sip on one of their famous Cabs. You can opt to try the Private Estate experience which will take you on a behind the scenes look as well as access to Quintessa's intricate cave system or enjoy a seated tasting flight in the Tasting Salon.

*Follow me on [Twitter](#). Check out my [website](#).*



**Michelle Gross**

Born and raised in beautiful Southern California, I moved to New York City to pursue a career in journalism in 2006 and haven't looked back since. Having lived, worked and reported from cities around the world, I graduated from the Newmark School of Journalism (formerly CUNY) with a masters degree in international reporting and have spent the last few years exclusively covering trends in travel, food and lifestyle for variety of publications including Robb Report, Travel+Leisure, Vogue, Men's Journal, Food&Wine, The San Francisco Chronicle, Travel Weekly, Travel Channel, Thrillist and BBC Travel among others. **Read Less**

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