

Lodi



Experience spring with customized wine tastings, farm-to-fork cuisine

INSIDE

Dining: Restaurants use seasonal ingredients to craft unique dishes **S4**

Wineries: Young winemakers innovate, focus on sustainability **S6**

Weddings: Over a dozen venues offer lush settings to get married **S9**

Wineries cater to any level of wine connoisseur

By Carey Sweet

For many people, wine tasting can be intimidating. Which wines are “good?” What is the etiquette of visiting tasting rooms? And if you’re new to the experience, is it OK to ask lots of questions?

First of all, everybody has different preferences, so if you personally like a wine, that makes it good. Drink what you enjoy. Second, simply be polite and know your limits (tasting is not a time to get tipsy). Third, ask as much as you like — most wine educators (a.k.a. tasting hosts) love to talk about their passion projects and show off the winery’s hard work and what it takes to get the final, great result.

Still, over the past few years, many larger Northern California Wine Country destinations have implemented changes that can be confusing to people who don’t taste very often.

Now, most tasting rooms require appointments instead of allowing walk-ins. And the cost of tasting is rising with the average price in Sonoma County increasing 44% since before the pandemic, according to data compiled by the Sonoma Wine Tasting Blog.

In Napa Valley, the average cost for an entry level tasting has more than doubled, according to the reservation platform CellarPass, and the cost for an “elevated” tasting that includes food pairings or reserve wines has jumped to \$82.26 per person, up from \$30 in 2016.

In Lodi, you can almost always walk up without reservations, except on busy weekends. Often, the person leading your tasting is the winemaker or a member of the family that owns the winery.

If you are a beginner, they are happy to walk you through the different styles of wine and explain the process of how it is made. If you have a wine style you especially like, they might even open a special bottle for you to enjoy.

And when you walk out the door with a couple bottles of Lodi wine, the whole experience generally will be more affordable than other wine areas.

“Most of the wineries here are small and family owned,” said Marilia Nimis-Schrader, winemaker at Oak Farm Vineyards in Lodi, where a basic tasting of five wines is \$20 per person and a two-bottle purchase waives one tasting fee. “That means that they are really friendly and easy to talk to when you go visit them. Our prices are very affordable, too. You can find a lot of top quality wines for less than \$40-50 per bottle.”

In fact, one Lodi wine recently showcased at a celebratory multi-course dinner at a high-end, James Beard Award-winning restaurant in Scottsdale was the 2019 Peirano Estate Vineyards Old Vine Zinfandel from Acampo. The estate grown, hand-picked grapes come from 120-year-old vines, and the juice was aged in French and American oak barrels for two years, yet it retails for \$16.

Plan a trip around these other gems, too:

Lucas Winery

“As a wine region, I think that Lodi attracts consumers who want to know where their wine comes from,” said the Lucas Winery Operations Director Eliza Hess. “They want to understand it from grape to glass, and that’s where we fit in. In Lodi, you’re always likely to run into an owner or a winemaker in the tasting room, and there’s nothing we love more than explaining our craft and showing you how it all comes together.”

Here, tastings are an elevated experience, guided by an educator who shares the history of the winery, followed by a trip to the estate’s historic and CCOF Certified Organic ZinStar Vineyard. Guests then tour the Grand Chai, or barrel room, before finishing up in the tasting room with a Late Harvest Desert Wine and a dark chocolate pairing. Guided tastings are just \$20 per person and include an etched wine glass for each guest to take home.

It’s a friendly affair, limited to 6 guests per reservation, and hosted (weather permitting) largely on the garden patio where children and BYO picnics are welcome.



PHOTOS BY LAURA MORTON

Joy Hunter, Kathy Hunter, Sadie Velasquez and Lindsay Roe (left to right) sit down for an outdoor tasting at d’Art Wines in Lodi.



Above left: Jo Anna Stenzel looks at wine barrels while taking a barrel room tour at the Lucas Winery. Above right: Dave Dart, owner of d’Art Wines, talks with winery visitors while hosting a special class at the winery in Lodi. Below left: A tasting is poured for visitors to the Lucas Winery. Below right: Kim Silas participates in a wine tasting while visiting d’Art Wines with her sister and mother in Lodi.



Details

Oak Farm Vineyards: 23627 N. Devries Road, Lodi, 209-365-6565, www.oakfarmvineyards.com

Lucas Winery: 18196 N. Davis Road, Lodi, 209-368-2006, www.lucaswinery.com

D’Art Wines: 3299 N. Curry Ave., Lodi, 209-334-9946, www.dartwines.com

Stama Winery: 17521 N. Davis Road, Lodi, 209-727-3314, www.facebook.com/stamawine

Macchia Wines: 7099 E. Peltier Road, Acampo, 209-333-2600, www.macchiawines.com.

d’Art Wines

The casual tasting room is in a warehouse on the vineyard property, so you can see the inner workings alongside the crush pad, vineyards and gardens. Reservations are recommended, but are easy to do by simply clicking on a Tock link, and tasting fees are \$10 per person with one fee waived with each bottle purchased.

Indoor and outdoor tastings are offered, and if you sit outdoors, children and BYO picnics or the winery’s own charcuterie platters are welcome.

Try the standout Spanish-style Tempranillo, Italian-style Barbera (both red and white varieties) and the Symphony blend of French natives Grenache Gris

and Muscat of Alexandria. Nearly all current wines are \$30 or less per bottle.

Stama Winery

Amenities include periodic, free live music performances, free classic car shows with optional barbecue feasts for pur-

chase and opportunities to wander the elegant stone chateau estate flanked by expansive vineyards.

The \$15 tasting fee features a flight of five wines, salami and cheese and a bonus: the fee is waived if you purchase two bottles of wine. Browse among the Chardonnay, Merlot, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc and see if you don’t feel compelled to purchase a Mediterranean fig scented candle from the shop (the Kapiniaris family hails from Greece).

Macchia Wines

Enjoy Macchia’s small lots of high-quality vintages with a tasting fee of \$10 that’s refunded with the purchase of two bottles of wine. Larger groups require more staffing, so reservations are required for parties of more than six

Plan your trip to Lodi

Stop by the Visit Lodi Downtown Visitor Center at 25 N. School St., Lodi, call 209-365-1195, go to www.visitlodi.com, email info@visitlodi.com or follow @visitlodi on social media.

people (at \$15 per person), and for groups of 16 or more, patio rental is required. Still, it’s a real deal for the cheerful, family-home style experience — yes, the tasting room is a former cottage house — flanked by gardens, patio and lots of original art.

Sip Italian-style Primitivo, 90-plus year old vine Zinfandel, Italian-style Sangiovese and Spanish-style Graciano; bottles are all around \$25.

