



March 27, 2017

Raise a Glass to “Green” California Wines During Down to Earth Month in April

Celebrate at Dozens of Eco-Friendly Winery Events



Down to Earth Month in April offers eco-focused winery events statewide, including Earth Day in Green Valley featuring 10 wineries pouring at Iron Horse Vineyards, pictured right.

SAN FRANCISCO — Eco-conscious consumers have many ways to celebrate with sustainably produced wines during California’s [6th Annual Down to Earth Month in April](#). California wineries will be offering dozens of sustainability-focused events and activities throughout the month from Earth Day wine festivals, farm-to-glass tours and walks with the winemaker to vineyard hikes, VIP eco-tours and more.

Created by [Wine Institute](#) — the association of nearly 1,000 California wineries and affiliated businesses — Down to Earth Month raises awareness about the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA) [Sustainable Winegrowing Program](#), one of the most comprehensive and widely adopted in the world, involving vineyards that grow 70 percent of winegrapes and wineries that produce 80 percent of all California wine. California is the world’s fourth-largest wine producer and the scale and comprehensiveness of the program covering vineyards, wineries and communities is a remarkable accomplishment.

“Consumers care about how their wines are grown and made, and our Down to Earth Month celebration is a way for people to learn about California’s world leadership in sustainable winegrowing,” said Bobby Koch, President and CEO of Wine Institute. “In a [recent survey](#), members of the wine trade said that they

anticipate consumer demand for wines produced with sustainable practices to grow substantially over the next decade.”

The sustainability commitment of California’s vintners and grapegrowers has been recognized by the California Legislature which has introduced a [joint resolution](#) proclaiming April 2017 as “Down to Earth Month” in California. April’s events are happening throughout California with new ones being added daily at: www.discovercaliforniawines.com/d2e.

North Coast

On April 22, visit Napa Valley wineries and restaurants and stop by the [Earth Day Festival](#) in downtown Napa’s Oxbow Commons. Enjoy local wines and foods, local bands and kids’ activities. Napa Valley Vintners, an event sponsor, has committed to having all its eligible winery members in the Napa Green program by the end of 2020.

Sonoma County Winegrowers are committed to the county’s wines being 100 percent sustainable by 2019. A great way to explore Sonoma wines and green practices is at the [Dry Creek Valley Passport Weekend](#) April 28-30. More than 45 wineries are offering themed parties with food and wine pairings, regional chefs and vintners, and vineyard tours that offer a closer look at their winegrowing practices.

In the Russian River Valley in Sonoma County, the [Celebrate Earth Day in Green Valley](#) festival April 23 offers the chance to taste wines from 10 local wineries pouring at Iron Horse Vineyards. California Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross will discuss the future of food, while Chef Traci Des Jardins will showcase the “Impossible Burger” made entirely of plants. Guests can enjoy a National Geographic food photography exhibit. Proceeds benefit Sustainable Conservation.

Inland Valleys

About 90 miles northeast of the San Francisco Bay Area is Lodi, Wine Enthusiast’s 2015 Wine Region of the Year. The [2nd Annual Lodi Wine & Food Festival](#) on April 1 provides an opportunity to taste wines from more than 30 wineries, many of which use sustainable practices. Food from local restaurants and caterers, wine pairings, blind wine tastings, olive oil tasting and live music are all part of the day.

Sierra Foothills

The Sierra Foothills wine region offers some of California’s highest elevation vineyards. [El Dorado Wine Association’s 26th Annual Passport Event](#) takes place April 22-23 and April 29-30 and is a chance to explore 20 of the region’s wineries, including participants in sustainable winegrowing efforts. Guests can

sample local wines, buy gifts made by regional artisans and enjoy delicious food tastings.

Central Coast & Santa Cruz Mountains

In the Santa Cruz Mountains wine region, more than 50 wineries will offer special tastings during [Passport Day](#) on April 15, one of four times a year when wineries of this region come together to offer their wines. Another area tour is the [Organic Wine Trail](#) of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The [Santa Barbara Vintners Festival Grand Tasting](#) on Earth Day April 22 is the largest tasting of Santa Barbara County wines of the year. Wine lovers can celebrate with more than 100 wineries and winemakers, more than 30 food purveyors and chefs, regional artists and more.

Southern California

San Diego offers the [VinDiego Wine and Food Festival](#), a fun experience with 70 wineries, including many certified sustainable, on April 8. Known as the largest wine tasting in San Diego, the event offers guests a chance to sip among hundreds of California's finest award-winning wines and enjoy gourmet bites and live music at NTC Liberty Station arts district.

California Sustainable Winegrowing

California is a world leader in sustainable winegrowing practices. The California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance (CSWA), established by Wine Institute and the California Association of Winegrape Growers 15 years ago, is a three-time recipient of the governor's top environmental award for increasing adoption of sustainable winegrowing practices in California. More than 2,000 wineries and vineyards in California participate in the CSWA program.

