



The 3 Most Exciting New Napa Valley Wineries Debuting This Fall

There are a lot of labels coming out of America's top region, but there's plenty of room for more.

By MIKE DESIMONE AND JEFF JENSSEN



Suzanne Becker Bronk; Suzanne Becker Bronk; Palisades Canyon

It's no secret that Napa Valley ranks among our favorite wine regions, and it certainly tops the list for many of our readers as well. As much as we are always excited to hear how the harvest is going or to be among the first to taste a new vintage from established players, we're also intrigued when completely new wineries enter the scene. Although there are already more than 1,000 wine brands coming out of Napa Valley, there is always room for newcomers to fill our cellars and delight our palates. Among the new arrivals we've tried this year, the ones that top our list right now are Annulus, Arborum Napa Valley, and Palisades Canyon, three brand new and completely different wineries that share a common thread in that each has brought in top winemaking talent.

The first releases from Palisades Canyon in Calistoga, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Sirah, and Chenin Blanc, are made by fourth-generation Napa winemaker, grape grower, and historian Graeme MacDonald, who also makes wine at his family's storied To Kalon property in Oakville under the MacDonald label. Palisades Canyon owners Felicia Woytak and Steve Rasmussen searched for years before settling on this 796-acre property in Calistoga that contains their 17.5-acre CCOF-certified organic Palisades Vineyard. Vines are farmed using regenerative principles, and MacDonald prefers a minimal interventionalist style of winemaking, including a predilection towards native yeasts.

Palisades Canyon 2021 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is made with the addition of small amounts of Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. The vineyard's volcanic soil adds a sense of minerality that is present in a whiff of smoke and saline that joins aromas of wild blackberries, black currants, and a touch of dried thyme. Flavors of black cherry, dark chocolate, marjoram, and a hint of pencil lead are sheathed in a cloak of opulent tannins that just keep going on the palate.



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Mike DeSimone and Jeff Jenssen, also known as the World Wine Guys, are wine, spirits, food, and travel writers, educators, and hosts. They have been featured guests on the Today Show, The Martha...

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