



BETWEEN THE VINES

Vasco Road Stroll Offers Visual, Gustatory Gifts Aplenty

Explore a different part of Livermore Valley wine country with this itinerary for a great afternoon of wine tasting with a minimum of driving.

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Plan your Livermore Valley Wine Country visit [here](#) or print the driving directions [here](#).

1 Start at [Longevity Wines](#), not far from where Vasco Road meets Tesla. Owners Debra and Phil Long operate this boutique, urban-style winery with a focus on quality, not quantity. They handle everything from bin to bottle, and all of the wines are produced in small batches with a hands-on approach to quality control.

The tasting room is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. with a \$5 tasting fee. Favorites in the barrels always include cabernet sauvignon, merlot, chardonnay, Debruvee (a Rhone style blend), and Philosophy (a Bordeaux style blend). Longevity Wines is located at 2271 S. Vasco Road in Livermore.

2 Just a few steps down Vasco Road is [Occasio Winery](#). With very limited production, owner John Kinney brings fervor for perfection and respect for timing to every bottle he creates. He is committed to the heritage varietals of Livermore Valley and focuses on small and micro-lot wines made only from local grapes. Early-morning harvesting at vineyards minutes from the winery ensures grapes are fresh and cold on arrival.

Occasio Winery strives to craft wines that best express the soul of Livermore Valley, including zinfandel, tempranillo, pinot gris, chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon and petite sirah. Located at 2245B S. Vasco Road, the tasting room is open Thursday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. with a \$10 tasting fee.

3 Right next door is [Nottingham Cellars](#), a boutique winery dedicated to bringing guests the best of Livermore Valley at an

exceptional value. The Cranor family employs Old World and New Age techniques, keeping production small to have an intimate experience with every barrel in their cellar.

Nottingham was, for a period of time, the original name of Livermore in the mid-19th century. It is rich history from which the winery draws inspiration for everything, especially Vasco Urbano Wine Company, the new brand launching this month. The labels on the new Rhone-style wines -- viognier, Grenache, mourvedre, syrah and petite sirah -- feature 100-year-old portraits of early 20th century residents of Livermore. The tasting room is located 2245 S. Vasco Road, Unit C, in Livermore and is open from noon to 4:30 p.m. Thursday through Sunday with a \$10 tasting fee.

4 A 5-minute walk away (down Vasco and left into Graham Court), you will find [Eckert Estate Winery](#), a small family-owned winery that specializes in lesser-known Italian, Portuguese and French grape varieties.

This is a new site for Eckert. After 11 years on Arroyo Road, they have consolidated the winery and tasting room into one location at 5963 Graham Court, Suite D, in Livermore. Guests enter through double doors, and immediately smell the wines, see the barrels that hold the future and begin a tasting experience at the 30-foot bar. In this casual setting, you can relax and taste exceptional wines, sample freshly made mustards and truffles, talk directly with winemaker Michael Eckert or just admire the murals depicting the good life. The tasting room is open Friday through Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. with a \$5 fee.

Between the Vines is a bi-weekly column on wine and wine making in the Livermore Valley wine region. This column was contributed by the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association.