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# SONOMA

## WHAT'S NEW IN WINE COUNTRY

Napa's Riverfront gets an Iron Chef

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\$5.95 / Napa Sonoma



# FLIGHTS OF FANCY

by Sarah Sung |

Eight artistic interludes in Wine Country.



WINE ENJOYMENT AND ART APPRECIATION HAVE ALWAYS SEEMED LIKE CLOSE COUSINS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME WINERIES, TASTING ROOMS, AND GALLERIES THROUGHOUT WINE COUNTRY THAT ARE TAKING THIS CONNECTION TO THE NEXT LEVEL. NEW EXHIBITS ARE OPENING THROUGHOUT THE REGION, MAKING SURE YOUR NEXT "TASTING" EXPERIENCE IS MULTI-SENSORY.

PHOTOGRAPHY (LEFT TO RIGHT) COURTESY OF CORNERSTONE, COURTESY OF BARDESSONO

Left to right: Cornerstone, Bardessono, Seven Stones Winery





## IN LIVING COLOR

### Gallery Meets Tasting Room at Ma(i)sonry

This historic 1904 stone manor is one of only two buildings in Yountville listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The gallery within displays art and artifacts from as far back as the 16th century. “It’s as if you have just walked into someone’s home, and you are both immediately comfortable and yet immediately intrigued by all that is going on around you,” owner Michael Polenske says. “Ma(i)sonry is in every way a celebration of life’s aesthetics. Every collection onsite has been created by the hand of an artist, artisan, or designer, and, of course, that includes the wine.”

Weekends often feature trunk shows of handcrafted jewelry and fashion events from boutiques, such as San Francisco-based Eco Citizen. After touring the bi-level gallery’s rotation of roughly 400 works of art, settle in at the stone fire pit or the long communal redwood table, and run through prescribed flights, or order à la carte from the collective of 15 obscure small-production wineries, including Blackbird, Brown, and Lail.

*Ma(i)sonry, 6711 Washington St., Yountville, (707) 944-0889, maisonry.com.*

## RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT

### Platinum Playlist Wine Tasting at Cliff Lede

The music aficionado—owner of Cliff Lede Vineyards is single-handedly forging a stereophonic relationship between music and wine. This Stags Leap District winery started by dividing its 60 acres into vineyard blocks named after classic rock songs. Next, they created a wine series called Rock Blocks by blending the best blocks from the estate—2006 Moon Sympathy (“Dark Side of the Moon” and “Sympathy for the Devil”), 2007 Imagine Rhapsody (“Imagine” and “Bohemian Rhapsody”), and the 2008 Lonely Wizard (“Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” and “Pinball Wizard”). Finally, this year, it developed the Platinum Playlist, a tasting program that pushes the audio-oenological marriage even further.

It starts with a tour of the winery, including the tasting room, which is decorated with framed copies of classic records such as The Beatles’ *White Album*. Then, each of the three Rock Block series red wines is paired with a rock song from Cliff Lede’s playlist. An art gallery adjacent to the tasting room terrace showcases Lede’s private collection as well as rotating shows.

*Cliff Lede, 1473 Yountville Cross Rd., Yountville, (707) 944-8642, cliffledevineyards.com.*



## LUCKY SEVEN

### Museum-Quality Art and Cabernet at Seven Stones

Set high above Meadowood and named after the 100,000-pound granite sculpture of seven rocks taken from a quarry near Yosemite, Seven Stones grew from being Ron and Anita Wornick's private residence to a museum and winery. Their private collection of upwards of 250 pieces is highly acclaimed and has been on exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Museum of Arts and Design in New York, and Oakland Museum of California.

Appointment-only wine tastings began a year ago, and art tours started this spring. The in-depth tours are led by local art collector and interior designer Leslie Wilks. She discusses the various sculptures spread throughout the grounds—such as artist Glenna Goodacre's large stone work of her daughter, Victoria's Secret model Jill Goodacre, in Anita Wornick's cutting gardens—before walking through the Wornick residence, where hundreds of acclaimed pieces decorate every room. The tour ends with an al fresco tasting of the 2007 Seven Stones Cabernet Sauvignon on the patio overlooking the valley.

