SPECIAL REPORT: WINERIES



Wineries:

→from page 15

2012, the value of wine grapes grown in San Diego rose from \$904,000 to \$5.5 million, a more than fivefold increase. Value, which has been in the multimillion dollar range each year since then, peaked at \$6.6 million in 2014.

There are now more than 115 wineries in the county, according to the San Diego County Vintners Association (SDCVA), which McWilliams heads as president. When she first visited with its members, the association was comprised of a "core group of eight to 10" wineries.

Total wineries countywide is now only about 30 fewer than the number of local craft breweries — and making wine takes significantly more time and expense than brewing beer. The wineries cover all corners of the county, from Campo Creek Vineyards in East County, just minutes from the U.S.-Mexico border, to **Beach** House Winery in Fallbrook, which abuts Camp Pendleton.

Nationwide there are about 10,000 wineries in operation. While there are wineries in all 50 states, California accounts for about 85 percent of total U.S. output. Economic impact of the industry was estimated at \$84.5 billion by the National Association of American Wineries, also called WineAmerica, which recently studied the industry's national economic impact.

Reborn From Tragedy

The story of the modern-day San Diego wine industry (as opposed to the region's original wine industry — think Franciscan friars planting vines decades before California was considered for statehood) begins in the aftermath of environmental disaster.

Wildfires that roared through the county in 2003 and in 2007 charred more than half a million acres of land. Following the fires, some in the county's \$1.75 billion agriculture industry — often forgotten amid its high-profile defense and biotech sectors — took the opportunity to reconsider the types of crops they grew.

Some decided to replant with grape vines, a less water-intensive plant than avocados and citrus that can also function as a kind of natural firebreak.

And, as vineyard acreage grew, the number of wineries opening in less traditional areas, known as urban wineries, also increased. Today such production spaces dot the county's coastline, where winemakers ferment, barrel, age and bottle wine they produce from grapes grown elsewhere.

That's the model at San Pasqual Winery, which McWilliams, a speech pathologist, and her husband, Mike, an industrial psychologist, bought in 2009.

Previously they had considered opening a champagne bar in the Gaslamp. They also considered running a wine bar.

Urban Wineries

During their research, up popped "urban winery for sale," and we said, "what's that?" McWilliams said.

Now the company, which was in Pacific Beach when they bought it, produces wine — including passionfruit wine, for which it is perhaps best known — in an industrial area of La Mesa. It also has a tasting room in downtown La Mesa, which it opened in December 2009. Success there prompted the McWilliams' to open another location, this one in Seaport Village in downtown San Diego.

Linda McWilliams said the increase in grapes grown in San Diego County has



Jamie Scott Lytle

Jason Wimp, an owner of 2Plank Urban Winery, and winemaker Mike Szymczak show off some of the winery's top offerings at its tasting room in Vista. The winery uses grapes from its vineyard in Fallbrook as well as from other vineyards.



Photo courtesy of San Pasqual Winery

A crew at San Pasqual Winery, an urban winery based in La Mesa, prepare for the pressing stage of winemaking.



Mike McWilliams, who with Linda McWilliams owns San Pasqual Winery, holds a cluster of malbec grapes.

allowed San Pasqual to produce more local wine each year, a goal of hers.

Eric Van Drunen, owner and winemaker at urban winery Charlie & Echo in Miramar, also has a penchant for local grapes.

Van Drunen and his wife, Clara, have been in the business since 2007, when they established Vinavanti Urban Winery in San Marcos. They recently renamed the business, which was most recently in Hillcrest, using the military phonetic alphabet and their initials in a nod to the nearby air base and shifted their focus to creating more sparkling wines.

The new location is in a Miramar business park on Miralani Drive that also houses breweries and tasting rooms for mead, a honey-based brew, and sake, Japanese rice wine.

Since 2015 everything the winery makes is using grapes grown in San Diego County.

"I just find it more interesting," Eric van Drunen said. "There are other wineries that will bring grapes out of Napa and Washington. ... To me, there's enough winemakers in those areas."

Wine Club

Adam Carruth, another local winemaker, takes the opposite tack.

"I try to bring what's known and common — a cabernet (sauvignon) or zinfandel or malbec or whatever — and do the best I can, take care of it and get it to the bottle in the best form I possibly can with the grapes I get," he said.



