

Vineyard	Wines	Wine	Exper	Purchase(s)	Comments
Ramona Ranch	Merlot, Syrah, Zin	★★★	★★★	2109 Viognier 2017 Estate Sangiovese	Ramona Ranch was the only winery we visited that had good whites. Both the Sauvignon Blanc and the Viognier were very dry and tasty. All their reds were light-bodied, subtle, and among the best we tasted in Ramona. We sat on a beautiful patio with a great view. Given we were there first thing on a Friday morning, we got a lot of attention from the server.
Hatfield Creek	Petit Syrah, Zin	★½	★	2017 Syrah	Hatfield is a small winery that is a "Harvest Host". This is a program where RV owners can park their rig on the winery property overnight. It's dry camping, but usually located in beautiful spots. There were a couple of RVs parked there while we were. The server commented that at times they have nearly a dozen RVs parked there and the generator noise at night is overwhelming. This winery itself has a large patio area overlooking the vineyards and is a nice place to taste. The wines were largely forgettable. We bought the best of what they made.
Vineyard Grant James	Syrah, Sangiovese, Cab	★★★	★★½	2019 Reserve Negroamaro NV Super Tuscan	The Grant James wines were a bit more full bodied and utilized more Cabernet than most of the wineries we visited. Their blends were the highlight of the tasting. The Zinfandel and Chardonnay were mediocre at best. Our server was a sommelier from San Francisco and was quite knowledgeable. We also met the owner and had a nice chat with him about the area.
Woof'n and Rose	Grenache, Merlot, Cab Franc, Malbec, Petit Sirah	★★★½	★★★	2015 Estate Eglantine qty 2 2016 Petite Sirah qty 3 2016 Estate Cabernet Franc	"Woof" was the most eclectic and one of the best vineyards of our stay. It's in a remote spot with stunning views and a quirky outdoor tasting area. It is one of the oldest wineries in the area and the owner-founders are a married couple who love dogs and roses. They make small quantities of a large number of varietals and blends. Our server was the co-owner who was colorful and extremely knowledgeable. She poured 11 wines ranging from Albarino to Petite Sirah. All the wines were "on the light side" with Sirah and Cab Franc wines presenting the best.
Turtle Rock	Cab, Merlot, Sangiovese	★	★	2108 Sauvignon Blanc 2018 Chardonnay	The tasting was on a large and beautiful patio area that overlooked the entire valley. However, the tasting process was like getting a Big-Mac combo at McDonalds and waiting for your number to be called. We tasted four "premium" wines including three forgettable reds and a chocolate dessert wine. The only decent wine was the Cabernet, but it was quite over-priced. We ended up buying their two whites that we didn't even taste as our "tasting fee coupon" reduced the price to supermarket levels.

Wine - quality of the wines **Exper** - tasting experience including server, ambience, food, time taken, facilities.

Note: The scores are normalized (scaled 1 to 4) to further differentiate the results

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Milagro	Petit Syrah, Cab, Italian varietals	★★	★★½	2017 Cabernet Franc 2017 Bellorosso	This was one of the larger and more developed wineries visited. All of their wines were made from estate grown fruit. Our tasting was literally in the vineyard, between rows of grapevines. The wines were generally "tart" and not exceptional, but the "in-the-vines" part was pretty cool.
Edwards Cellars	Cab, Syrah, Petite Syrah	★★★★	★★★★	2019 Rosé of Syrah 2019 Winter Rosé qty 2 2016 MSG Blend 2016 Zinfandel 2014 Syrah qty 2 NV Larboard Port	Edwards had the most unpretentious tasting area of all the wineries we visited. It was a patio in the middle of a field with a small hut to store tasting supplies. The wind was blowing so hard it was hard to pour wine into the glass. Despite the physical environment, this was hands-down the best wine of the week for us. We bought at least one of everything they had. The reds had a few years on them and likely provided some insight to maturation expectations of Ramona wines. Our server was the co-owner and shared a lot of time and interesting info with us. She and her husband were both artists and got into winemaking on a whim. She said that he frequently makes winemaking decisions that are unconventional – some of which pay off handsomely and some that fail spectacularly. Clearly, we tasted the former.
Principe Di Tricase	Aglianico, Nebbiolo, Petite Syrah	★★★	★★★★	2017 Aglianico Barrel Select 2019 Primavera 2019 Sagrantino	We spent the better part of two hours at Principe and it was an experience like no other. It was like being dropped into a Sunday afternoon family gathering in Tuscany. Tasting is in a compound of buildings, tables, ovens, construction equipment, and bird cages. They served food, the owner's kids visited with all the customers, dogs and peacocks walked through area, and many people were just hanging out and drinking wine. Our server was also the owner and winemaker and spoke with a heavy Italian accent. I lost track of how many wines he poured us; I think it was over a dozen. They were all made in "the Italian way": unfiltered from Italian varietals. Most of the wines were young and sour. However, the big reds were unique, complex, delicious, and surprisingly ready to drink despite their youth. We bought 4 bottles. To sum it up: a wonderful and unique experience.

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Hungry Hawk	Syrachs, Cabernet, Sangiovese	★★★★	★★★★½	2017 Estate Petite Sirah 2017 Estate Syrah Noir 2018 Elliot Ranch Cabernet 2018 Estate Super Tuscan	Hungry Hawk was the most upscale and expensive winery we visited. They have a beautiful outdoor tasting area with a great view. Every wine we tasted was excellent. Like most of the wines from the region, they were light and elegant, but with a bit more fruit. All wines, save the Cabernet, were produced from estate grown grapes.
Speckle Rock	Sangiovese, Tempranillo	★★★	★★★½	2017 Tälynlu Grenache	Until 2007 Speckle Rock was an avocado farm. After the trees were wiped out by a wild fire, the owners decided to pursue a longtime dream, planted grapes, and started a winery. The winery is set on a mountaintop overlooking the beautiful San Pasqual Valley. Unfortunately, they only sold wine by the glass and bottles, so we could only taste a couple of their wines. However, the wines we drank were quite good and relatively full bodied. A couple of parties came to the patio with complete hors d-overs platters and bought bottles of wine for what appeared to be an extended happy hour. It would be hard to find a better place for it.

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