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## Renaissance in Sonoma – Buena Vista Winery

Posted on [September 6, 2012](#) by [Anthony Burich](#)



In 1857 Count Agoston Hazaszthy founded Buena Vista Winery, the first premium winery in California. The Count left Hungary, his home land, in 1840 and eventually settled in Sonoma via Wisconsin, San Diego, and San Francisco – tirelessly pursuing his quest for “purple gold”.

After purchasing land and establishing the winery, The Count continued to experiment with various viticulture and oenology techniques, at the same time expanding production. He became ambassador for Sonoma and California, promoting the potential for world class wine; inspiring many others to follow their passion for wine growing in Sonoma. In 1861 The Count traveled to Europe to study techniques that he can use to improve wine making in California. After travel through France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland, he returned with vines of over 300 different varietals; many planted at Buena Vista and introduced to other California vintners.

Buena Vista Winery had ups and downs over the following years; eventually closing in 1878 and reborn in 1949 with a vintage released by Frank Bartholomew and André Tchelistcheff. In continuum, Boisset Family Estates acquired Buena Vista in 2011.

After a year of renovations, press and media was invited to tour the property last Friday, led by Jean-Charles Boisset. Even with the ongoing construction, this was a day of celebration – opening of the Champagne cellars, start of the 2012 grape harvest, signing of Sonoma-Tokaj Sister City Agreement; all coinciding with Count Agoston Hazaszthy's 200th Birthday.

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