LODI

Antoinette Santos
Director of Sales
415-777-6122
antoinette.santos@sfchronicle.com

Claire Sumalinog
Account Executive
415-777-7314
claire.sumalinog@sfchronicle.com

Maggie Creamer
Editor
mcreamer@sfchronicle.com

Cover photo: Pizzas cooked in a wood-fired oven are pictured with the deep fried 6-minute egg, pork milakatsu and wood-fired cabbage dishes at Guantonios Wood Fired, a family-owned restaurant in Lodi. **S4**
Photo by Laura Morton



Visit Lodi Wine Country

85+ Award-Winning Wineries

Imagine driving past lush vineyards as far as the eye can see. Wind in your hair and the excitement of adventures to come is in the air. A tasting room catches your eye, and you go in. You are immediately greeted with welcoming smiles. You share the joys of wine with newfound friends. Your curiosity peaks as the winemaker enthusiastically talks about their latest passion bottled for you to experience for the first time. You have never heard of the varietal, but you are encouraged to taste. This is how wine should be experienced.

This is award-winning Lodi Wine Country. With 85+ boutique wineries, over 450 different wine labels, approachable price points, and the most diverse winegrape growing region in the US, you can experience the world of wine from here. But that's not all, taste farm-to-fork cuisine from amazing restaurants, paddleboard the Mokelumne River, visit an olive mill, and more. When the day is done, stay overnight in a world-class resort, bed & breakfast inn, or one of Lodi's dozens of individually owned properties or your favorite franchise.

Come experience the welcoming hospitality of Lodi, California.



- (209) 365-1195
- visitlodi.com
- 25 North School Street, Lodi, CA 95240



PHOTOS BY LAURA MORTON

Clockwise from top left: The wood-fired cabbage dish at Guantonios Wood Fired in Lodi comes with Hawaiian butter, sesame seeds, breadcrumbs and dill; Brooke Blakeslee, left, and her sister Kelly Dobbins have dinner with their family at Guantonios Wood Fired; the Brewhouse Pulled Pork Sandwich at High Water Brewing features 16-hour house smoked pork shoulder, coleslaw and sweet-smoky barbecue sauce on a toasted Italian roll. The brewery has 36 taps and a full kitchen.



Discover farm-to-fork fare in a casual setting

By Carey Sweet

Farm-to-fork food is such a deep part of California dining that even the most casual restaurants wow us with pristine ingredients. Tucked in the heart of the Central Valley food basket community, Lodi culinarians pull out the stops for everything from pizza parlors, to brewpubs to a hotel restaurant.

Chefs probably don't need to work this hard for seemingly simple fare but they wouldn't have it any other way in this culinary mecca. With such ample bounty right in their own backyards, sourcing premium produce, meats, dairy and grains is not only a badge of honor, it's a way of life.

Guantonios Wood Fired

Owners Shelly and Nick Guantone and their son, chef and founder Nicholas Guantone, put a lot of love into their restaurant and wine shop. The result is that their cheerful, compact eatery is almost always packed, lined up with locals and tourists who have discovered their magnificent artisanal pizzas.

"We believe pizza is the perfect canvas to present the beautiful produce grown in our region, as well as our straightforward approach to food," chef Nicholas Guantone said. "Plus, who doesn't love pizza?"

This is fine stuff, based on handmade, naturally leavened dough crafted with organic, non-GMO flour and topped in more than a dozen different creative combinations. Showcasing local ingredients, the crispy, bubble-edge crust arrives piled in delights like Zuckerman Family Farms Delta-grown asparagus, homemade miso bagna cauda, walnuts and caciocavallo Italian curd cheese. You'll also dive into a blend of roasted mushroom crema, shiitake, crimini and oyster mushrooms, mozzarella and chive;



Yazmin Perez, Serissa Arreguin and Valeria Lopez (left to right) enjoy food with classmates from their school, California College of Barbering and Cosmetology, at High Water Brewery Taproom in Lodi, which serves pub classics, including pizza, chicken wings and pastrami and tri-tip sandwiches.

or highly seasoned housemade sausage, basil, pesto, walnuts and mozzarella.

Some pies are crowned in burrata, made from real Italian water buffalo milk or farmstead basket ricotta from the Double 8 ranch and dairy in Petaluma, while other pies are capped in Olympia Provisions premium specialties like salami cotto and crazy-rich mortadella. Many veggies come from Hana Acre Farm in nearby Wilton, including an unexpected, delicious pie recipe of zesty garlic crema, fresh mozzarella, dressed Hana Acre lettuces and salty, buttery, shaved pecorino cheese.

"It's a menu driven by talking to farmers and seeing what they have

» "It's a menu driven by talking to farmers and seeing what they have seasonally. We're in one of the best agricultural regions in the world."

Nicholas Guantone, chef and founder at Guantonios Wood Fired

seasonally," Nicholas Guantone said. "We're in one of the best agricultural regions in the world."

The focus speaks to his training, previously working with the Chez Panisse group, at a butcher shop and even a cattle ranch.

Menus change weekly, tempting with appetizers such as Don Bocarte Spanish anchovies paired with housemade potato chips, whipped mozzarella and leek vinaigrette; or a deep fried six-

minute egg fancied up with smoked Tsar Nicoulai trout roe farmed in Wilton, mayonnaise and maple.

Newer dishes include full entrees — see if you can resist the mouthwatering breaded Rancho Llano Seco heritage pork chop finished with sweet ketchup mayo, Bachan's Japanese barbecue sauce and fresh herbs. Add in a side of wood-fired cabbage with Hawaiian butter, sesame seeds,

breadcrumbs and dill, and you've got an inspired Asian tonkatsu-style meal. Then, finish with Noni's feather-light cannolis.

High Water Brewing

Opened in mid-2019, this is a big operation, boasting an indoor tasting room with 36 taps and a full kitchen, a 5,000-square-foot outdoor beer garden and a brewery facility outfitted with fermenters, barrel aging stands and high-tech packaging set-ups.

Clearly, beer rules — unique quaffs from founder and brewmaster Steve Altamari include ever-changing pours, like a refreshing Cucumber Kolsch brewed with pure German Pilsner malt, fresh cucumber-mint waters and the delicate caress of the finest German noble hops.

There are international nods, like a Mexican-style Cerveza Blanca Mexi-Cali lager that's light with a bright, clean finish and there are plenty of suds for hops fans, such as the Hop Logic Imperial Double IPA crafted with Citra (citrus/resin), Amarillo (grapefruit) and Simcoe (pine/catty) hops, then fermented with a hazy yeast strain for pleasing bitterness.

So sip, check out the design and décor from local artisans, then settle in for a very nice meal. Browse among pub classics — we all crave crispy chicken wings dunked in an array of sauces, including spicy Carolina Reaper mango. Or try an excellent hoagie featuring a toasted Genova steak roll stuffed with house made beef-pork meatballs smothered in marinara, melty mozzarella, provolone, Romano and Parmesan cheeses.

