

STARK SPOTLIGHT: [Shuck an Oyster](#) [State of the Wine Industry](#) [Social Media: For the Lonely or the Engaged?](#)

ON LOCATION

A Grape Time in Sonoma (Plus: "We're living in a moment of danger!")

Dressed in some sort of medieval outfit, featuring a top hat, and with a sword at his side, Jean-Charles Boisset was an effervescent host. There were lots of hugs (oh, the love!), story-telling (oh, the stories!), and ... speeches (oh, the speeches!).



CLINTON STARK

09.04.2012 | Comments

Like Share 0 Tweet 9



The Whisky Richards delighted the Taste of Sonoma crowd at MacMurray Ranch.



Sonoma threw one heck of a party this weekend. There's likely an intellectual exercise in the aftermath involving terroir, sophisticated pseudo wine analysis, and deep conversation about viticulture. Surely all those topics mattered at the Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, but what mattered most was the *fun quotient*. It was through the roof. If you ever wanted to trek across the country to visit Sonoma (and no doubt Napa of course) these annual Labor Day festivities are the perfect excuse.

With so many events, tastings, dinners, concerts, every agenda is unique. This year mine included: a visit to the Buena Vista winery where I witnessed a Sister-City signing and a wildly entertaining and gloriously over-the-top performance by host Jean-Charles Boisset (did he really say that he'd like to "meet you further" to my wife on camera?!); an evening

STARK INSIDER. TECH+CULTURE. DAY+NIGHT.

Do you enjoy talking Android, tasting Napa Cab, seeing a Show? Then put on your Ray-Bans and join the adventure already!



SUBSCRIBE

Stark Insider on Facebook
Like Confirm
You like the Page - Ins
You like the Page - Ins
1,144 people like Stark Insider. 1,143 people like Stark Insider.
Theara Jullity
Facebook social plugin



MORE FROM STARK INSIDER



of dining and dancing under the stars (with a full moon no less) at Francis Ford Coppola's stately new winery in Geyserville, and an epic grand tasting at MacMurray Ranch where no less than 170 wineries were pouring their bestest.

Re-Birth of Buena Vista Winery

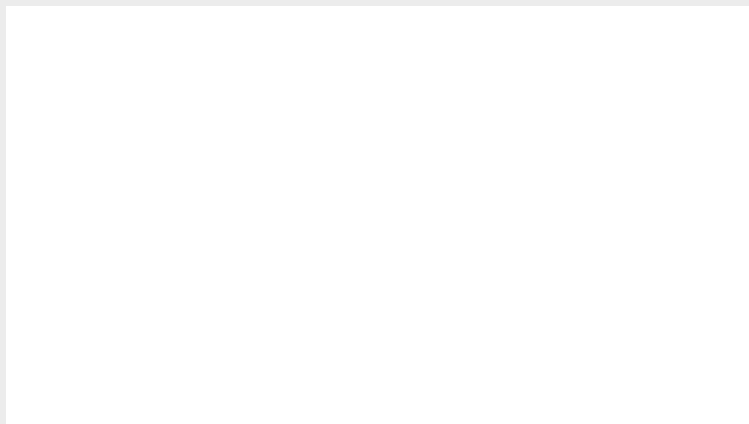


Jean-Charles Boisset: wine personality extraordinaire.

How do you celebrate the 200th birthday of a Count? Turns out you invite a bunch of close friends, pour lots of wine, sing three national anthems (Hungarian, French, American). Then you hold a ceremony featuring more than ten speeches, a sabre, several gift exchanges, at least one Thomas Jefferson reference. You then top the whole thing off with the exchanging of more gifts and the signing of a Sister City proclamation (Sonoma-Tokaj). Oh: tossing in some spirited Hungarian dancing for good measure is always welcome. Add all that together and you have what amounted to an extremely memorable event last Friday afternoon on the gorgeous grounds of the Buena Vista Winery in the heart of Sonoma. I swear I spotted David Lynch just over a knoll, directing the proceedings from afar.

WATCH: "We're living a moment of danger!"

Here's a sneak peek at the scene at Buena Vista. Watch for the full segment soon here on Stark Insider.



MOBILE NEWS



Motorola unveils Droid RAZR HD, RAZR Maxx HD, and RAZR M Android smartphones

BY MIKE CARRALL

CLINT ON MOBILE



Nokia reveals Lumia smartphones running Windows Phone 8 – will consumers bite?

BY CLINTON STARK

WINE NEWS



Napa Harvest Report 2012

BY CLINTON STARK

THE TEAM

Stark Insider
All Things West Coast®

Tech+Culture.
Day+Night.

