



## Food pairings enhance wine at Napa Valley wineries

Although most vintners say that their wines taste best with food, until recently few local wineries offered food tastes with their wine samples. That's a shame, for savory bites like cheese, olives or charcuterie make most wines tastier and European wineries typically offer them with their wines at tastings.

Local wineries have long hosted wine and food marketing meals, but rarely offered more than crackers in the tasting room. This was partly because Napa County used to discourage food pairings in tasting rooms.

The county now sees the advantages of serving snacks with wine, and has relented. As a result, an increasing number of Napa Valley wineries now offer food and wine pairings in their tasting rooms to enhance visitors' experiences - and sell more wine.

The wineries have to be careful, however: Napa County prohibits restaurants at wineries in unincorporated areas (Domaine Chandon was grandfathered in), but allows the pairings as long as the wineries are permitted for the practice. Some wineries seem to be pushing the envelope a bit, however, and you can get a light lunch at some.

Here are some of the food pairings at wineries, though many other wineries offer them, too. All prices are per person and appointments are generally required.

**Kenzo Estate** offers extensive food pairings at the impressive winery on Mount George, even a la carte sandwiches, appetizers and desserts. Info, [kenzoestate.com](http://kenzoestate.com); (877) 977-7704.