Jamie Scott Lytle The "cap" of grape skins from which color is rapidly leaching is mashed with a metal device to mix it with the red wine fermenting below in a tank in a local urban winery.

Carruth Cellars, his winery, has grown its wine club to about 2,000 members. Carruth said the winery will sell nearly 10,000 cases of wine this year, or more than \$2 million in sales.

In addition to its winery in Solana Beach's Cedros Design District, Carruth has a tasting room in Carlsbad Village and a new wine garden in Little Italy.

McWilliams says she sees this diversity of winemaking philosophies as a strength for the region — as long as the results are quality.

One sip of a subpar San Diego wine could give a visitor or resident a negative impression of the industry as a whole.

That's Carruth's take, too: "The more good wine, the better," he said. "I want all these urban wineries to do well.'

Van Drunen is head of **San Diego Urban** Wineries, a coalition of 13 urban winemakers to which Charlie & Echo, Carruth Cellars and San Pasqual Winery belong.

The industry has grown alongside the region's explosive craft beer businesses, albeit at a slower rate.

McWilliams remembers when the San **Diego Brewers Guild** asked the **Vintners Association** for advice as to how to bring together business owners. Now the winemakers look to the brewers for business tips, she said.

Carruth went from homebrewer to winemaker in a few short years thanks to a stint living in Sonoma County.

"My passion was (in) making something," Carruth said. "Making beer was fine, but I moved to Sonoma for three years, got into viticulture and started making wine and never made beer again. My interest completely switched over."

Learning Opportunities

Still, when it comes to business inspiration, he looks to a San Diego institution: Pizza Port.

Carruth, a San Diego native, began brewing beer while in college and continued once he graduated. Before he made the transition from hops to grapes, Carruth worked for a time under Gina Marsaglia, who with her brother, Vince, owns the popular San Diego chain of brewpubs.

Carruth said watching the family-owned business support the local craft beer industry by training people who later left and started their own successful breweries gave him a glimpse of what the local winemaking community could do.

The Vintners Association recently partnered with Cuyamaca College in El Cajon to offer interested students handson experience in winemaking through its Viticulture Technician Apprenticeship Program. That is part of a broader effort to establish more of a support system for the industry in San Diego County, McWilliams said.

Offering Several Services

Another winery, North County's **2Plank**, is an unusual amalgamation of a number of winery business models. The company has its own vineyard and an urban winery in Vista, where it makes wines with its own grapes and those grown in other areas, too.

In addition, 2Plank provides winery services for others winemakers, ranging from varietal consulting and pest control to pruning and harvesting.

David Bridgeman and Jason Wimp, a doctor and technology executive, respectively, founded the vineyard. Winemaker Mike Szymczak joined the company in

Wimp, like other winery owners interviewed for this article, said he knows and is comfortable with the fact that producing wine isn't a get-rich-quick scheme. It might not even be a get-rich-at all scheme. But the romance inherent in working with the soil on a project that, at its heart, is mainly in Mother Nature's hands, has proven a powerful pull for some business owners.

"We are really excited and proud of what's going on in San Diego County with wine," he said. "Over the last five to 10 years we've had a lot of people come in who are very serious about making good wines and bringing it to the masses in an urban setting, so we're seeing wineries in downtown, in Ocean Beach, in Solana Beach, in Carlsbad ... all up and down the coast and in nontraditional areas where we're able to provide a good quality product and a unique experience to wine lovers or novices or aficionados."

The next step is getting consumers equally enamored.

Demand for locally made wine won't increase until people are made aware of what is being produced by San Diego vintners, Wimp said.

"This is something we as an industry have to invest in and be patient about, and we have the good fortune of already having patience because of the product we make, so if we're going to take this long to make the product we understand it's going to take a little time for the consuming public to come around and say 'hey, wait a minute, wow — this is good, ' he said. "So we're here for the long haul — and so are the grapes."

Urban Winery Finds Sustainable Way to Serve Its Wines

WINERY: Using New Device, Reusable Growlers Are Filled From Barrels

■ By SARAH de CRESCENZO

One urban winery in San Diego has found success taking a page out of the craft beer industry's playbook.

LJ Crafted Wines, a family-owned and operated winery in the Bird Rock neighborhood of La Jolla, recently announced the company had switched over to using reusable growlers instead of bottles to get its wine to customers.

