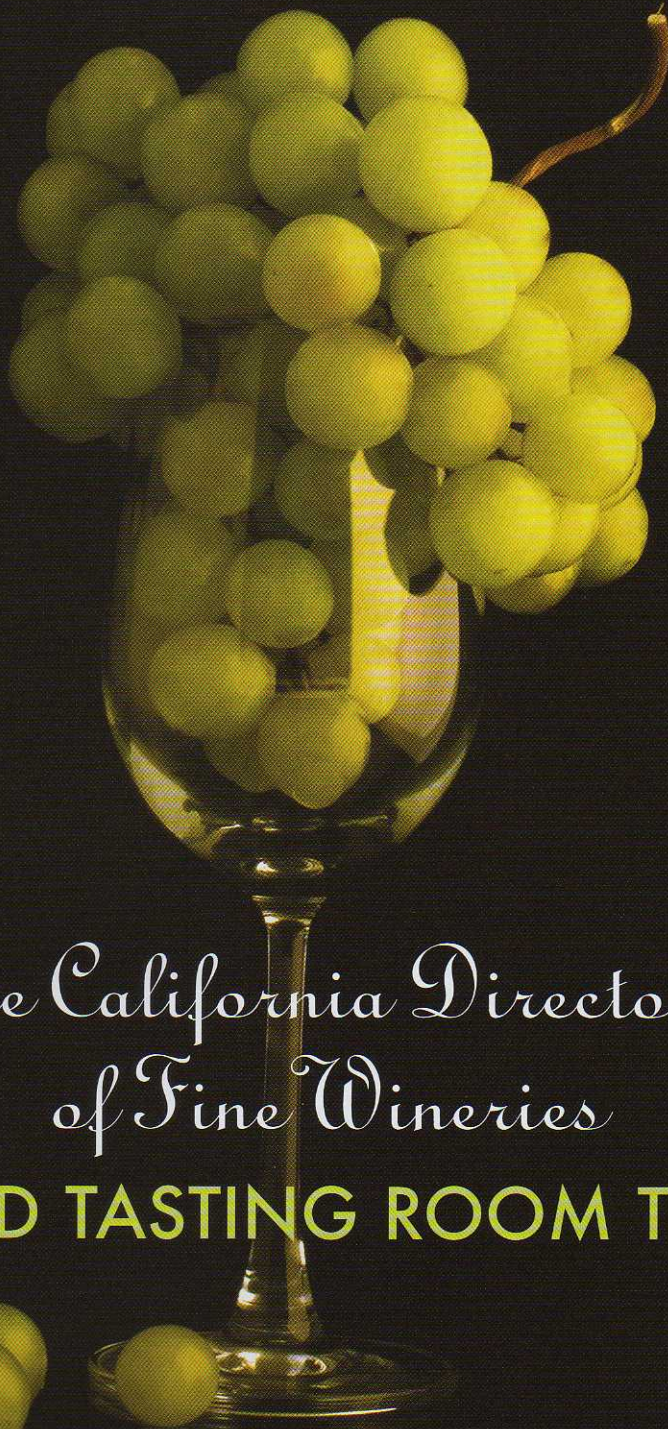




WINE

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(Please see the full story on back)



