

FOOD & WINE 2018

NAPA VALLEY *life*

MAGAZINE

Spend the Day at
BRASSWOOD



PLUS+

2nd Annual Forks & Corks
8th Annual Napa Valley Film Festival
Napa Valley Michelin Star Restaurants

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Auberge Du Soleil



Photo courtesy of Grgich Hills Estate





Spend
the
AT *Day*

BRASSWOOD

♦ BY KARI RUEL | PHOTOS BY MIKE LARSON



What to do and where to begin in the quest for the Napa Valley experience?

Brasswood Estate, located just north of St. Helena, has something for everyone. A visit to Brasswood Estate challenges local and visitors' sensory palates—from smell to sight to taste to feel—as well as one's imagination. Whether the preferred mood is elevated elegance or down to earth casual, visitors create the experience they want. The wine and food village showcase a state of the art winery, a 17,000 square-foot cave to explore, unique food experiences, a contemporary art collection, plus a myriad of boutique shopping opportunities.

BRASSWOOD WINERY and CUSTOM CRUSH FACILITY

A winery and cave adorned with a “living roof” of native California succulents. Brasswood Estate proprietor, Stacia Dowdell, explains the strategy behind the design:

“With the property, we have all the hills; we decided to make most of the winery underground and have a “living roof” to hide the building. We wanted to

make sure as people were driving by it wasn't sticking out like an eyesore. We have a 17,000-square foot cave and state of the art lab.

Dowdell, an 18-year winemaker herself with Marcus Marquez speaks passionately about cabernet and growing her own grapes.

“When you are in the dirt, it's your dirt, and it makes such a difference. It might sound cliché, but our wines are made in the vineyards.” I know I can make good wine out of decent grapes, but the best quality grapes come from well-maintained vineyards and owning those vineyards is so important to make sure you get exactly the quality you want. Cabernet is the perfect blend of art, science, and nature.” Brasswood Village encompasses all of that.

Three harvests ago, Marquez brought in winemaker Angelina Mondavi to work with Dowdell. Together the duo represents a perfect blend of legacy winemaking combined with a contemporary, state of the art vision, creating a true balance of world-class Napa Valley wine.

Brasswood's current list of crush winemaker partners includes:

Angelina Mondavi
*Dark Matter, Aloft,
Fourth Leaf, Castlevale*

Jade Barrett
Ladera

Philippe Melka
*Moone Tsai, Parallel,
Zakin Estate, Dalecio,
Benediction*

Jason Moore
Modus Operandi

Weston Eidson
Montagu, Silver Ghost

Russel Bevan
*Bevan Cellars,
Addax, Perus*

Tim Milos
*Hidden Ridge,
Haber Family*

Rossemay Cakebread
Galica

Michael DeSantis
Harumph

Robbie Meyer
*Aileron Ranch,
Montgomery Vineyard,
Peirson Meyer*

“Working with Angelina is fun,” said Dowdell. “The first year, we were getting used to each other's style. We sat down and discussed winemaking philosophy and what I want to do in the vineyards. We go out tasting a lot together. She has an amazing memory. I like to process gently the high-quality grapes coming in, but I don't want to over-manipulate the grapes. I'm very sensitive to bitter and tannins. She has experience with coopers that I don't, and can make recommendations.”

Next door at the winery, Brasswood built and operates a custom crush facility. Including Angelina Mondavi, the facility is utilized by nine acclaimed winemakers, many of whom have received formidable wine scores.

“This gives Brasswood Estate another level of winemaking because our wine partners' entrust us to make their next potential 100-point wine for themselves and for their clients” said Marcus Marquez, Winery Estate General Manager. ➡

THE BRASSWOOD VILLAGE ADJACENT TO THE WINERY IS INVITING and PLAYFUL.