That's intended to eliminate the packaging that goes along with bottling wines in the traditional fashion, said owner Lowell Jooste, who opened the winery with his wife, Anne, last year. Before the husband-and-wife team moved their family to La Jolla in 2012, they had managed Klein Constantia and Anwilka vineyards in South Africa.

Lowell Jooste, whose family has been in the wine business for four generations, is a Cape Town native.

A device he has developed, called a "wine steward," allows the winery to serve wines directly from the barrels in which it is aging. Jooste said he is pursuing patents in the United States and in the European Union for the device.

Wine Integrity Preserved

Using the wine steward, wine is removed from the barrel and replaced with an inert gas. To bring home or somewhere besides the tasting room, the wine is poured into refillable growlers, which just like at many local craft breweries —



Photo courtesy of Justin Galloway

A reusable growler is filled with wine at LJ Crafted Wines using a "wine steward," a device developed by winery owner Lowell Jooste to allow wine to be served directly from barrels without affecting the quality of the remainder of the fermented juice.

'We've been through about 70 barrels,

can be brought back, sanitized and reused. and for every barrel the wine's integrity has been the same from top to bottom,"

he said. "We're keeping all our original wine production up in Napa, where we buy grapes as well because the quality control is world class, and we just have to look after the quality here, and so far, the wine in refillable bottles has been very well received."

The Joostes said they were unsure whether wine drinkers would buy into their new way of serving, so they bottled half of their first vintage, in 2015, and prepared to bottle the wine left aging in the barrels if customers weren't willing to adopt the new technique of serving solely from the barrels.

Customers Take to Growlers

But it caught on, and quickly: More than 600 people are a part of LJ Crafted Wines' wine club, and 98 percent of members agreed to go the growler route, the winery said.

Per month the winery goes through about six barrels, which translated to 1,500 liters. While wine typically comes in 750 milliliter bottles, the growlers at LJ Crafted Wine hold one liter.

So far, the use of refillable growlers has allowed LJ to fill 20,000 fewer single-use bottles than it would have had the same volume of wine been purchased without the growler option.

"We're still a drop in the ocean as far as the wine industry goes, but it's something new," he said. "We really like the environmental approach: we're selling wine, not packaging."

The move to refillable growlers, which minimizes glass disposal in landfills as well as the energy required to produce the bottles, is a frequent topic of discussion in the tasting room, he added.

San Diego Business Journal

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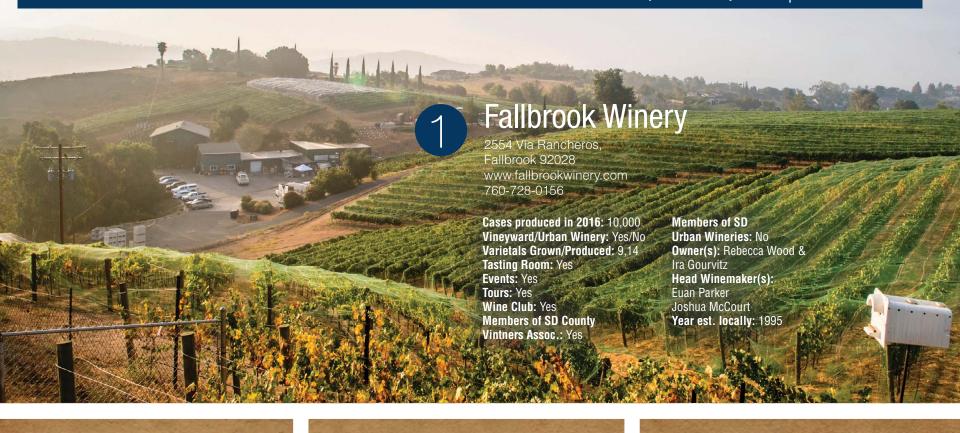
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Call 858-277-6359 to participate in the 2nd annual SD500! Vineries

Ranked by number of cases produced locally in 2016

Researched by





Carruth Cellars

Urban Winery 118 S. Cedros Ave Solana Beach 92075 www.carruthcellars.com 858-847-9463

Cases produced in 2016:

Vineyward/Urban Winery: No/Yes Grown/Produced: na,15 Tasting Room: Yes

Events: Yes Tours: Yes

Members of SD County Vintners Assoc.: Yes Members of SD Urban Wineries: Yes Owner(s): Adam Carruth Head Winemaker(s): Ryan Scottt

Year est. locally: 2006

Wine Club: Yes





Hill Top Winery

30803 Hilltop View Court, Valley Center 92082 www.hilltopwinery.com 760-913-1013

Cases produced in 2016:

Vineyward/Urban Winery: Yes/No **Varietals** Grown/Produced: 15,13

Tasting Room: Yes **Events**: Yes Tours: Yes Wine Club: Yes

Members of SD County Vintners Assoc.: Yes Members of SD Urban Wineries: No Owner(s): Michael Schimpf Head Winemaker(s): Nolan Schimpf Year est. locally: 2006





Belle Marie Winery

26312 Mesa Rock Road, Escondido 92026 www.bellemarie.com 760-796-7557

Cases produced in 2016:

Vineyward/Urban Winery: Yes/No **Varietals**

Grown/Produced: 13,24 Tasting Room: Yes **Events:** Yes Tours: Yes

Wine Club: Yes **Members of SD County** Vintners Assoc.: Yes **Members of SD Urban** Wineries: No Owner(s): Jeff Lazenby Head Winemaker(s):

Jeff Lazenby Year est. locally: 2000





San Pasqual Winery

8140 Center St. La Mesa 91942 www.sanpasqualwinery.com 619-462-1797

Cases produced in 2016: 3,644 Vineyward/Urban Winery: No/Yes Varietals Grown/Produced: na,15 Tasting Room: Yes **Events:** Yes Tours: Yes

Members of SD County Vintners Assoc.: Yes **Members of SD Urban** Wineries: Yes Owner(s): Linda & Mike

McWilliams Head Winemaker(s): Linda McWilliams

Year est. locally: 2009





2Plank Vineyards

2379 La Mirada Drive, Vista 92081 www.2plankvineyards.com 858-622-2001

Cases produced in 2016: 3,000

Vineyward/Urban Winery: Yes/Yes Varietals Grown/Produced: 17,24

Tasting Room: Yes Events: Yes Tours: Yes Wine Club: Yes

Members of SD County Vintners Assoc.: Yes **Members of SD Urban** Wineries: Yes Owner(s): Jason Wimp, David Bridgeman Head Winemaker(s): Michael Szymczak Year est. locally: 2010





Bernardo Winery

13330 Paseo Del Verano Norte, San Diego 92128 www.bernardowinery.com 858-487-1866

Cases produced in 2016: 2,850 Vineyward/Urban Winery: Yes/No Varietals Grown/Produced: 6,20 **Tasting Room:** Yes **Events:** Yes

Tours: Yes Wine Club: No Vintners Assoc.: Yes **Members of SD Urban** Wineries: No Owner(s): Ross Rizzo Jr., Veronica Hall-Rizzo Head Winemaker(s): Ross Rizzo Jr. Year est. locally: 1889