Yet the kitchen is ambitious. So vegetarians (and vegans) are celebrated, too. Try the roasted vegetable pizza on cauliflower crust, topped in an elegant mélange of garlicky extra virgin olive oil, mozzarella, zucchini, yellow squash,

"Acquiesce won a perhaps unprecedented four best-of-class awards. And these weren't small classes."

MIKE DUNNE
Acclaimed Writer & Wine Judge

San Francisco Chronicle
Wine Competition

4x BEST OF CLASS
~ and ~
BEST WHITE WINE

Winery & Vineyards
ACQUIESCE

ALL ARE WELCOME. WE STAND TOGETHER.

CHEESE CENTRAL

"Love Cheese? Have a bite on us!"

11 N. School St. 209.368.3033
Mon-Tues 10am-2pm | Wed-Sat 10am-6pm | Sundays closed
www.cheesecentralodi.com

Details

Guantonios Wood Fired: 600 W. Lockeford St., Lodi, 209-263-7152, www.guantonios.com

Highwater Brewing Co.: 927 Industrial Way, Suite A, Lodi, 209-625-8146, www.highwaterbrewing.com

Towne House Restaurant: 2505 W. Turner Road, Lodi, 209-371-6160, www.winerose.com/towne-house-restaurant

sweet pepper, purple onion, roasted and fresh tomatoes and tangy green onions drizzled in a balsamic reduction glaze.

Any self-respecting brewery pub offers a pulled pork sandwich, and this one checks all the delicious boxes: 16-hour house smoked pork shoulder, topped with creamy coleslaw and drizzled in house made sweet-smoky barbecue sauce on a toasted Italian roll.

Towne House Restaurant

A decidedly elegant destination at the treasured Wine & Roses hotel, this restaurant still keeps things relaxed in the friendly Lodi style.

It's considered a legacy destination by locals and sought out by tourists drawn by its gorgeous garden setting, more than 70 wines from the Lodi Appellation and menus that change daily for the season's best ingredients. Indeed, the restaurant is named for the Towne family, industrious farmers who founded the property more than 100 years ago.

Settle into the space that resembles an upscale farmhouse with polished wood floors, a carved wood fireplace and a brick-paved dining patio next to the porch. Immediately order the hot, pillowy house-baked brioche singing of creamy Toma cheese, Calabrian chilies and a slather of garlic herb butter.

You'll also want vegetables, perhaps local greens dotted with chunks of local pears, pepitas, crisp radish, smoky Treviso chicory, endive and basil oil. Then, it's on to northwestern open-range raised Painted Hill bavette steak plated with mushroom, potato gratin, broccoli rabe, cipollini onions and earthy black garlic glaze.



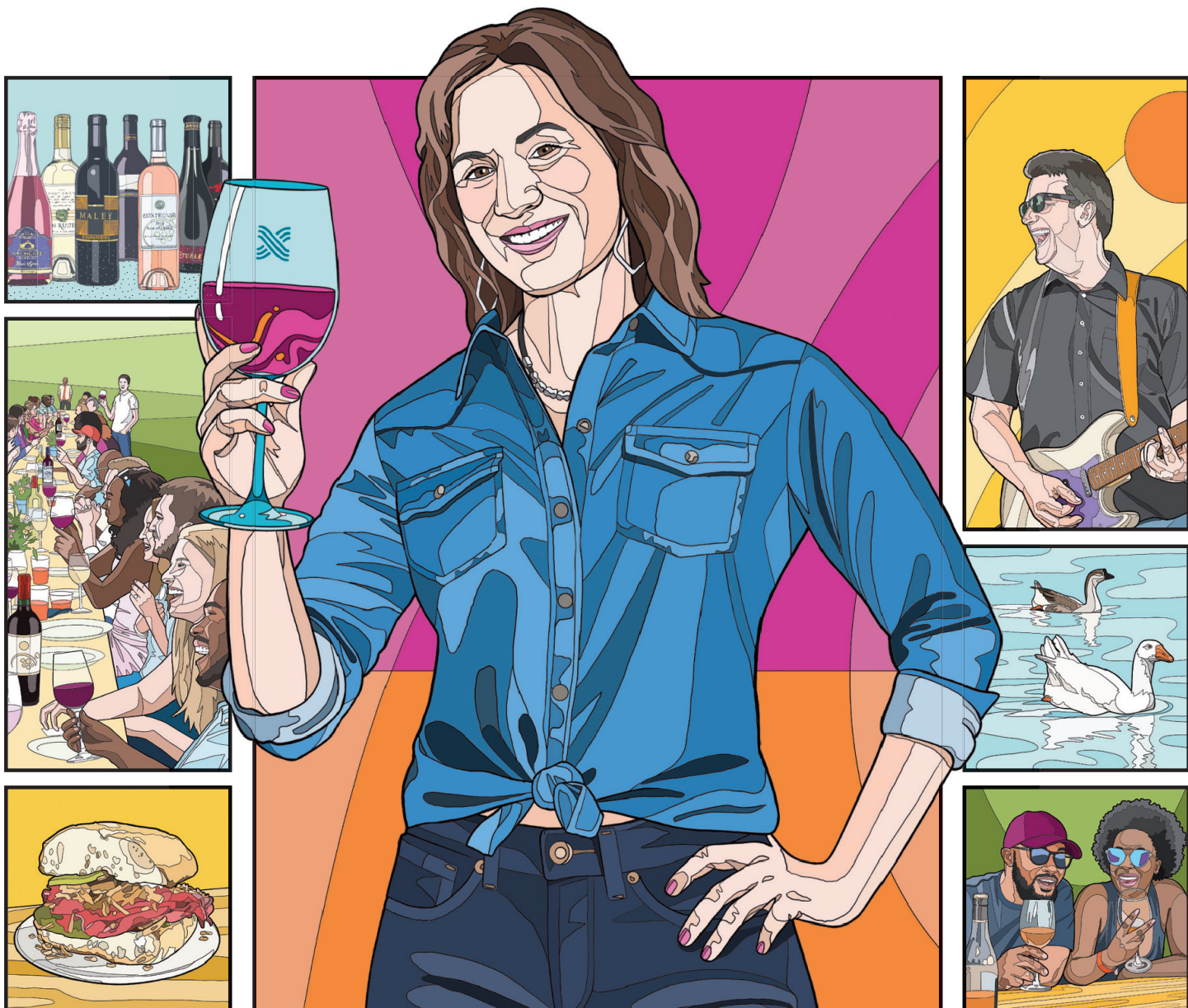
Above: Nicholas Guantone works in the kitchen cooking pizzas in a wood-fired oven alongside his father, Nick, and mother, Shelly, left to right, at Guantonios Wood Fired in Lodi. Below left: The pork milakatsu dish at Guantonios features breaded pork chops with kewpie, bachan and herbs. Below right: High Water Brewing's seared sushi grade ahi tuna salad includes romaine lettuce, spring greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, sweet bell peppers, toasted sesame seeds, green onion and crispy wontons with a toasted sesame and ginger dressing.



