



Cattleya Wines Is One of Sonoma County's Most Unusual Tasting Experiences

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Colombian-born winemaker Bibiana González Rave pairs small-production Sonoma County wines with freshly roasted coffee sourced from her homeland.

Wine and coffee have a lot in common. Grapes and coffee beans both undergo fermentation during processing, and their origin, growing conditions and handling all play a significant role in shaping the final product. In the glass or cup, each can reveal layers of aroma, flavor and texture. At Cattleya Wines in Rohnert Park, visitors can explore both worlds under one roof.

The Story

Bibiana González Rave grew up in Medellín, Colombia, during a period when the city was synonymous with the violence of Pablo Escobar's drug cartel. Kidnappings and bombings were a part of daily life. Though she was not raised among the vines, her father enjoyed wine with dinner, and as a teenager she became fascinated by the complexity she found in the occasional sip from his glass.





Determined to become a winemaker, Rave moved to France to study viticulture and enology. She worked at estates in Burgundy, Alsace and Cognac before eventually settling in California. In 2011, she founded Cattleya Wines, named for Colombia's national flower (pronounced "cat-LAY-yah"). The winery focuses on single-vineyard and single-appellation Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

Rave later expanded her portfolio with Alma de Cattleya, a more affordable line of Sonoma County wines, and Shared Notes, a Sauvignon Blanc-focused collaboration with her husband, winemaker Jeff Pisoni.

Wine is not her only beverage passion. In 2019, Rave began importing fair-trade green coffee beans from Colombia. She initially partnered with a local roaster before installing a small roaster at her winery in Rohnert Park. The Shared Notes coffee label borrows principles from the wine world, emphasizing balance, acidity and site-specific character.

The vibe

Cattleya is not the sort of winery visitors stumble upon while touring Sonoma County. There are no vineyards on site, and

few clues from the street suggest what is inside. The winery occupies an unmarked building in an office park near Graton Resort & Casino.

The ground floor houses a compact production facility and coffee roaster, while the offices and tasting area are upstairs. Tastings take place around a long communal table in a bright, modern space overlooking the winery below.

On the palate

Balance and precision define Rave's wines across all three labels.

The 2023 Alma de Cattleya Sonoma County Pinot Noir (\$35) is light-bodied, with aromas of pencil shavings and flavors of bright summer cherries. Fans of Bordeaux-style whites are sure to appreciate the Shared Notes 2024 Les Leçons des Maîtres (\$95) from Russian River Valley. A blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon, the wine is fresh and tangy, with floral aromas and zesty citrus and stone-fruit flavors.

For a real showstopper, try the Cattleya 2024 "The Goddess" Pinot Noir (\$125) from the West Sonoma Coast. It has intoxicating aromas of dark fruit and violets, and a complex profile of raspberries, blueberries and a hint of earthiness.



Cattleya hosts just two visits daily (\$75), each including a private tour of the winery's lab, cellar and barrel rooms, followed by a seated tasting of five wines.

Guests can also add a \$35 coffee cupping experience, an introduction to the method professionals use to evaluate freshly roasted coffee. Participants compare Shared Notes coffees, roasted from light to dark, assessing their aromas before tasting them with hot water. Each visitor leaves with a 12-ounce bag of their preferred roast.

I'm not usually a big coffee drinker — the stuff at local chains usually tastes bitter and burnt to me — but Rave's roasts are like her wines: smooth and balanced.

Beyond the bottle

For another hidden gem in Rohnert Park, check out Vinoma. The takeout shop shares a parking lot with a Shell gas station, but inside, pastry-wrapped treasures await in the form of Argentine-style empanadas. There are lots of tasty meat-filled and vegetarian options to mix and match. Eat your empanadas at one of the small tables out front or take a box along for the ride — they're extra delicious with wine.