*Seven Stones Winery, St. Helena, (707) 963-0993, [sevenstoneswinery.com](http://sevenstoneswinery.com).*

## LABEL-MAKER

### The Wine Label Art Gallery at Imagery

The little sister winery to Benziger, Imagery breathes fresh life into winery visits by marrying fine art with oenological accomplishments. At any given moment, 35 artists create work that eventually will make its way onto a label for one of Imagery's limited-production wines: varietals that are generally lesser known, such as a Lagrein. Housed within the tasting room is a gallery, showcasing some of the works by the 200 artists who have contributed their pieces over the past 20 years. While many artists are local, there's representation from all across the globe: Cuba, China, Germany, and Japan.

The overarching theme in each work of art is the Parthenon-like structure. It's a building that appears on the hillside at Benziger, and in a *Where's Waldo* sort of way, is on each and every label of Imagery wine.

*Imagery Estate Winery, 14335 Hwy. 12, Glen Ellen, (877) 550-4278, [imagerywinery.com](http://imagerywinery.com).*

## EMINENT DOMAIN

### Tasting in the Sculpture Garden at Domaine Chandon

Having gotten its start in 1973 by French champagne house Moët et Chandon, Domaine Chandon is now renowned not only for its bubbly, but also for its outdoor terrace, Michelin-starred restaurant, and revolving collection of art—sculptures, paintings, and photographs scattered throughout the 300-acre property.

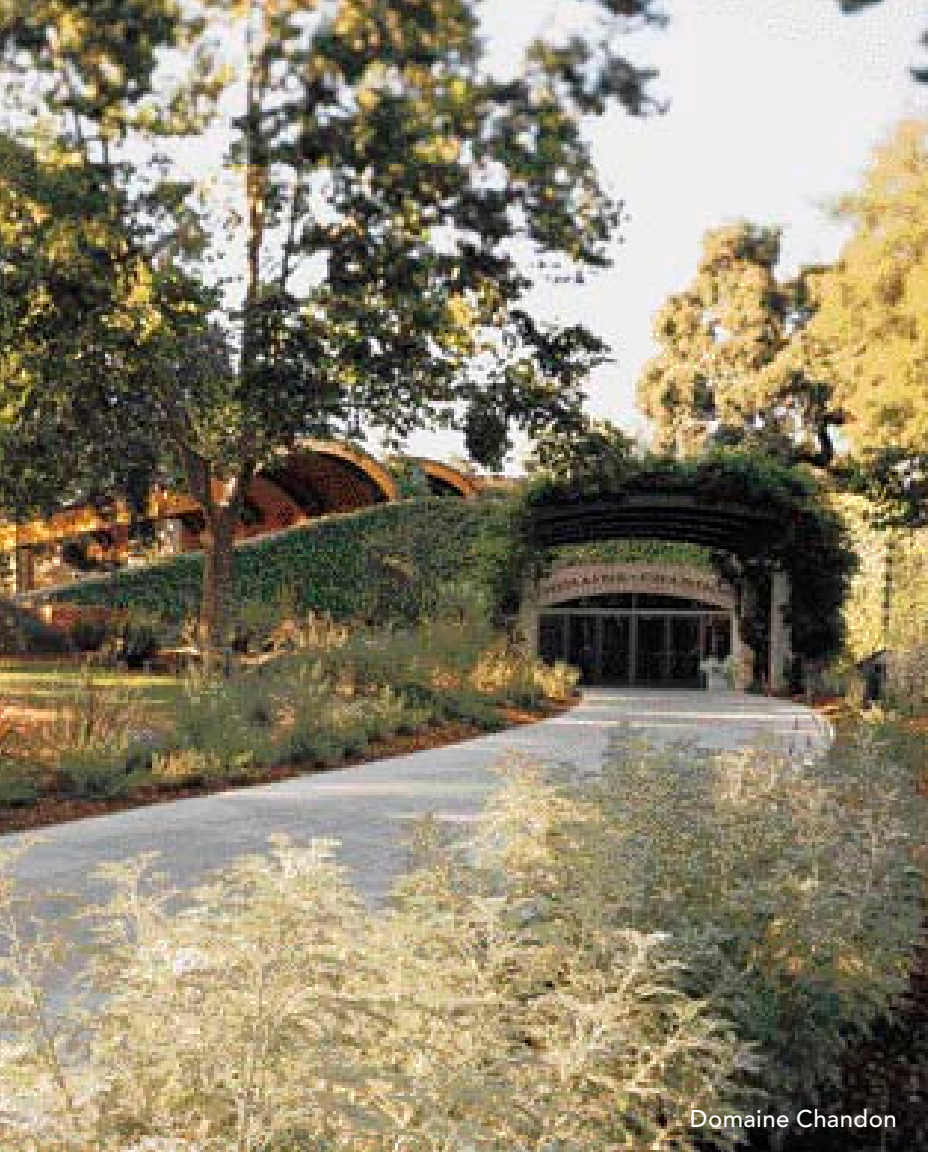
The art tour begins on the drive up, with rock and metal sculptures dotting the driveway. Richard Botto's rock-work