Many wineries and vineyards around the state have also earned CSWA's [Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing](#) status with verification by a third-party auditor. Certified wineries will soon be able to include a "CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE" logo on their bottle labels beginning with the 2017 harvest. Certified California Sustainable Winegrowing and other statewide and regional programs such as Bay Area Green Business Program, Fish Friendly Farming, Lodi Rules, Napa Green and Sustainability in Practice (SIP) play vital roles in the California wine community's efforts to produce high quality wine that is environmentally sound, economically feasible and socially responsible. To learn more, visit: www.discovercaliforniawines.com/sustainable-winegrowing.

Explore all of the Down to Earth Month activities at www.discovercaliforniawines.com/d2e or to earn a certificate as a Sustainable Winegrowing Ambassador, take a [free one-hour course here](#).

Editors: [Download photos by clicking here.](#)

MEDIA CONTACT:

Wine Institute, 415/356-7525

communications@wineinstitute.org

2017 Down To Earth Events, Tours and Offers in California Wine Country

Check www.discovercaliforniawines.com for updates
as events are being added continuously. *Listing as of 3/14/17*

NORTH COAST

[Spring Suckering at Alpha Omega](#)

April 4, 2017

Time: 2:00 pm

Cost: Free

Alpha Omega, Rutherford, Napa Valley

707/963-9999, concierge@aowinery.com

Celebrate Earth Month by participating in an educational and hands-on suckering session in the vineyards led by Alpha Omega winemaker Jean Hoefliger and enologist Joel Antonio.

[Flavors of Spring at Korbel Champagne Cellars](#)

April 22, 2017

Time: 10:30 am-4:00 pm

Cost: \$25

Korbel Champagne Cellars, Guerneville, Sonoma County

707/824-7316, webstore.info@korbel.com

Flavors of Spring at Korbel Champagne Cellars Celebrate Earth Day and enjoy the opening day of the historic garden tours at Korbel's picturesque grounds.

[Earth Day Napa](#)

April 22, 2017

Time: 11:00 am-4:00 pm

Cost: Free

Oxbow Commons, Napa

taylorradek@gmail.com

Featuring exhibits, food, live entertainment, kids' activities – and of course, wine.

[Down to Earth at Rodney Strong Vineyards](#)

April 22, 2017

Time: 11:00 am-1:00 pm

Cost: Free

Rodney Strong Vineyards, Healdsburg, Sonoma County

hospitality@rodneystrong.com

Observe Earth Day with Ryan Decker, winegrower and viticulturist, as he leads a stroll through our River East Vineyard.

Earth Day Dog Hike

April 22, 2017

Time: 10:30 am-1:30 pm

Cost: \$40

Saracina, Hopland, Mendocino County

707/670-0199, tastingbar@saracina.com

Take a 4-mile hike with pals and pooches, followed by a casual, catered wine country lunch.

Celebrate Earth Day in Green Valley

April 23, 2017

Time: 12:00 noon

Cost: \$65

Iron Horse Vineyards, Sebastopol, Sonoma County

707/887-1507, joy@ironhorsevineyards.com

Celebrate Earth Day with 10 Green Valley wineries and an "Impossible Burger" made entirely from plants. Proceeds benefit Sustainable Conservation.

Passport to Dry Creek Valley

April 28-30, 2017

Time: Varies

Cost: \$55-\$200

Venues throughout Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County

707/433-3031, info@wdcv.com

Tastings, food and wine pairings, and a vineyard tours highlighting how sustainability operates in the vineyards.

Earth Day Hike and Wine Tasting

April 22, 2017

Time: 1:00 pm-3:00 pm

Cost: \$20-\$30

Benziger Family Winery, Glen Ellen, Sonoma County

707/935-3052; alandolt@benziger.com

Celebrate Mother Earth with an hour-long hike around our Sonoma Mountain property followed by a tasting of Biodynamic wines. Open to Club Members and the general public.

SAN FRANCISCO SOUTH & EAST BAYS, SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

Organic Wine Trail of the Santa Cruz Mountains

Cost: Varies

Venues throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains

<http://www.organicwinetrail.org/>

Visit eight certified organic Santa Cruz Mountain vineyards, some with tasting rooms, some by appointment.

Cooper Garrod Walk with the Winemaker

April 1, 2017

Time: 11:00 am

Cost: Free

Cooper Garrod Estate Vineyards & Silver Mountain Vineyards, Santa Clara County
408/867-7116, doris@cgv.com

Go from grape to glass and find out what it takes to become a Certified Sustainable estate vineyard and winery.

Wines & Vines Class at Captain Vineyards

April 9, 2017

Time: 1:00 pm-3:00 pm

Cost: \$43

Captain Vineyards, Moraga, Contra Costa County
925/631-0714

Captain Vineyards, the first green winery in Contra Costa County, will show you how wine is processed using green and sustainable practices. Barrel tasting and cheese pairing included.