LODI WINE

EXPERIENCE

LODI LAKE | MAY 19-20, 2023 | LODI, CALIFORNIA



An iconic weekend of world-class wines and the friendly faces behind the craft.

Tickets: LodiWineExperience.com



LAURA MORTON



LAURA MORTON

Left: Christina Lopez, assistant winemaker at Acquiesce Winery, smells wine from their latest vintage while working on tasting notes in Acampo. Right: Winemaker Marilia Nimis-Schrader stands for a portrait at Oak Farm Vineyards in Lodi. The family-owned winery produces a diverse selection of wines from estate fruit.

Next generation of winemakers focus on sustainability, unique grape varietals

By Carey Sweet

Lodi is well known for its rich, deep history of family-owned vineyards and wineries, such as Bechthold Vineyard, the oldest continuously farmed vineyard in the Lodi American Viticultural Area.

This remarkable 25 acres of gnarled vines was originally planted in 1886 by Joseph Spenker and was farmed by the late Al Bechthold from the 1970s until 2008. It is now solely owned by his wife and the great granddaughter of Joseph Spenker, Wanda Woock Bechthold. This year, it was recognized by California's Historic Vineyard Society.

But these days, Lodi is drawing attention for a new generation, too. Younger winemakers have increasingly been entering the scene, bringing new ideas and often capitalizing on Lodi's Mediterranean climate to experiment with new and different varietals that aren't commonly found in other wine regions.

Here are some rising stars to watch.

Marilia Nimis-Schrader Winemaker at Oak Farm Vineyards

Marilia Nimis-Schrader grew up in Italy, just a few miles from Venice, in the Prosecco and Pinot Grigio region. Her father's side of the family were grape growers, and as long as she can remember, she was interested in the wine world.

"I tasted wine for the first



LAURA MORTON

Winery Operations Director Eliza Hess poses for a portrait at Lucas Winery in its ZinStar Vineyard, where they recently replaced tractors with herds of sheep to mow the cover crops and weeds and planted native hedgerows.

time as a child," she recalled. "My granddad used to make a few gallons a year for our family. I remember him asking me to 'check the wine' to be sure it was good."

While studying viticulture and winemaking in college in the cities of Udine and San Michele all'Adige (in the Trentino region of northern Italy), she had the opportunity to work harvests in the Collio area of the Friuli region with La Roncaia and also in Trento at Cantine Ferrari, world famous for their sparkling wine crafted in the traditional method.

Her enthusiasm deepened on an intellectual and personal level.

"Wine has history, it has been around for thousands of years," she said. "To me, knowing about wine is like knowing about culture and art. It is also good socially — sharing a bottle of wine is an excellent way to get to know a person."

After graduating, Nimis-Schrader traveled to New Zealand for the 2019 harvest and learned their regional winemaking styles. Next, she ventured to Lodi's Oak Farm Vineyards, where she planned to stay for just one

harvest, immersing herself in "this different terroir and a wine region that no one in Italy really knows about."

Today, at 26, she has completed her fourth harvest and has no plans to leave Lodi and the family-owned Oak Farm team. She loves the serious winemaking, but also the casual setting, where you'll often find her tending her duties dressed in a t-shirt, shorts and boots, her legs stained purple with juice.

"Lodi has such wonderful variety, approachability and affordability," she said. "You can find wineries that pro-

duce a few hundred cases per year or wineries that produce millions. And because of the Mediterranean climate and the sandy clay soil, we can grow more than 100 grape varieties made in different styles. That means winemaking is always challenging and never boring."

She also appreciates the increasing commitment to protecting the Earth that she sees in green-growing programs, like the "Lodi Rules for Sustainable Winemaking Practices" third-party vineyard certification program.

"I believe that winemak-

ing is moving toward a more sustainable and efficient way of growing grapes and processing them in the winery," she said. "As a young generation, I feel more open to trusting science and to taking advantage of new products or new techniques that are suggested, mostly the ones that can help preserve the environment."

She has found that the local industry is open, as well, to contributing ideas, all working together to help increase Lodi's market presence.

"Lodi has started to understand its value and the quality of the wines that are made here," she said. "Every single winery is becoming more focused on making an excellent product, and to do that, I see grape growers and winemakers sharing opinions, experiences and suggestions. We want to make everyone's wine the best it can be."

Christina Lopez

Assistant winemaker at Acquiesce Winery & Vineyards

Acquiesce owner and winemaker Sue Tipton takes a unique approach to her winery, focusing only on white wines, plus one dry Rosé made from the black-skinned Grenache Noir grape. Yet Lopez, working alongside her, never feels limited.

"Each season brings a different set of challenges that we must adapt to, so it's constantly keeping you



LAURA MORTON



LAURA MORTON

Left: Cristina Bauer sits down to a wine tasting with friends at Acquiesce Winery in Acampo. Right: Christina Lopez works on writing tasting notes at Acquiesce Winery.



LAURA MORTON

creative," she said. "I also love that the wine industry is interdisciplinary, covering everything from science to art, history and business."

Acquiesce offers an array of Rhône varietals, all estate grown and made in small batches. So Lopez gets to tackle uncommon grapes, including Grenache Blanc, Picpoul Blanc, Roussanne, Viognier, Clairette Blanche and Bourboulenc.

"The new generation of winemakers is parallel with the new generation of consumers — we want something different and fun that intrigues yet respects tradition," the 34-year-old said. "As we focus on often overlooked obscure varieties, we still want to ease consumers in. So we make them in a style they're comfortable and more familiar with, such as our 2021 Picpoul Blanc."

Indeed, tasting notes for that wine playfully refer to "aromas of lemon-lime Sprite with lemon meringue, lemongrass, green apple and a silky yet racy palate followed by a long mineral finish." If a consumer has any hesitations about this largely unknown grape, this description will certainly encourage them to try it out.

Plus, now and then, Acquiesce introduces other surprises. An Outlier 2021 is actually a red wine, in a light, lively blend of Grenache Noir and Cinsaut.

"Christina loves our Grenache Noir so much that she wanted to make something special for our wine club members," Tipton said. "We understand what it's like to be the nonconformist, the deviation, so we felt compelled to share it."

Such an adventurous spirit is a large part of the

Lodi charm, Lopez thinks.

