

## Winery Adventure: Frenchie Winery

# Fido welcome, at this winery

The number of people who take their dogs with them almost everywhere is growing — a circumstance that includes wine-tasting forays. Naturally, dog lovers are loathe to leave their canine companions in the car while they sip and swirl, but that's not a problem at Frenchie Winery.

This winery within a winery is part of the Raymond Vineyards estate in St. Helena and the brainchild of its clearly fun-loving owner Jean-Charles Boisset, whose French bulldog, a gift to his wife, Gina Gallo, is the label's namesake.

Dog owners can leave their four-legged family members in a posh kennel in the estate's biodynamic garden, where the digs are decked out with dog beds made from wine barrels, plus artwork — and even a chandelier.

Inside the tasting room,

their humans can sample Frenchie wines, a boutique label that makes up a small fraction of Raymond's total 150,000 case production, while they keep an eye on their pooches via a closed-circuit TV above the tasting room bar.

For an upgraded tasting experience of Raymond's premium wines (\$30), the Crystal Room marries the gleaming stainless steel tanks in the production area with mirrors, Baccarat chandeliers and a fur-covered trapeze (for real). There's also a winemaker-for-a-day program (\$100), where visitors make their own blend while decked out in shiny silver lab coats that look straight out of a sci-fi B movie.

**The details:** Frenchie Winery is at 849 Zinfandel Lane in St. Helena and is part of the larger Raymond Estate. Tastings start at \$15

for the Frenchie label.

**The sips:** The 2012 Ben Franklin Red Wine (\$30) is a lip-smacking, fruit-forward merlot blend that's low in tannins. We also liked the 2013 Estate Collection chardonnay (\$38). Thanks to a short time on oak, it's crisp and refreshing with notes of lemon and lychee.

**Two more stops:** V. Sattui, William Harrison.  
— J. Graue, Correspondent



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Closed-circuit TV allows the human guests, while sipping Frenchie wines, to keep an eye on their pooches in the luxury outdoor kennel.