Members of SD County



Wineries

Ranked by number of cases produced locally in 2016

Researched by Gina Bertuzzi

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							Serv	rices		Memb	ers of			
Rank	Winery Address Website Phone		Cases produced in 2016	Vineyard/ Urban Winery	Varietals: Grown Produced	Tasting room	Events	Tours	Wine club	SD County Vintners Assoc.	SD Urban Wineries	Owner(s)	Head winemaker(s)	Year est.
8	Vesper Vineyards 298 Enterprise St., Suite D, Escondido 92029 www.VesperVineyards.com 760-749-1300	Vesper	2,100	N/Y	0 14	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	N	Y	Chris Broomell Alysha Stehly	Chris Broomell	2008
9	LJ Crafted Wines 5621 La Jolla Blvd., La Jolla 92037 www.ljcraftedwines.com 858-551-8890		2,000	N/Y	na 8	Υ	N	N	Υ	Υ	N	Lowell & Anne Jooste	Alison Doran Green	2016
10	Schwaesdall Winery 17677 Rancho de Oro Drive, Ramona 92065 www.schwaesdallwinery.com 760-789-7547	Woman I	2,000	Y/N	6 6	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Υ	N	John Schwaesdall Shirley Schwaesdall	John Schwaesdall	na
11	Shadow Mountain Vineyards & Winery 34680 Highway 79, Warner Springs 92086 www.shadowmountainvineyards.com 760-782-0778	Shedini Manatian Gungari an Turuy	1,800	Y/N	12 11	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Alexander & Pamela McGeary	Alexander McGeary	1995
12	Negociant Winery 2419 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego 92104 www.negociantwinery.com 619-535-1747	NEGO CIANT	1,500	N/Y	0 8	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	na	na	2015
13	Beach House Winery 1534 Sleeping Indian Road, Fallbrook 92028 www.BeachHouseWinery.com 760-519-2942	Book Sog	1,500	Y/N	2 14	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	George Murray Kimberly Murray	George Murray Kimberly Murray	2005
14	Koi Zen Cellars Craft Winery 12225 World Trade Drive, Suite P, San Diego 92128 www.KoiZenCellars.com 858-381-cork (2675)	The Control of the Co	1,500	N/Y	0 9	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Lisa K. & Darius F. Miller	Darius F. Miller	2015
15	Gianni Buonomo Vintners 4454 Saratoga Ave., San Diego 92107 www.GBVintners.com 619-991-9911	Buonomo Vinnis	1,500	N/Y	na 10	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Keith Rolle	Keith Rolle	2013
16	Turtle Rock Ridge 18351 Woods Hill Lane, Ramona 92065 www.turtlerockridge.com 760-789-5555	SER	1,500	Y/N	6 6	na	na	na	na	na	na	Laurie Wagner Ian Vaux	Laurie Wagner Ian Vaux	2012
17	Hungry Hawk Vineyards & Winery 3255 Summit Drive, Escondido 92025 www.hungryhawkvineyards.com 760-489-1758	Hagir Hack	1,275	Y/N	15 15	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Jeannine Embly Ed Embly	Mike Embly	2009
18	Altipiano Vineyard and Winery LLC 20365 Camino Del Aguila, Escondido 92025 www.altipianovineyard.com 619-478-5222	AUTIPIANO AUTIPIANO	1,164	Y/N	4 8	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Peter & Denise Clarke	Denise Clarke	2008
19	Charlie & Echo 8680 Miralani Drive, Suite 113, San Diego 92126 charlieandecho.com 877-592-9095	charlie & echo	1,152	N/Y	0 8	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Eric Van Drunen Clara Van Drunen	Eric Van Drunen	2007



Wineries

Ranked by number of cases produced locally in 2016 Researched by Gina Bertuzzi

2007

							Services			Memb	ers of			
Rank	Winery Address Website Phone		Cases produced in 2016	Vineyard/ Urban Winery	Varietals: Grown Produced	Tasting room	Events	Tours	Wine club	SD County Vintners Assoc.	SD Urban Wineries	Owner(s)	Head winemaker(s)	Year est.
20	Ramona Ranch Winery 23578 Highway 78, Ramona 92065 www.ramonaranchwines.com 760-789-1622		1,050	Y/N	5 12	Υ	N	N	Υ	Υ	N	Theresa Kerns	Micole Moore	2012
21	Espinosa Vineyards 15360 Bandy Canyon Road, Escondido 92025 www.espinosavineyards.com 619-772-0156	spinosa VINEYARDS	1,000	Y/N	6 8	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	N	N	Roberto & Noelle Espinosa	Roberto Espinosa	2008
22	Domaine Artefact Vineyard & Winery 154704 Highland Valley Road, Escondido 92025 www.domaineartefact.wine 760-432-8034	DOMAINE ARTEFACT	875	Y/N	12 11	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Mark & Lynn Robinson	Mark Robinson	na
23	Twin Oaks Valley Winery 1575 Mulberry Drive, San Marcos 92069 www.twinoaksvalleywinery.com 408-712-0487	To 200 P	792	N/Y	0 7	N	N	N	N	Υ	N	Malcolm Gray Kathryn Gray	Malcolm Gray	2013
24	Sierra Roble Winery & Vineyard LLC 34810 Highway 79, Warner Springs 92086 sierraroble.com 760-456-wine	SIERRA ROBLE	750	Y/N	9 7	Y	Υ	N	Y	Υ	N	David & Janine Lowe	David Lowe	2011
25	Principe di Tricase Winery 18425 Highland Valley Road, Ramona 92065 www.pineandwine.com 760-315-8872	Application on the state of the	730	Y/N	4 15	Υ	na	Υ	Y	Υ	N	Alfredo Gallone	Alfredo Gallone	2007
26	Stehleon Vineyards 298 Enterprise St., Suite D, Escondido 92029 www.StehleonVineyards.com 760-741-1246	L Sultion	700	Y/Y	5 6	Y	N	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	Al & Lisa Stehly	Alysha Stehly	2012
27	Triple B Ranches Estate Winery 15030 Vesper Road, Valley Center 92082 www.Triplebranches.com 760-749-1200		685	Y/N	12 12	Y	Υ	Υ	Y	Υ	N	Gary Broomell	Chris Broomell	2008
28	Campo Creek Vineyards 29556 Highway 94, Campo 91906 www.campocreekvineyards.com 619-478-5222	Campo Creek	542	Y/N	4 6	Υ	N	Υ	N	Υ	N	Mary Koppa John Clarke Paul Clarke	Mary Koppa	2008
29	Rock Canyon Vineyards 3355 Emmanuel Way, Alpine 91901 www.rockcanyonvineyards.com 619-445-4763	Manager .	500	Y/N	4 5	Υ	N	Υ	N	Υ	N	Tim Petersen	Tim Petersen	2007