"You can come to Lodi and taste Spanish varieties at one winery, Portuguese at another, Rhônes at another, and, of course, the region's signature Zinfandels at another," she said. "There's boundless variety, so you're not stuck drinking Cabernet Sauvignon all day. Many people may still see Lodi as a sleeper, but with so much to be discovered here, I think that is changing quickly."

Eliza Hess

Winery operations director at Lucas Winery

Handcrafted wine gets some unique attention at the Lucas Winery, where five different barrel coopers make the French Oak barrels custom selected for the characteristics of each vineyard. Then those barrels are set atop crushed gravel beds to maintain the proper temperature and humidity while the wine rests for 12 to 16 months.

Hess, who turned 28 on April 6, has been with the property since 2020 and was attracted to the winery's meticulous philosophy when she first served as a harvest intern for eight months in 2017-2018. She moved on to work as a laboratory technician at Michael David Winery in Lodi, but then returned for an opportunity to put her stamp on the Lucas operations.

"I think every generation contributes something new and different to the scene," she said. "Wine has been around for thousands of years, and it has maintained relevance and its place on the dinner table because of the innovations of each new generation. Here, my focus

» **"The new generation of winemakers is parallel with the new generation of consumers — we want something different and fun that intrigues yet respects tradition."**

Christina Lopez, assistant winemaker at Acquiesce Winery & Vineyards

has been on incorporating more sustainable and biodynamic practices, because the longevity of our legacy hinges on the life and the environment around us."

Recently, the winery moved to a "no-till" program in its ZinStar vineyard, eschewing tractors for herds of sheep mowing cover crops and weeds. The team has planted native hedgerows to attract more beneficial insects and augmented the property's existing solar power with a new installation last year.

For packaging, Lucas is eliminating foil capsules and using specialty corks in their bottles to reduce waste. They have begun working with Stockton's Greater Valley Conservation Corps to ensure that all of their bottles are actually recycled instead of ending up in landfills.

"I have more sustainability initiatives in the works," she said. "But they all revolve around the most important one — maintaining the existing vineyards on our property. The perennial nature of grapevines is one of our greatest assets when it comes to sustainable winemaking, and I'm not planning on breaking our 90-year streak."

Bryce Willingham

Associate winemaker at Peltier Winery & Vineyards

Now farming more than



LAURA MORTON



FARYN SCHATZ

Clockwise from top left: Vines are visible while tasting at Acquiesce Winery in Acampo; winery operations director Eliza Hess, left, talks with Aamira Garba, a winemaker from New Jersey visiting Lodi, at Lucas Winery; Bryce Willingham, associate winemaker at Peltier Winery & Vineyards, poses for a portrait with Zante, a sparkling White Zinfandel.

Lodi a little over 10 years ago for another Constellation placement.

"I thought it would be a stepping stone in my career as a winemaker," she said. "But as I got to know Lodi, the community and the wine here, I fell in love."

She joined Peltier in 2022 and found her creative niche. She had grown up surrounded by agriculture and farmland in a rural Clovis (Fresno County) community called Appaloosa Acres and had missed that bucolic setting. At the same time, she knew she thrived on challenging systems, taking risks and carving new paths.

"At Peltier, our roots are in farming, so there's emphasis on sustainable growing practices as stewards of

this land, and we aren't afraid of innovation," she said. "And there are unique varietals being cultivated here that are right at home in our Mediterranean climate. That excites me as a winemaker because I get to play with new things like Vermentino and Teroldego. I also get to challenge myself to see traditional varietals in new ways with things like sparkling dry white Zinfandel."

Now Willingham, 38, knows she has found new roots.

"The people I've met here are so passionate about the wines they produce and are eager to share ideas with one another," she said. "This sense of a village is what makes it my home now."



JUST TWO HOURS FROM SAN FRANCISCO

- POOLS AND WATER PLAYGROUND
- LAZY RIVER
- TOWER PARK MARINA
- MINI GOLF
- LASER TAG
- VISITS WITH YOGI BEAR™, BOO BOO™, AND CINDY BEAR™
- LUXURY CABINS AND DELUXE RV SITES
- AND MORE!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO BOOK YOUR STAY!

TowerParkResort.com

14900 CA-12, Lodi, CA 95242



LAURA MORTON

Winemaker Marilia Nimis-Schrader stands for a portrait at Oak Farm Vineyards.

From goat yoga to astronomy, find fun Lodi events

By Jeannie Matteucci

As the weather warms, it's time to escape to Lodi for fun spring and summer events. Enjoy world-class big red wines, learn about astronomy in the park or renew your inner spirit with a session of goat yoga at a local family farm. Find all of this and more in a laid-back atmosphere just a short drive from the Bay Area.

Here are some highlights in chronological order:

April 29-June 11: Relax and unwind at a 45-minute goat yoga class as goats play and romp around you. After class is over, enjoy wine and goat cheese pairings with delicious products from this local family farm. (\$65, classes at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, Spenker Family Farm, 17291 N. Devries Road, Lodi, 209-367-0467, www.spenkerwinery.com)

April 29: The Lodi Beer Fest is a celebration of craft beer with up to 50 local and national breweries. Held in conjunction with the State BBQ Championship, sample world-class barbecue, find a new favorite beer, toss a game of cornhole with friends or dance to music from a live band. (\$35 in advance, \$45 day of event, must be 21 or older to attend, visit website for additional prices, Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi, 209-369-2771, www.grapefestival.com)

April 29, May 27, June 24, July 22 with additional dates to December: View planets through giant telescopes after sunset during one of the Astronomy in the Park events taking place this summer in Oak Grove Regional Park in Stockton. (Free, \$6 parking fee, weather permitting, 8 to 10:30 p.m., 4520 W. Eight Mile Road, Stockton, 209-953-8800, www.sjparks.com/events-calendar)

May 7: A one-day pop culture convention with over 200 exhibitors and artist booths highlight this year's Lodi Comic Con. Explore comics, anime, manga, video games, science fiction, TV shows, toys and more. (\$10 at the gate, kids 12 and under free with a paid adult, visit website for additional prices, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi, www.lodicomicon.com)

May 7 and Oct. 1: More than 500 vendors from throughout California are featured at the biannual Lodi Street Faire in a 14-square block area of downtown. Browse antiques, arts and crafts and retail items, and satisfy your appetite with hamburgers, tacos, Chinese



BRIGITTE CLOUGH

Above: Sandhill cranes fly over fields in the Lodi area. The annual Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival in November celebrates the majestic birds. **Below left:** Artist Marilyn Eger paints outside of the Lodi Community Art Center during the 2022 Lodi Art Hop. This year's Art Hop will feature local art, performances, food and art-making opportunities. **Below right:** Yoga instructor Monica Martinez teaches a 45-minute goat yoga class at Spenker Family Farm. The classes run from April 29 to June 11.



