



SIP, SIP AWAY

TWO WINERIES, ONE NEW TASTING ROOM

By Cindy Brzostowski

Living in Austin means being a stone's throw away from one of the nation's most notable wine regions: the Texas Wine Country, where dozens of wineries, vineyards and tasting rooms await oenophiles amid rolling green hills. Sampling the variety that Texas winemakers have to offer just got even easier with the opening of the Texas AVA Tasting Room, a joint venture between C.L. Butaud and Wine for the People—two local, small-batch wine producers.

Ripe with Opportunity

Once you drive south to the Texas AVA Tasting Room, you'll find that it's in good company as it's surrounded by other popular imbibing destinations, including Revolution Spirits, the Last Stand Brewing Company and Jester King. You might also recognize the tasting room as the former Argus Cidery location.

Randy Hester, the co-owner and winemaker at C.L. Butaud, and Rae Wilson, the founder and winemaker at Wine for the People, were both on the hunt for their own tasting rooms when they learned Argus Cidery was preparing to close its taproom.

A transplant from Napa Valley, Hester first heard about Wilson when he was still living in California and making trips to Texas to work harvests. The two didn't formally meet until Wilson's release party for her Dandy Rosé at Umlauf Sculpture Garden in 2018. Having worked closely together during the harvests since then, they saw the building's vacancy as a great chance to team up and share a space.

"I thought our focus on sustainable winemaking and passion for the industry would make us great friends and partners," says Hester.

Rather than going by the lengthy "C.L. Butaud and Wine for the People Tasting Room," the duo found >>

FAB FINDS FOR FALL

HOME // HOSPITALITY // HEALTH & WELLNESS // BEAUTY // SELF CARE



OPEN AIR RESORTS

Austin's premier, family-friendly outdoor hospitality and RV resort situated in the Texas Hill Country 20 minutes from Lakeway/Bee Cave. Stay in one of our vintage RVs, tiny homes or bring your own RV. We offer campsites with electricity and tons of family activities!

f : [openairresorts](#) [OpenAirRV.com](#)



SHE SPIES PRIVATE EYE, INC.

She Spies Private Eye, established in 2003 by Anji Maddox, is a full-service private investigation company. Our specialty is domestic matters such as infidelity and child custody. We are confidential and here to uncover the truth. "Information is power, the not knowing is devastating."

f : [@SheSpiesPrivateEye](#) [shespiespi.com](#)



RARE FINDS AT PANACHE

Panache is a unique and eclectic store in Dripping Springs' Historical District. With passion for exquisite art, owner Debbie Frost curates rare finds including an original "Leonetto Cappiello." Spanning 9 ft tall & 6 ft wide, it adds panache to any space! [panachehillcountry.com](#)

@ : [@panachehillcountry](#)



LAKEWAY SPINE CENTER

Lakeway Spine offers chiropractic care, non-surgical spinal decompression, and clinical massage therapy. A board-certified spinal decompression specialist, Dr. Andrea Luise provides a safe, gentle, effective approach to managing disc disorders.

[lakewayspine.com](#)

f : [LakewaySpineCenter](#)



MERCER ST. ART & BOUTIQUE

Over 20 LOCAL artists and artisans. Original artwork! Artful gifts, workshops and awesome and unique clothing. Something for everyone. From local honey, soaps, ceramic, glass, candles and more to jewelry and clothing for men and women.

@ : [@mercerstart](#) **f** : [mercerstreetart](#)



AUSTIN SKIN PHYSICIANS

At Austin Skin, the Doctor is always in! See one of our 3 Harvard Trained, Board Certified Dermatologist for your medical, surgical, cosmetic, and now pediatric dermatology needs. Starting Oct 4th, our new pediatric dermatologist Dr. Tan will start seeing patients! 512-886-7546

f : [@austinskin](#) [austinskinphysicians.com](#)



inspiration in an industry term. AVA is the acronym for American Viticultural Area, a designated wine grape-growing region in the U.S., and the Texas Hill Country is one such AVA. Wilson says that she and Hester felt this name reflected their brands' emphasis on 100-percent Texas grapes and their dedication to building on the region's reputation.

Wine O'Clock

At Texas AVA, you can decide between a flight of either C.L. Butaud or Wine for the People wines or opt for a flight that features wines from both.

Wilson says that her wines are influenced by the traditional wine regions she studied during her career as a sommelier—places in Europe and the Middle East with thousands of years of winemaking history. Hester says that C.L. Butaud's primary goal is to highlight the beauty of Texas and its unique terroir, and adds that their wines are balanced between ripe fruit and savory influences.



For newcomers, Wilson recommends the shared tasting so that you can determine which wines please your palate the most. "Our shared tasting menu offers a great representation of the Hill Country and High Plains terroir," she says. "Our wines are distinctly our own, and guests will leave with a sense of place and a deeper knowledge of each brand's style."

A Perfect Blend

Regardless of any differences you might discern in taste between these two brands, one similarity of their founders is their approach to winemaking. Both practice minimal intervention or low-impact winemaking, allowing the grapes to shine through.

The two winemakers are also eager to educate tasting room visitors about the growers they work with and the grape varieties they use, and they want to showcase the delicious possibilities for Texas wines. Says Hester, "Each wine presented at Texas AVA is a unique expression of farming and winemaking, and exhibits the shared conviction of minimal intervention in the process."

Don't worry if you don't know much about wine when you stop by. Wilson says their knowledgeable team is eager to welcome and enlighten you. "We have a relaxed but elevated vibe," she says. "We want people to come, enjoy and learn, and come back the following weekend."

Planning a visit? They offer both indoor and outdoor seated tastings, and reservations are encouraged.

texasava.com | clbutaud.com | wineforthepeople.com

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEATHER GALLAGHER; MANDA LEVY OF A FINE GRAIN; HEATHER GALLAGHER