Publisher
Clinton Stark

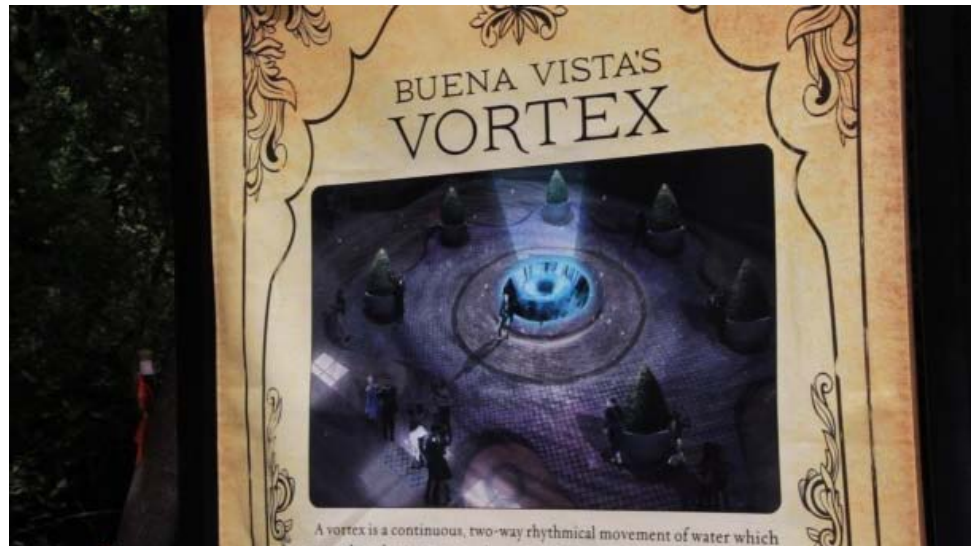
Creative Director
Loni Kao Stark

Contributors:
Gregory M. Alonzo
Mike Carrall
Tom Eden
Eve Giovenco
Al Graichen
Eugene Lee
Jane Lurie
Carl Orthlieb
Janice Nieder
Patricia Reardon
Cy Ashley Webb
Chris Wright

Press:
Monica Turner

Send us PR/info/events:

There's a lot of proud heritage at Buena Vista. Deservedly so. It was the first premium winery established in California (1857, producing 6,500 gallons in the first vintage). Contention, however, continues to rear its ugly head whenever the term "father of the California wine industry" arises – as we'd learn during this day, understanding the very definition of "father" is essential to determining the rightful origins. Regardless of how that plays out (if it ever will) this is a winery with significant contributions to Sonoma and the wine industry as a whole.



Bioshock in Sonoma: Fountains are so passe. The future is all about the Vortex.

If there was any sign of the disrepair the site had fallen into in recent times, it was hidden from view. Instead beautiful new barrel and tasting rooms adorn the neatly manicured, and hardscaped property. The renovation to the "historic champagne cellars" is elegantly done, with three long, dark caves winding their way beyond a large common space featuring stacks of barrels, decorative displays, and even projections of black and white films.

You won't find a central fountain here. How cliché! Instead, look for a Vortex which features a "two-way rhythmical movement of water."

MORE SONOMA COVERAGE:

Airfare Sale: Fly from \$88



Travelzoo Deal Experts found this airfare sale with flights starting at \$88.* Sale ends Friday.

TRAVELZOO

- In Photos: Williams Selyem Winery in Healdsburg, Sonoma
- Wine Country Photos: Dry Creek General Store, Sonoma
- Wine as User Experience – Tales from Dry Creek Valley

Dressed in some sort of medieval outfit, featuring a top hat, and with a sword at his side, Jean-Charles Boisset was an effervescent host.

press@starkinsider.com

News and tips:
news@starkinsider.com

Promote your business:
[Advertise with Us](#)

Red Carpet:
[Gonfball](#)

There were lots of hugs (*oh, the love!*), story-telling (*oh, the stories!*), and ... speeches (*oh, the speeches!*).

If you ever wanted a first-hand lesson in wine marketing, grand showmanship and the art of the spectacle, Jean-Charles is your man. There's a sneak peek of what went down on this day in the video preview above; stay tuned for the full Stark Insider TV segment. The grand re-opening of Buena Vista Winery is slated for 2013.

Coppola Starlight Dinner



Loni and the dynamic Ceja duo – Amelia and Dalia.

Later in the evening we headed up to Geyserville to attend Coppola's starlight dinner.