BAILEY CASWELL

dishes, Filipino food, sweet treats and cold drinks. (Free, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., downtown Lodi, 209-367-7840, www.lodichamber.com/lodi-street-faire)

May 18-Aug. 31: The Lodi Certified Farmers Market offers over 100 vendors with the best local produce, cheese, meat and arts and crafts. Enjoy a festive atmosphere where you can grab a bite, shop for handmade gifts or listen to live music in beer and wine gardens. (Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

Thursday evenings, School Street between Elm Street and Walnut Street, Lodi, 209-367-7840, www.lodichamber.com/farmers-market)

May 19-20: Rub elbows with Lodi's winemakers and wine growers at the Lodi Wine Experience (formerly known as ZinFest). Friday night includes the Signature Dinner with wine reception. Saturday's Grand Tasting offers food trucks, wine tastings, wine seminars and live music. (\$150 for



SPENKER FAMILY FARM

Friday dinner, \$90 for Saturday general admission, visit website for additional pricing, 209-367-4727, Lodi Lake Park, Lodi, www.lodiwineexperience.com)

May 19-21: Enjoy playing hundreds of pinball machines set to free at the Golden State Pinball Festival. Browse vendors for parts, memorabilia and new machines. Enjoy a bite to eat with a locally brewed beverage, check out silent auction offerings and enter to win a free pinball machine. (\$20 and up,

Discover more live events

For an online list of all events in Lodi, visit www.visitlodi.com/events-calendar, stop by the Visit Lodi Downtown Visitor Center at 25 N. School St. in Lodi, call 209-365-1195 or follow @visitlodi on social media.

Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi, www.goldenstatepinball.org)

May 24, June 28, July 26 and Aug. 23: Bring your favorite picnic dinner, low lawn chairs and blankets to the Music in the Park series on the fourth Wednesday of each month this summer. On May 24, enjoy the Whiskey Kiss Band for country music and classic rock. On June 28, Agent will perform 1970s and 1980s classic rock. On July 26, listen to Americana-style original music from Georgetowne. On Aug. 23, DohNutz plays classic rock, country, funk and pop tunes. (Free, 6 to 8 p.m., Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins St., Lodi, 209-333-6782, <https://www.lodi.gov/1136/Music-in-the-Park>)

June 11: Celebrate all things Italian at Festa Italiana, an annual Lodi event where you can enjoy delicious food, cooking demonstrations, bocce ball, Italian art, live music, wine and olive oil tasting and more. (\$15, kids 12 and under free with an adult, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St., Lodi, 209-242-9970, www.festa-italiana.com)

June 17, Aug. 19 and Oct. 21: Enjoy local art, performances, food and art-making opportunities for all ages at the Lodi Art Hop. Start at Veteran's Park, then stroll to participating downtown businesses. A special Twilight Art Market on Aug. 19 offers the chance to view exhibits, enjoy a gallery show and purchase one-of-a-kind local art. (Free, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 17 and Oct. 21, 6 to 10 p.m. Aug. 19, for more information and locations, visit www.lodiarts.com)

Nov. 3-5: The 25th annual Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival offers presentations, workshops and more in a celebration of the return of the cranes. Shop the exhibit hall and view incredible art or take a tour to learn more about these popular birds that migrate annually to this area. (Ticket sales go live in September, Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins St., Lodi, 800-581-6150, www.lodi-sandhillcrane.org)

Corporate venues offer seasonal meals, ability to host large groups

By Matt Villano

Focus. Camaraderie. Relaxation. Rejuvenation.

Lodi has emerged in recent years as a popular place to achieve all these ideals — especially for companies looking for an opportunity to take stock and prepare for what lies ahead.

There are a few reasons why Lodi has become such a desired location for corporate meetings and events.

First, it's close to San Francisco, Silicon Valley and the rest of the Bay Area. Second, it boasts a bevy of activities for groups to do before, during and after meetings, including visiting more than 85 wineries, paddling a kayak or enjoying global cuisine at one of the area's restaurants. Lodi is also home to dozens of farms that provide fresh produce for delicious catered meals.

Perhaps most important, Lodi has a variety of hotels and other venues with the capacity to host large groups. All told, there are over two dozen places to host a corporate meeting or retreat in and around Lodi. Here's a closer look at three.

Fairfield Inn & Suites Lodi

Meetings at the local Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott have a personal touch — Janice Prasad and her team see to that.

Prasad is director of sales, and when companies book the 3,000-square-foot banquet space or outdoor event center, she and her team provide the exact kind of service they would want if they were hosting the meeting themselves.

"Attention to detail is important for every sort of event — not just weddings," Prasad said. "I try

to make every experience personal, like it's my event and I'm the one planning it. I spend every second from the beginning to the end helping our clients, making sure that when they're having their event, everything is as perfect as it can be."

In addition to the two large spaces, Fairfield Inn & Suites also has a smaller board room — perfect for 15 people or less.

Prasad noted that many Bay Area companies book this space for team meetings in the morning, then fan out into the community for afternoon wine tastings, bike rides through the vineyards or paddles down the Mokelumne River.

"Our groups like to mix up the activities," she said. "That's one of the benefits Lodi provides."

Wine & Roses

Wine & Roses, a sprawling venue on Turner Road west of Lodi Lake, might be the most well-known of all meeting venues in the area. It comprises 8,000 square feet in event space overall, including indoor and outdoor options.

Inside, the largest event space is the Garden Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 350 people. The Cellar Room, which at one time was a wine cellar, seats 50 while the Deodar Room, upstairs from the Garden Ballroom, seats 40 and is ideal for breakout sessions. There's also a Board Room that seats 14.

Outside, the tented Pavilion & Patio can accommodate 150 guests, and smaller areas around the Garden Ballroom can be configured in any number of different ways.

Director of Sales and Marketing Heather Isbill said this flexibility is

what makes the Wine & Roses event offerings unique, and as a result, many Wine & Roses corporate events combine both indoor and outdoor spaces.

"We have so many options here. We can really set up spaces however a corporate client wants to have them," she said. "When you're here, you never really feel trapped in a meeting."

Because Wine & Roses has two on-site restaurants where the chefs incorporate fresh ingredients grown from local farms, the facility has become renowned for the snacks and food it can offer corporate guests. Among them: house-made granola bars, smoothies, beef jerky and an infamous flavored popcorn.

Of course, Wine & Roses also serves local wines; if corporate guests have questions about what they're drinking, they can ask them at the Lodi Wine Visitor Center, which is located on site.

Michael David, Cellardoor and Bare Ranch

Technically, companies have three distinct options when hosting a corporate event with Michael David Winery.

The first is the winery itself, a 150-year-old compound off Highway 12 that features an expansive vineyard, an indoor tasting room that can be converted into a dining area and an outdoor event space with a garden, pond and lawn that is perfect for friendly competition.

