

# Paul Hobbs: This exclusive winery brings the drama

By Stacy Briscoe | Posted on 12/13/2016



Photo: Preston Gannaway / Special to The Chronicle

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Think of a tasting at Paul Hobbs like a drinkable theater. And it should be, with the \$65 reservation. The moment you arrive you'll be greeted by name by a host who will hand you a glass of chilled **Chardonnay**, made from the vines just outside the door. The winery only conducts a handful of small-group appointments Monday through Friday, so not only will your host be full of enthusiasm and energy, you can rest assured that any fellow tour-goers are more than just curious wine country wanderers.

After everyone in the group has arrived, you'll be led on a tour of the estate, which includes the immediate surrounding vineyards, the fermentation cellar and the barrel warehouse. You'll appreciate the winemaking process at each stop. Questions are encouraged, and there's no shortage of knowledge because the small staff works directly with Hobbs. Once the tour has concluded, you'll be led into a dining area.

The sit-down Signature Tasting includes a flight of four current releases as well as bite-sized snacks of cheeses, fruit and pastry, all of which help put the wine into culinary context. Though the setting and surrounding may conjure up feelings of fine dining, the tasting is a laid-back, casual affair. You're encouraged to take your time with each wine, discuss tasting notes with fellow tour-goers and experiment with the suggested food and wine pairings. And because the tasting appointments are so spaced out throughout the day, you're welcome to linger a bit longer after your allotted 75 minutes.



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