Santa Cruz Mountains 2017 Passport Day

April 15, 2017

Time: 12:00 noon-5:00 pm

Cost: \$65

Participating Santa Cruz Mountains wineries
831/685-8463, robynnen@scmwa.com

50+ wineries throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, each offering a unique winery experience.

INLAND VALLEYS

Lodi Wine & Food Festival

April 1, 2017

Time: Varies

Cost: \$50-\$65

Ole Mettler Grape Pavilion, Lodi

Located in Lodi, Wine Enthusiast's 2015 Wine Region of the Year.

CENTRAL COAST: MONTEREY & SANTA BARBARA

Back to Earth in Monterey Wine Country at Scheid Vineyards

April 1-30, 2017

Time: 11:00 am-5:00 pm

Cost: \$10-\$20

Scheid Vineyards, Greenfield

831/386-0316

Learn about Scheid's commitment to sustainability while tasting handcrafted wines on their spacious deck.

Santa Barbara Vintners Festival Grand Tasting

April 22, 2017

Time: 12:00 noon-4:00 pm

Cost: \$35-\$200

River View Park, Buellton

The Vintners Festival is the largest tasting of Santa Barbara County wines of the year. Held this year on Earth Day, celebrate with 100 wineries, 30 food purveyors and chefs, regional artists and live music.

Cima Collina's Earth Day Vertical Tasting

April 22, 2017

Time: 12:30 pm-5:00 pm

Cost: \$15

Cima Collina Tasting Room, Carmel Valley, Monterey County

831/620-0645, david@cimacollina.com

Learn about Cima Collina's sustainable farming practices while experiencing a vertical tasting of Hilltop Ranch Estate Pinot Noir.

Spring Vineyard Walk & Scavenger Hunt

April 23, 2017

Time: 11:00 am-1:30 pm

Cost: \$40-\$45

Buttonwood Farm Winery & Vineyard, Solvang, Santa Barbara County

805/688-3032, karen@buttonwoodwinery.com

Search this sustainably farmed vineyard for scavenger items, ending with prizes, brunch and wine.

SIERRA FOOTHILLS

Farm to Glass Tour

April 1-30, 2017

Time: 11:00 am

Cost: \$10

Vino Noceto, Plymouth, Amador County

Tour a sustainable vineyard, following the grapes from the vines to the bottle.

El Dorado Passport

April 22-23 and 29-30, 2017

Time: Varies

Cost: \$20-\$95

Venues throughout El Dorado County

916/862-0956, passport@eldoradowines.org

Access to 20+ participating wineries, some committed to sustainable growing and winemaking practices.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Ponte Winery Vineyard Estate Tour

April 1-30, 2017

Time: Varies

Cost: \$32-\$40

Ponte Winery, Temecula, Riverside County

951/694-8855, info@pontewinery.com

Tour a sustainable, working winery by electric bus.

South Coast Winery Behind the Scenes Tour

April 1-30, 2017

Time: 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm

South Coast Winery Resort & Spa, Temecula, Riverside County

Cost: \$40

951/587-9463

Our Behind the Scenes tour takes our guests on a 60-minute walking tour, from our California Sustainable vineyards to crush pad, followed by a 30-minute food and wine pairing.

Vineyard Tour and Olive Oil Tasting

April 2, 2017

Time: 1:00 pm

Cost: \$10

Ramona Ranch Vineyard & Winery, Ramona, San Diego County

760/789-1622

Join us for a walking tour of the vineyard, discussing the importance of sustainability on viticulture, then sample Ramona Gold Olive Oil and learn what it takes to pass the laboratory criteria and tasting panel analysis from the California Olive Oil Council, while you sample local wines.

VinDiego Wine and Food Festival

April 8, 2017

Time: 3:00 pm-7:00 pm

Cost: \$95-\$135

NTC Liberty Station, San Diego

760/805-2131, david@vindiego.com

Known as the largest wine tasting in San Diego, the event offers guests a chance to sip among hundreds of California's finest award-winning wines and enjoy gourmet bites and live music.

Blessing of the Vines

April 30, 2017

Time: 3:00 pm

South Coast Winery Resort & Spa, Temecula, Riverside County

Cost: Contact the winery, 951/587-9463

This fun event includes great wines, a buffet of farm-to-table locally-sourced food, unlimited games with vine-based prizes and tours through the sustainable vineyards.

From Garbage to Garden: Backyard Composting

April 30, 2017

Time: 12:00 noon

Ramona Ranch Vineyard & Winery, Ramona, San Diego County

Cost: Free

760/789-1622

Our Sustainability Director, Megan, is offering a fun, hands-on, how-to class on backyard composting and transforming kitchen waste into organic fertilizer with worms! Learn how to start, maintain and harvest an organic composting system and how to build a worm composting bin.

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