Event Supervisor Alyssa Dezell said recent corporate guests have used the lawn for epic cornhole tournaments, as well as outdoor meals. She added that events at this location take place at night, following the end of the business day.



WINE & ROSES

Above: Seating is available outside of the Garden Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 350 people, at Wine & Roses in Lodi. **Below:** The Fairfield Inn & Suites Lodi features a variety of rental spaces, including an outdoor event center with a patio.



DIGITAL TANK MARKETING AGENCY

"We're a working winery during the day, but at night, the tasting room and outdoor space are really great places for corporate groups," she said. "It's nice to welcome groups to the historic property."

Two other corporate meeting options affiliated with Michael David include Cellardoor, an intimate indoor space in downtown Lodi, and Bare Ranch, a large property about 10 miles north of the main winery on Highway 12. While Cellardoor can host a maxi-

mum of 50 guests, Bare Ranch can accommodate about 350, making it popular among big companies looking to buy out a space.

Dezell noted that wherever corporate guests choose to book, Michael David offers all-inclusive service, including rentals of tables, chairs, linens, glassware, plates and silverware, as well as set-up, tear-down and more.

Package also include Michael David wines, as well as a pilsner beer brewed through the nearby Dust Bowl Brewery Company.

Wedding venues flourish in lush wine country

By Matt Villano

Love is in the air around Lodi.

Many couples looking for the romance of wine country at a reasonable price are turning to the Central Valley city to get married in the lush vineyards. Lodi weddings have become so popular that in 2023, many couples booked Thursdays and other weekdays to have their celebrations — because the weekends are booked solid.

There are several reasons why this decision makes sense for brides and grooms embarking on their lives together.

First, Lodi is closer to the Bay Area than many other wine destinations in the foothills. Second, with its charming downtown and wide variety of wine experiences, it is the perfect location for guests to explore.

Of course, the actual wedding venues are a big draw, too. The properties impress with beautiful backdrops for pictures, cottages for getting ready and unique wines for guests to taste. Interestingly, most venues also come with the option of free and full-service event planning, which is a rarity in the wedding industry today.

According to Visit Lodi, there are more than 15 local wedding venues, including Durst Winery and Estate, Harmony Wynelands and more.

Here, in no particular order, we dive into a few of the wedding venues in and around Lodi and examine what makes them such special spots for momentous occasions.

Viaggio Estate & Winery

Ambience reigns supreme at this lush winery wedding venue.

The property, adjacent to the serene Mokelumne River, boasts lush estate vineyards and shady walnut orchards, as well as several different (and distinct) wedding venues.

According to Teri Lawrence, winemaker and co-owner, the most intriguing spot to get married at Viaggio is the Secret Garden, a smallish patio beneath the long branches of weeping willow trees. This magical place is perfectly secluded from the rest of the winery — and the world.

Another popular place for weddings at Viaggio is the Lower Lawn down by the Mokelumne. This area is the largest of the outdoor venues and can seat nearly 100. On the Upper Lawn, there are fountains, crape myrtles and giant oak trees under which the betrothed can recite their vows.

Inside, a ballroom called La Vita Bella can seat up to 480 guests. It is one of the largest venues in the Lodi area.

Lawrence said food for all Viaggio events is prepared by the on-site chef Brian Graves. While the chef's style is American and French, he often leans into Italian cuisine as well.

There are other benefits of booking an event with Viaggio. As Lawrence puts it, the winery's customer service is second to none, and the young vine Zinfandel and Chardonnay are always big hits. What's more, guests have access to a 10,000-square-foot Italian villa for the bridal party (or the extended families), as well as a river cottage for the bride and groom.

Perhaps the best thing about Viaggio: exclusivity. The winery is only allowed to have 28 events per year, which means Lawrence and her team can be



BRIGGS PHOTOGRAPHY

Above: A bride and groom pose in front of the Viaggio Estate & Winery wine trolley in Acampo. Below left: A couple poses among the vines in the Mettler Family Vineyards in Lodi. Below right: A couple pose on the steps of The Terrace by Good Morning Maxwell in Lockeford.



METTLER FAMILY VINEYARDS

» "We wanted to create a memorable setting for a day our couples will remember forever."

Joanne Tan, Good Morning Maxwell founder

picky about whom they select.

Mettler Family Vineyards

A long driveway lined with cypress trees sets the stage as you arrive at this circa-1899 winery — everything here is romantic, dramatic and breathtaking.

The 7-acre ranch offers several different outdoor Mediterranean-vibe wedding sites, including one on a small wooden dock overlooking a picturesque pond beneath a willow tree, and another under a majestic oak in front of the tasting room. Most of the wedding areas were renovated during this fall and winter.

Mettler's busy season for weddings runs from April to November with the exception of July when temperatures in the evening make it a little too hot for some people to gather outside.

Advertising Coordinator Nick Stefan said weddings at Mettler are most magical at sunset when summer skies turn cotton-candy pink.

"The whole place becomes a sort of fairy tale," Stefan said.

"You look around, the sky is pink and red and orange, a couple is snapping pictures on this dock in the pond against the backdrop of these beautiful

trees, and you ask yourself, 'Is this place real? Is this really happening?'"

Stefan said the winery lets this natural beauty lead; there's very little other fanfare to speak of.

That's not to say Mettler isn't equipped to throw a great party. Many couples bring in their own planners for weddings at Mettler, but the winery also employs a full-time coordinator who can arrange everything from catering and table linens to photography.

The winery often lets customers get creative with how they want to celebrate. The only real rule: All couples must purchase a minimum of three cases of Mettler wine to serve at the event.

The Terrace by Good Morning Maxwell

Lodi's newest wedding venue is set to open this spring. The 3-acre outdoor venue is in Lockeford and can host up to 200 guests. It is owned by Melissa Peters and operated in partnership with Good Morning Maxwell, a women-owned company.

According to company founder Joanne Tan, Good Morning Maxwell specializes in spaces that can be rented for



TOONEY WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Details

Viaggio Estate & Winery: www.viaggiowinery.com/weddings

Mettler Family Vineyards: www.mettlerwine.com/weddings

The Terrace by Good Morning Maxwell: www.goodmorningmaxwell.com/lodi-ca

weddings and other corporate events. In Lockeford, the venue is a four-story structure that looks out on a beautiful walnut orchard. Because the venue faces west, sunsets over the orchard are particularly beautiful.

The venue is surrounded on the ground floor by greens and manicured lawns — this is usually where guests host their ceremonies. At the top, where receptions are held, there's a fountain.

Bookings also come with use of an on-site bridal suite.

"We wanted to create a memorable setting for a day

our couples will remember forever," Tan said.

The Terrace keeps a list of local vendors with which it can connect couples to provide everything from custom cakes to photography. Tan said couples also are welcome to bring in their own vendors or to hire outside planners.