Brasswood Tasting Room is designed to be simple and showcase their 100-percent estate grown red wine. There is no appointment unless you want a curated experience or to visit the Winemakers den for a private tasting with one of Brasswoods' wine partners. The Brasswood Lunch pairing is one of the experiences people want to come back the next day and do all over again.

"We rely on the whole wine and food experience at Brasswood Estate," said Dowdell. "We have been able to develop a unique experience here by using our wine partners' expertise to create these lifestyle experiences with food and wine, which encourages people to want to come in and enjoy. Not only is it Brasswood wines, but they can also tag along with Angelina and her brands or Philippe Melka and his brands."

Every August, Brasswood hosts the "Vintners' Vanguard Tasting" where guests have the unique opportunity to sample all the wines from Brasswood Cellars and all of the wine partners at the same time.

Brasswood Sensory Room was inspired by Dowdell after she visited Burgundy in 2010. The olfactory experience focuses on smell, touch, and vision, and encourages guests to dive in and open up their senses as they explore the wines. Led by a wine educator and accompanied by a beautiful flavor wheel on the wall, one can dig in and explore sensory characteristics with the wine.

"When I was in Burgundy they had an amazing display of wine wheels with glass globes, and you could envision what makes up the aroma components of the different wines," said Dowdell. "But you could also put your nose in and smell. I was so impacted by the experience I knew I had to add something similar to our village. The glass globes we have here have all been hand blown for us to design the space."

THE FOOD ELEMENT AT THE BRASSWOOD ESTATE VILLAGE is a CULINARY EXPERIENCE IN ITSELF.

Brasswood Bar + Kitchen offers night-time fine dining with Executive Chef David Nuno, who opened the restaurant following 30-years of cooking in the Napa Valley at noted establishments such as the former Tra Vigne and Domaine Chandon. Chef David is in his element at Brasswood Bar + Kitchen, allowing his years of experience with wine country flavors and the amazing terroir of the Napa Valley's cornucopia to drive his cuisine. Having beautiful, high-quality produce grown alongside the world's best grapes makes cooking up his favorite dishes a gift for all to enjoy. Twelve garden beds are planted on the edge of the village and its bounties are harvested for the restaurant and bakery. The farm to fork model integrates estate grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs into the culinary program, including edible flowers for the cocktails and delectable desserts.

Brasswood Bar and Bakery – Elevated café drinks with a shot of liquor or a "boozy milkshake" is unique for a bakery. Full sandwiches, salads, and breakfast items offer a perfect beginning or a break in one's day. Dining options include tables in the outdoor courtyard or sitting inside at one of the copper top tables. Accompanying the bakery is Brasswood Bar and Kitchen, which boasts an expansive wine list representing wines within a 100-mile radius of the property.

The Brasswood Gallery showcases curated fine art from galleries around the world. Every quarter there is

a new curation and a party to showcase the art collections.

Next door the **Brasswood Bottle Shop + Mercantile** shop offers unique Napa Valley gifts and high-end specialty items including cigars, spirits, clothing, and jewelry as well as premier wines from Brasswood wine partners. The entire Brasswood Village and winery was well thought out by Dowdell and translated to her architecture and designers. Signum Architecture is based out of St. Helena and recently won a prestigious award for the winery design.

In the months ahead, they will introduce Brasswood Spirits - American whiskey, gin, and vodka that will be available on the premise. "This was a natural fit for what we have going on here at Brasswood," said Marquez.

Philanthropy is important at Brasswood Napa Valley. Dowdell's cousin, Haley Margaret died at age 25 of Cystic Fibrosis. In her memory and to raise money for research, Dowdell makes a limited edition Rose' in her honor every year.

Brasswood Estate is a Village, and it takes a Village to create this amazing style of Napa Valley experiences. "We want Brasswood to be here for generations for our neighbors and guests to experience, but even more rewarding is creating a community of friends that we get to work with every day," said Marquez. "I feel very grateful to have a professional wine and food team that can run with the vision and make it their own. You can really feel it when you are on the property."

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