

# DONNA FLAVETTA

VICE PRESIDENT, OWNER & SENIOR EVENT PLANNER  
AT ELLISTON VINEYARDS

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT THE LIVERMORE VALLEY AS A WINE REGION?

I love the beautiful rolling hills that separate us from the cold air of the bay but we're close enough that we still can take advantage cool winds. What most don't know is that because of this, our region has great conditions to grow a balanced fruit because of the warm days and cool nights through the season.

## WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE WINE OR WINE TASTING EXPERIENCE?

My most memorable tasting was actually last summer when we decided to close Elliston on a Saturday and stepped out to Livermore as a team. It was such a great experience to see how others in the area promote our region and made me prideful to be apart of it.

## WHAT IS ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS ABOUT WINEMAKING YEAR IN AND YEAR OUT?

One year it might be too much rain and another you'd be wishing for more. You have to be prepared for deer and other wildlife. The hardest thing about winemaking is unpredictability of what nature has in store.

## WHO WOULD YOU WANT TO SHARE A BOTTLE OF WINE WITH, LIVING OR NOT? AND WHY?

My father, who reestablished the winery in the early 80's. Along with many other subjects, he had a wealth of knowledge about the Livermore Valley and the wines produced here. I should not have assumed we had more time for these discussions.

## WHAT 3 THINGS WOULD YOU TAKE WITH YOU ON A DESERTED ISLAND OTHER THAN WATER?

Wine, beef jerky, and George Clooney

## WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE GROWING UP?

A teacher like both of my parents, grandfather, uncle and aunt. I knew they were all smart but I think I was more attracted to the idea that you got to boss people around....so I became an entrepreneur instead. :-)



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- Donna Flavetta



PROUD MEMBER OF THE  
LIVERMORE VALLEY  
WINEGROWERS  
ASSOCIATION

# ELLISTON VINEYARDS

COME TASTE THE HISTORY. ESTABLISHED 1890.

Tucked away in the hills of Sunol is Elliston Vineyards. The property – with its historic stone mansion, lush grounds, and secluded Terrace Room offers a unique and picturesque atmosphere that is sure to provide an enjoyable and memorable experience for any occasion.

## HISTORY

The Elliston Vineyards estate was built by Henry Hiram Ellis who arrived in California in July 1849 at the age of twenty, in hopes of striking it rich during the Gold Rush. In 1875, Henry became the last elected Chief of Police in San Francisco, serving from 1875-1877. Ellis Street in San Francisco was named after Henry Hiram Ellis for his years of service. During this time, Henry and his wife Elizabeth settled in to San Francisco and made a home.

In 1885 Ellis, contemplating retirement, bought a lovely oak-studded property in the agricultural district of Sunol. Here, between 1885 and 1890, he built Elliston, a stately 17-room, three-story, neo-Romanesque mansion featuring graceful stone arches and 32-inch-thick walls of blue sandstone quarried in nearby Niles Canyon.

During this same time, Henry's son Robert Ellis constructed a building on the corner of St. Johns and Main Street in Pleasanton, and opened the Ellis Grocery Store. The location of the Ellis Bros store is now the home of the Rose Hotel.

The last few years of Captain Ellis' life was spent quietly working on his memoirs and managing his estate. He died on December 15th in 1920 at the age of 91.

## WINES & VINES

In 1890, Ellis planted three acres of vineyards on his Estate, and it is known that wine was produced here. This acreage was included when the Sunol Viticulture District was named in the 1898 report to the State Board of Viticulture to consist of 14 vineyards totaling 148.5 acres and total cooperage of 25,000 gallons.

In 1977, Sunol's grape growing tradition was revived by the planting of 55 acres of premium grape varietal's on San Francisco Water Company land. In 1984, the Awtrey's obtained rights to the Sunol Valley Vineyards, and also replanted the Elliston vineyards at the estate with three acres of Chardonnay. The original carriage house was converted into the winery.

In 1991, Elliston purchased a twenty-three acre winery in the Santa Cruz Mountains complete with a state-of-the-art 4,000 square foot building equipped to handle 20,000 cases.



## TASTING ROOM

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info@elliston.com  
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Open Saturday - Sunday  
11:00 - 4:00



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