As is the gift of Sonoma, the event felt equally swanky as it did casual. You can't help but feel a sense of grandeur as you ascend the impressive stone stairs, and pass through large iron double-gates on your way to the poolside dining area. Several wineries were on hand. Some of my favorites included Ceja, J Vineyards, Sojourn Cellars, and Coppola.

Pride and Joy provided the live music, and soon lots of us were (trying in my case) to light up the dance floor. I wouldn't confuse the band with Green Day, or a solid 80s cover outfit, but they did provide enough energy and a solid set that included Michael Jackson, and the always favorite send-off *You Make Me Wanna Shout* by Little Richard.



Poolside at Coppola's new winery in Geyserville.

Taste of Sonoma



The scene at MacMurray Ranch for the annual Taste of Sonoma.

The marquee event for the Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is the Taste of Sonoma. This year it was held on the expansive grounds of MacMurray Ranch in Healdsburg and attracted about 1,200 people. There's no shortage of stories related to this winery either. It was founded by actor Fred MacMurray of *My Three Sons* fame. His vivacious daughter, Kate, now runs the winery.



Sonoma Organics: Looking good.

Taste of Sonoma is like SF Chefs, but with even better wine selection and views. There were over 170 wineries pouring. I especially appreciate the way planners had organized them by appellation; wineries were organized into four separate tents including Alexander Valley, Russian River Valley, Sonoma Valley, and Dry Creek Valley. Better still was the integration of paired dishes. Marked by red signs, you could enjoy a RRV Pinot, say, and then pair it with some nearby, hand-pulled pork.

FOR MORE PHOTOS OF TASTE OF SONOMA: Visit the Stark Insider Facebook gallery [here](#).

And that was our grape time in Sonoma this past weekend.

Follow [@StarkInsider](#) Tech+Culture. Day+Night.

CLINTON STARK

Clint writes about Silicon Valley, film, California wine ([Stark Sips](#)), theater ([ATCA member](#)) and tech (including his unlocked GNexus and Canon EOS 60D). A would-be NHLer if it weren't for the clarinet, he tries in vain to direct [Loni](#) on [Stark Insider TV](#).



He's held executive marketing roles at Cisco, EMC and Salesforce.com, and is active with start-ups across the valley.

[Clint's story...](#)

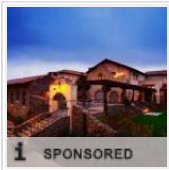
[Follow @clinton](#)



You may also like -



Stark Sips:
Quality Zins (a starlet inspired Rosenblum tasting)



Destination Wedding Guide:
Napa Valley and Sonoma, California
CNTraveler



Wine Events:
Russian River Valley wines star at pre-harvest party (Video)



More Indonesia Trivia: Remember This Statue?
CNTraveler



Stark Pick:
Sonoma Wine Country Weekend (Video preview)

- RELATED
- FOOD & WINE
- NEWS
- STARK INSIDER TV
- STARK INSIDER TV: FOOD & WINE
- STARK INSIDER TV: WINE
- STARK SIPS WINE BLOG
- BUENA VISTA WINERY
- FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA WINERY
- MACMURRAY RANCH
- SONOMA
- SONOMA WINE COUNTRY WEEKEND

Stark Insider on Facebook

[Like](#) [Confirm](#) You like this. · [Admin Page](#) · [Insights](#) · [Error](#)

You like this. · [Admin Page](#) · [Insights](#) · [Error](#)

1,144 people like **Stark Insider**. 1,143 people like **Stark Insider**.

Facebook social plugin

0 comments · **9 reactions**

★ **0 Stars**

Comment input field

Discussion :: **Community** :: "

No one has commented yet.

ALSO ON STARK INSIDER

[What's this?](#) ✕

Verizon Nexus

HTC made 3 key mistakes

discounted, but 7 reasons why you should go unlocked GSM

★ 0 • 13 comments • a month ago •



Lance Case — I'm with you. I dropped Verizon mid contract last week. The EFT will apply, but the savings from swi...

- ceding Android race to Samsung vs. Motorola

★ 0 • 3 comments • a month ago •



Dave Lewis — 1) Samsung have a good name with the Galaxy handsets. But they're now abandoning it for tablets in f...

Watch: Mad Men star Vincent Kartheiser on Facebook, Canada, Thai food (Outtakes)

★ 0 • 1 comment • 6 days ago •



whimsyfox — I absolutely love Vincent's work and always enjoy seeing his interviews. He's such a

Stark Insider
ALL THINGS
WEST COAST®

Culture

Food & Wine

Tech & Silicon Valley

Stark Insider TV