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID FENTON

Seven Stones Winery





Domaine Chandon

mushrooms and sunflowers continue along the walk up to the main entrance. Weather permitting, Domaine Chandon will accommodate tastings on the east lawn amid a dozen sculptures—currently, Lyman Whitaker’s kinetic wind sculptures—or in the more intimate grotto off the terrace, with its rock waterfall and sculptures. The restaurant and visitors center feature photographs and paintings by local artists available for sale.

*Domaine Chandon, 1 California Dr., Yountville, (707) 944-2280, chandon.com.*

## FOUR CORNERS

### Cornerstone: Where the Gardens Are Works of Art

The big blue chair just east of the Carneros Junction marks the entrance to this eclectic venue that’s home to tasting rooms, a gourmet café, home and garden stores, galleries, and nine acres of garden installations collected from a select group of world-renowned landscape designers. The shops and galleries highlight design-driven landscape and interior finds, as well as collectible art and a fair amount of salvaged pieces. Like an interactive museum of gardens, where each plot is a work of art, Cornerstone appeals to all ages, making it the ideal destination for families to augment a wine-tasting excursion.

Private tours can be arranged, but a casual walk from garden to garden is easy. Eye-catchers—ranging from Canadian-based Claude Cormier’s *Blue Tree*, giving a dead tree a second life with 70,000 bright blue Christmas balls, to a plot of plastic daisy pinwheels called *Daisy Border*, by New York designer Ken Smith, that’s meant to transcend natural and artificial—can fill a day or a few hours.

*Cornerstone, 23570 Arnold Dr., Sonoma, (707) 933-3010, cornerstonegardens.com.*

## WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN

### Napa Artwalk Unveiled

Downtown Napa and the Riverfront are having a renaissance, with the arrival of new restaurants and hotels. And to encourage more foot traffic within the city limits, the California Arts Council and National Endowment for the Arts collaborated to fund the Napa Artwalk, a sculpture tour that was unveiled in July.

Akin to a scavenger hunt, with a map that lays out the 10 sculptures scattered across a 10-block stretch that winds along Napa’s riverfront and down First Street, the series is a more or less DIY exploration that will change annually. It also features a tech component: Smart phone users can download a free scanner app to scan the codes of each sculpture and get background information on the artist and inspiration for each piece.

*Celebrating the Napa River, (707) 257-2117, napaartwalk.org.*

## ECO-FRIENDLY ART

### From the City to the Country at Bardessono

This eco-friendly Yountville resort recently commissioned 16 new pieces from nine artists around the country. Andrea Schwartz Gallery in San Francisco procured the collection of contemporary art, which will rotate twice a year. The works are displayed in the hallway en route to the restaurant and scattered around the property, and range from a series of collages incorporating vintage reading books and repurposed matchbooks by Barbara Kronlins, to crocheted and fabricated metal by Tracy Krumm.

Bardessono is one of four sites selected to display works by Napa artist Gordon Huether for the Yountville Art Walk. On the property, and even from the street, it’s hard to miss the *Orange Squares*, which will be on display at the resort for the next year.

*Bardessono, 6526 Yount St., Yountville, (707) 204-6000, bardessono.com. ■*



PHOTOGRAPHY BY (CLOCKWISE) JENN FARRINGTON, COURTESY OF CLIFF LEDE VINEYARDS, COURTESY OF BARDESSONO (2)

Top: Cliff Lede, bottom: Bardessono