

Wine lovers are returning to wineries in surprising numbers



DURING THE PANDEMIC, WE HAVE TRIED OUR BEST to drink in place. But as days turned into weeks and weeks turned into months, our thirst for Wine Country grew. It's not just the tastings we've missed. We've longed for the architectural treasures, terraces, gardens and expansive views — the hillsides ribbed with vineyards.

As wineries are opening, vintners are witnessing this yearning manifest with the surprising number of guests they're seeing now.

Here's a peek at six wineries and what they offer restless wine lovers in addition to a tasty glass of wine.

The Press Democrat

Buena Vista Winery

Founded in 1857, this is the first premium winery in California, and volcanic stone is the building block for the tasting room and the cellar. The grounds are expansive, with 14 acres for guests to explore with two courtyards and a picnic area next to the creek.

Offerings: No tours at this time, but the winery has a couple of tasting options. For \$50, the winery has cheese and charcuterie platters for two, paired with wines. Oakville Grocery also supplies boxed lunches, and with wine, this tasting is \$50 per person. If guests prefer food only, the winery offers a reduced price.

Protocol for guests: You only can enter the tasting room in limited numbers and must wear a mask until you're seated for the tasting.

800-926-1266, buenavistawinery.com, 18000 Old Winery Road, Sonoma