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Winery Adventure: DeLoach Vineyards & Winery, Russian River Valley

By Laura Ness

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De Loach's gorgeous setting on Olivet Lane in the Russian River Valley proves perfect for growing pinot noir and all manner of veggies for the seasonal artisan pizzas that are whipped out of the wood-fired pizza oven on weekends.

Club members enjoy these yummy treats, served by the cutest teenagers you've ever seen, as perks. Nonmember guests who purchase a glass of wine will receive a complimentary slice of this blissed-out, heavenly combo of earth, wine and fire.

A selection of well-crafted chardonnay, pinot noir and zinfandel, available by the bottle or glass, make enjoying pizza even more memorable. Choose from the daily tasting (\$15), refundable with \$100 in wine purchases, or the seated Appellation Tasting (\$25) in the Appellation room, filled with a quirky collection of corkscrews, soil samples and appellation map.

Or, for a truly unique experience, reserve your spot for the Magic of Mustard & Wine (\$40). DeLoach's partnership with Burgundy's Edmond Fallot Mustard makes for a tongue-tingling pairing of flavor-packed wines and spicily harmonious mustards. Take a garden tour with sparkling wine, attend a mustard-grinding demonstration, and enjoy a seated, paired tasting in the glorious guesthouse. It's a gourmand's delight.

The details: 1791 Olivet Road, Santa Rosa. Tasting is \$15 for five wines (waived with \$100 in wine



Pizza is the pairing of choice at DeLoach Vineyards & Winery in Russian River Valley. (Laura Ness)

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purchases). www.deloachvineyards.com.

The sips: 2011 Olivet Bench OFS (Our Finest Selection -- ask the staff how they coined the moniker) Chardonnay, pure lemon cream pie; 2011 Estate Olivet Bench Pinot Noir, floral with lavender and roses, so elegantly spicy; 2010 Green Valley Pinot Noir, a crowd-pleaser, fruit-filled and ultra smooth.

Nearby: Merry Edwards and Lynmar. For a trip into the past, visit Battaglini, off Oliveton Pliner Road to admire 128-year-old, dry-farmed zinfandel and petite sirah vines.

-- Laura Ness

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