





# Napa Revisited

California's most popular wine region is getting a jolt of much-needed energy.

BY TED LOOS PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX FARNUM<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, Napa Valley had settled into a comfy rut. Wineries were turning out up-scale but often predictable Cabernets, and the hotels felt reliably, if not excitingly, luxurious—the kind of complacency that comes from being at the top of the heap. But the area's affluent, increasingly younger clientele wants something different—innovation, clean design, a casual vibe—and Napa has responded in the form of new projects, reboots, and renovations all across the valley. This isn't your parents' Napa, but they'll like it too. >>

Odette Estate winery, in Napa Valley, California.

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FROM TOP: Vineyards at Odette; the winery office, upcycled from a shipping container; scallops with white gazpacho at Atlas Social; Odette's Jeff Owens (left) and Gavin Newsom.



Leading the charge is **Odette Estate** ([odetteestate.com](http://odetteestate.com)), a next-generation winery in the Stags Leap District from philanthropist Gordon Getty, California lieutenant governor Gavin Newsom, and Napa veteran John Conover. Instead of building the faux-Tuscan villa with the blue-chip art collection that used to pass for a bold statement, the trio created a LEED Gold-certified facility with a living roof and a glassed-in visitors' center with a private dining room. "Millennials are driving us in an experiential direction," Conover says. Newsom adds, "The travelers we're encountering are seeking more than just a tasting flight. They want their wine, but also architecture, design, and an authentic culinary experience."

Visitors can take a guided walking tour of the grounds, then embark on a 90-minute tasting of Odette's three bottlings, crafted by the 34-year-old winemaker Jeff Owens. The 2012 Estate Cabernet, with its rich black-cherry flavors, goes for \$98—aspirational, but not crazily priced. Even more remarkable is the fact that all the wines can be bought under screw cap. The \$300 2012 Estate Reserve Cab is the first twist-top ever to earn 100 points from Robert Parker.