

10 Sustainable Wineries to Support on Earth Day and All Year Long

BY MARGOT MAZUR



THE VINEYARDS AT HIYU WINE FARM / PHOTO COURTESY OF HIYU WINE FARM

The term “**sustainable**” can have many different meanings depending on whom you’re speaking with.

Thanks to the myriad wine certifications and styles out there, terms like “organic” or “natural” can be confusing. From **SIP Certified to Certified California Sustainable**, there are many ways for makers to assert themselves as environmentally friendly.

According to **WordStream by LOCALiQ**, interest in organic and sustainable wine has soared, with the U.S. reaching more than 17,000 searches per month on the topic. Winemakers around the world are hearing the call—the organic wine market is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 10.2% from **2022 to 2030**.

Organic and sustainable wines are filling up more and more glasses, and many bottles are big on flavor. Here's a guide to 10 to try.

10 Sustainable Wineries to Explore

Macari Vineyards

Mattituck, New York



COMPOST PILES AT MACARI VINEYARDS / PHOTOS COURTESY OF MACARI VINEYARDS.

In its 27 years of existence, **Macari Vineyards** has never used chemical herbicides. The company makes its own compost and doesn't irrigate its vines, enriching the soil and saving water in the process.

“We recently worked with Christopher Gobler [professor at] **Stony Brook University** to add locally grown kelp to our compost,” says Gabriella Macari, general manager of Macari Vineyards. “Kelp extracts nitrogen and phosphorus from our seas and helps restore our ecosystem. When added to compost, it acts as a natural fertilizer that restores our vines and soil.”

For Macari, sustainability means constant innovation. “Our entire team is constantly thinking about what we can do better. We're looking into solar, tank insulation [and] reusable glass—it's a never-ending process but we're proud of how far we've come.”

Bottle to Try: **Life Force Sauvignon Blanc**

La Montañuela

Bethel, Vermont



TRUNK PASTE MADE OF HORN, MANURE, STINGING NETTLE, HORSETAIL, AND CLAY AROUND THE VINES AT LA MONTAÑUELA 'LA LUZ' / PHOTO COURTESY OF LA MONTAÑUELA

Camila Carrillo of **La Montañuela** prioritizes regenerative practices in her vineyard, using **biodynamic**, organic and regenerative methods to care for her vines. These methods eschew chemical herbicides or pesticides in the vineyards, opting instead for plant-based trunk pastes and sprays.

“The trunk paste is horn manure, stinging nettle, horsetail and clay which creates this white paste that attracts sunlight, which is healing for the vines and promotes new growth,” says Carrillo. “Sustainability to me involves a mission to farm responsibly, to heal and to create abundance.”

Bottle to try: [Onda de Luz](#)

Hiyu Wine Farm

Hood River, Oregon



CHICKENS AT HIYU WINE FARM / PHOTO COURTESY HIYU WINE FARM

Hiyu Wine Farm is a mixed farm with animals who help with vineyard management by noshing on grass and helping to create compost.

Its farming practices center on permaculture and sustainability.

The winery focuses on organic and biodynamic methods, makes its own compost, uses natural yeasts for fermentation and doesn't irrigate. The wines themselves aim to transport drinkers to pastoral wine country, and the Columbia Valley Red contains a blend of over 50 varieties.

Bottle to try: **Columbia Valley Red**

Flowers Vineyard & Winery

Healdsburg, California



VINEYARD AND COVER CROP AT FLOWERS VINEYARD & WINERY / PHOTO COURTESY OF FLOWERS VINEYARD & WINERY

Sonoma winemaker **Chantal Forthun** is passionate about crafting Pinot Noir from high-elevation vineyards and old vines. Forthun uses biodynamic practices, like silica sprays made from quartz, to help manage her vineyards.

“We’re using organics, using very prescribed cover crops [and] pruning in such a specific way that we’re not pushing the plants to have too much yield,” says Forthun.

Bottle to Try: **2020 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir**

Ellsworth Wines

Nevada County, California



SHEEP IN THE VINEYARDS AT ELLSWORTH WINES / PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLSWORTH WINES

Bryn Molloy and Jeffrey Sherwood, duo winemakers out of **California's** Nevada County, focus on seeing the vineyard as a complete ecosystem.

“Our no-till and dry-farming [farming with no irrigation during dry season] approach allows the clay soils to retain rainwater for the vines to access all year,” says Molloy. “Our goal in every vineyard is to leave it better than we found it, which requires rehabilitation and thoughtful farming. We do not use fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides, synthetic or organic, in our vineyards.”

Bottle to try: 2020 Zinfandel/Petite Sirah

Oyster River Winegrowers

Warren, Maine

Brian Smith of **Oyster River Winegrowers** is producing bottles in an up-and-coming American wine region—Maine. This dedicated winemaker used to use a horse for all his vineyard work but switched to a tractor in 2017.

His sparkling wine, Chaos, a blend of organic hybrid grapes **La Crescent** and **Vidal Blanc**, is unfinned and unsulfured, a beautiful expression of what **Maine** has to offer.

Bottle to try: **2018 Chaos**

Matthiasson

Napa Valley, California



2020 ROSE BY MATTHIASSEN WINES / PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHIASSEN WINES

In addition to focusing on environmental pursuits like planting native California grasses, limiting water use and pursuing healthy soil, Winemaker Steve Matthiasson also prioritizes the wellness of his employees. Unlike many wineries, **Matthiasson** employs vineyard workers all year, offers health insurance, holds internships and provides educational opportunities.

Bottle to try: 2021 Rosé

Bloomer Creek Vineyard

Hector, New York

Kim Engle, winemaker at **Bloomer Creek**, wants to make wine the old-school way. Sustainability in his vineyard means using buckwheat, rye and clover for cover crops, seaweed and fish compost, and forgoing herbicides and insecticides.

Instead of using chemical sprays, Engle uses the Scott-Henry training system pruning method to ensure maximum air flow through the vines, mitigating fungal and mildew issues common in the Finger Lakes region.

Bottle to try: **Tanzen Dame Riesling**

Soter Vineyards

Carlton, Oregon

“The team at **Soter Vineyards**, led by winemaker Chris Fladwood, not only make incredible Pinot Noir and sparkling wine but they are also LIVE certified as well as biodynamic,” says Derrin Abac, general manager at **Spago Maui**. “From reducing the amount of water usage to using organic material in their winemaking process, they are always conscious of reducing their carbon footprint.”

Bottle to try: **2014 Mineral Springs Blanc de Blancs**

Sipwell

San Diego, California

Sipwell owner Hilary Cocalis is dedicated to sustainability in packaging, shipping and her line of canned wines.

“Right now, our minimum is that it has to be sustainably farmed,” says Cocalis.

“Either SIP Certified or some sort of sustainable certification. The reality is that it’s much lighter to ship, and aluminum cans are infinitely recyclable—that’s important to me and my business.”

Bottle to Try: **Tiny Victories Sparkling Wine**

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