As Tan sees it, the more flexibility the venue can offer its clients, the better.

"Some people want to manage everything, others want to hire someone else," she said. "We have found the best approach for us is to accommodate all of it."

World of Wonders
SCIENCE MUSEUM

The World of Wonders Science Museum is an exciting, educational hands-on science museum filled with science-based exhibits and offers many programs to stimulate discovery FOR ALL AGES!

WowScienceMuseum.org

Open Thurs.-Mon. 10am-5pm
(closed from 1-2pm for cleaning)

2 North Sacramento Street, Lodi • 209.368.0969

Barsetti Vineyards
WINE-TASTING BOUTIQUE

JOIN OUR MONTHLY EVENTS:
Floral | Bunco | Painting
Live Music Twice Monthly on Selected Fridays
- Follow us on Facebook for Event Information -
209.744.6062
Old Town Galt | 400 4th St. | Suite 150
OPEN FRI. - SUN., NOON - 5PM

MENTION THIS AD AND RECEIVE TWO COMPLIMENTARY TASTINGS AND FIVE DOLLARS OFF A BOTTLE OF WINE!

ricjan@barsettivineyards.com | www.barsettivineyards.com



PHOTOS BY LAURA MORTON

Lydia Henderson plays with a bubble table at the World of Wonders Science Museum. The downtown Lodi museum features more than 70 hands-on, educational exhibits.

Explore science, art, nature, history in Lodi

By Jill K. Robinson

For families looking for a spring break getaway, this Central Valley city has a variety of family entertainment — from indoor education to outdoor adventures.

Whether the outdoors calls to you or indoor fun is just your bag, Lodi has many opportunities for families to enjoy spending time together. With a good balance of nature, history, science and art, family activities here also have an educational angle — but you don't have to tell the kids.

World of Wonders Science Museum

Science is more fun when you can witness results right before your eyes. The World of Wonders Science Museum (WOW) offers hands-on, science-based exhibits and programs for children and adults to learn about the world around them. Home to more than 70 exhibits, the museum was inspired by a family visit to San Francisco's Exploratorium, and a group of dedicated locals helped establish this informal science education center to foster young scientists and engineers as well as the science literacy of the community at large.

Duck into the Jim Pyers Illumination Lab to explore elements of light and shadow, like convection currents and the phenomenon of Pepper's Ghost — an illusion technique used in amusement parks, museums, TV and theater. Or consider trying your hand at stop-motion animation, kinetic-energy domino experiments and the ever-popular bubble table.

Micke Grove Regional Park and Zoo

This park packs a lot in, making it easy to find something fun any day of the week. The Micke Grove Zoo is home to more than 170 individual animals representing more than 50 different species from six continents — many of which are classified as endangered or threatened in the wild. From primates like tamarins to the world's smallest deer species from Madagascar, and even animals native to California, the zoo is a delightful adventure.



Above: Addisyn McCullough paints a unicorn at the Mud Mill in Lodi. Visitors can choose a piece of pottery to buy and paint it with an array of colors. Below: Eli Magana, left to right, plays in the sand exhibit with her mom, Dom Magana, and Stephanie Serrano at the World of Wonders Science Museum.

Also at Micke Grove, the San Joaquin County Historical Museum preserves the rich heritage of the region, from early Miwok and Yokuts cultures to the development of modern agriculture in the area. Explore through native plant habitats and historic buildings, as well as the museum's wealth of exhibits. Round out your visit with a relaxed picnic and play time at Wortley Lake.

Lodi Lake

There's something special about how water allows us to slow down, and with Lodi Lake right in town, it's an ideal family outing. In the heart of the nature trail area, you can see two distinct forests — live oaks that weave a tight canopy inland and an open canopy of cottonwoods, willows and valley oaks near the lake. If you're lucky, you'll spy wildlife like deer, red foxes, opossums and kingfishers.

From its boathouse on Lodi Lake, Headwaters Kayak offers rentals and tours for a liquid change of perspective. Snag a kayak or stand-up paddleboard rental to explore the lake and the tame, twisty stretch of the Lower



Mokelumne River. Or join one of the 1.5- to 2-hour guided trips on the Mokelumne. Make it a beach day at the lake's public beach, open Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day.

Mud Mill

Screens dominate so much of our lives that it's refreshing to have an occasion to leave them behind and engage with the real world for a little while. Budding Picassos will enjoy getting in touch with their creative side at the Mud Mill, a Lodi pottery

painting studio. Sign up for a two-hour session, and choose from more than 300 bisque items to decorate — from tabletop items like plates and mugs, to pumpkins, bunnies, sharks and trucks.

With a paint palette of more than 60 colors, kids get to make a one-of-a-kind masterpiece. This creative outlet isn't only for children; adults are welcome to dive right in and create their own family heirlooms. Once the artwork is finished, studio staff will schedule the pottery for firing

Details

World of Wonders Science Museum: 2 N. Sacramento St., Lodi, 209-368-0969, www.wowsciencemuseum.org

Micke Grove Regional Park and Zoo: 11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi, 209-953-8800, www.sjpark.com

Lodi Lake: 1101 W. Turner Road, Lodi, www.loadi.gov/348/Lodi-Lake (Headwaters Kayak: 209-471-5988, www.lodi-boathouse.com)

The Mud Mill: 115 S. School St., Suite 1, Lodi, 209-365-9900, www.themudmill.com

Ginger Bugs: 2 W. Oak St., Lodi, 209-224-8684, www.gingerbugslodi.com

Visit the **Downtown Visitors Center** at 25 N. School St. in Lodi for information on fun family activities or call 209-365-1195.

and glazing, and you can pick it up within seven days.

Ginger Bugs

No matter the weather, the indoor play space at Ginger Bugs for children is a welcome place for families to have fun while supporting open-ended play and discovery. A tricked-out Cedar-Works play structure made from splinter-free, chemical-free, high-quality furniture grade wood is ideal for active kids. There's even a large ball pit for jumping, filled with GermBlock balls that incorporate antimicrobial protection.

Soft play equipment like a baby ball pit, poufs, Foamnasium and Rody Horses add to the play choices. If parents are looking for a little me time while children are burning off steam, there's a comfortable place to relax, snag a refreshment from the coffee bar and catch up on work or reading with free Wi-Fi. The coffee bar also offers snacks for purchase that are extremely popular with children, like pizza, cheesy breadsticks and mac n' cheese bites.



Left: Kevin Tyler, left to right, and Lisa Tyler paint pottery with their granddaughter Penelope Christi at the Mud Mill. Visitors can pick from over 60 colors to decorate more than 300 bisque items, including plates, mugs, unicorns, sharks and trucks. Right: Kamryn Castro plays with the Lego exhibit at the World of Wonders Science Museum.