Y/N

500

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31	Woof'n Rose Winery 17073 Garjan Lane, Ram www.woofnrose.com 7	W Carlos Garage	411	Y/N	9 8	Υ	N	Υ	N	Υ	N	Stephen and Marilyn Kahle	Stephen Kahle	Winery - 2007 Vineyard - 1995
32	Casi Cielo Winery / Mane S Vineyards 3044 Colina Verde Lane, Jan 1935 www.casicielowinery.com 1-1819	WIKERY		Y/N	15 12	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Greg & PJ Maness	John Keily	2014
33	Roadrunner Ridge Wirk 4233 Rosa Rancho Lane, www.roadrunnerridgewinery.com 760-731-7349	Realnume, Willery		Y/N	14 14	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Jim & Judi Brady	Jim Brady	2010
34	Coyote Oaks Vineyards 9843 Oak Ridge Road, Escondido 92026 www.coyoteoaksvineyards.com 760-504-2434	3604	300	Y/N	9 7	Υ	N	Υ	Υ	Υ	N	Karen Sherman	Karen Sherman	2010
35	Myrtle Creek Vineyards 1600 Via Vista, Fallbrook 92028 myrtlecreekvineyards.com 442-444-5066	MYRTLE CREEK	300	Y/N	11 11	Υ	N	N	N	Υ	N	Matt Sherman	Matt Sherman	2012
36	Highland Valley Vineyards 15412 Bandy Canyon Road, Escondido 92025 www.HighlandValleyVineyards.com 858-531-6589	HIGHLAND VALLEY VINEYARDS	300	Y/N	4 9	Υ	N	N	Υ	Υ	N	Ray & Jeannine Schnorr	Ray & Jeannine Schnorr	2007 ⁽¹⁾
37	Little Oaks Winery 6084 Corte Del Cedro, Suite 105, Carlsbad 92011 www.littleoakswinery.com 760-494-0597	Little Caki	300	N/Y	0 6	N	N	N	Υ	Y	N	Richard Sportsman Marcia Wylie	Richard Sportsman Rachel Speck	2013
38	ZXQ Vineyards and Winery 15454 Highlands Crest Way, Escondido 92025 www.ZXQVineyards.com 619-384-1405	ZXB	200	Y/N	3 4	Υ	N	N	Υ	Υ	N	Andrew Klotz	Andrew Klotz	2012
NR	Lenora Winery 251 Steffy Road, Ramona 92065 www.lenorawinery.com 760-788-1388	St Lenova Winery	na	Y/N	8 8	Υ	N	N	Υ	Υ	N	Eric Metz	Eric Metz	1999

na Not available (NR) Not ranked

Sleeping Indian Vineyard PO Box 245, Bonsall 92003

www.sleepingindianvineyard.com 626-665-4808

In case of a tie, companies are ranked alphabetically. **Sources:** The wineries. To the best of our knowledge, this information is accurate as of press time. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy and thoroughness of

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