*The California Directory
of Fine Wineries*
AND TASTING ROOM TIPS

BY GERALD M. PHILLIPS

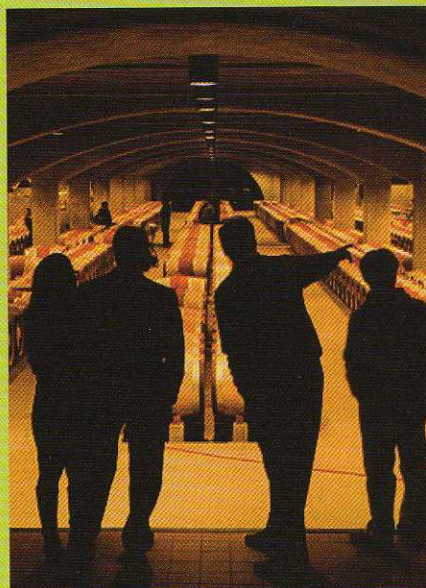
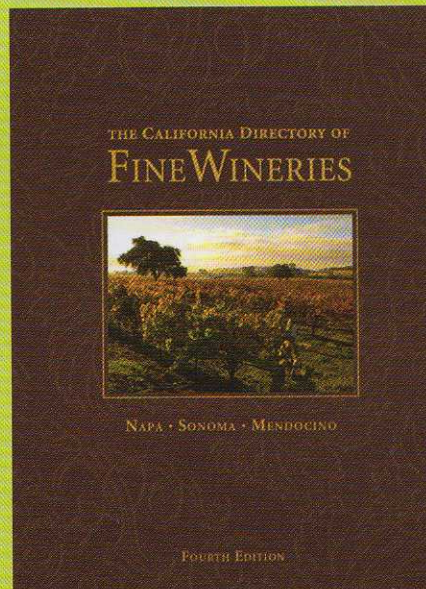
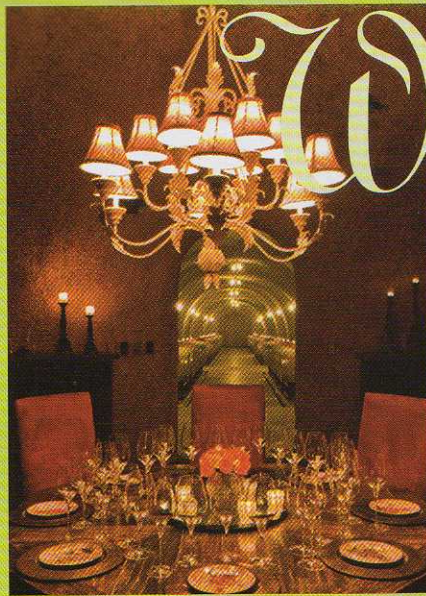


Fine Wineries

On a recent trip to Northern California wine country, I met Tom Silberkleit, publisher of Wine House Press, and reviewed the 4th Edition of *The California Directory of Fine Wineries: Napa • Sonoma • Mendocino* by Marty Olmstead. This book is not all-inclusive—it reviews 69 wineries in the three counties mentioned, while there are literally hundreds more that are not covered. However, the ones selected include some of the very best and many good ones to visit. If you used this book as a guide for a visit to wine country, you would not be disappointed. In fact, it would be ideal as a reference tool in selecting wineries to visit.

After a short introduction on tasting room etiquette and maps showing the location of the wineries, you will find a narrative on each winery that covers a short history, location, hours, tastings (some wineries require an appointment to visit and taste), tours, the wines produced, and nearby attractions.

Some wineries charge a small fee for tasting and give you a complimentary glass, while others offer the tasting on a complimentary basis. If you buy their wine, most wineries will ship it back to Florida for you. You are under no obligation to buy their wines but personally, if the tasting is free and if I don't particularly like the wines, I try to buy a t-shirt, book, or some of



the other wine-related bric-a-brac that tasting rooms usually stock. Then I don't feel that I've abused their hospitality by drinking their free wine and doing nothing to help support them. You can be guided by your own moral code.

Another important tip for visiting tasting rooms: Although the amount poured in your glass for tasting seems small, you will be surprised by how much you accumulate in a short time and how fast the alcohol works, so a good policy is to have a designated driver.

The photography in this book is spectacular and done very professionally by Robert Holmes. The photos give a view of what to expect when you drive up or walk into the tasting room. The photographs alone would help me decide which wineries to visit. The book is published by Wine House Press of Sonoma, California, distributed by Ten Speed Press, and retails for approximately \$20. If your local bookstore doesn't carry it, you can buy it on Amazon.com. It makes a great hardcover coffee table book.

Gerald Phillips has worked as a commercial winemaker and has a second major in oenology from Fresno State University. He is a member of several internationally recognized wine societies and professional organizations and has traveled to many of the major wine growing regions in the world.

