

featured flight of the month

peju, napa valley, california

\$35 per wine flight and \$20 cheese pairing

Napa Valley didn't become Napa Valley overnight. The region has spent decades figuring out which grapes truly belong here, and Bordeaux varietals turned out to be some of the most natural fits. Warm afternoons ripen fruit fully, cool evenings preserve acidity, and the long growing season gives wines both richness and structure. That balance is what built Napa's reputation.

Peju Winery sits in Rutherford, right in the center of the valley, where some of Napa's most recognizable Cabernet-based wines come from. The winery was founded in 1983 by Tony and Herta Peju and remains family-owned today, something that's increasingly rare in Napa as large corporations have moved into the region. From the beginning, the goal wasn't just to make powerful wines, but wines that feel polished and complete — the kind that make sense both on their own and at the table.

Rutherford itself plays a big role in that identity. The area is known for its well-drained gravelly soils and a climate that consistently ripens Bordeaux varieties without pushing them too far. Cabernet Sauvignon is the grape most people associate with the area, but Merlot and Cabernet Franc thrive here as well, developing layered fruit, fine tannins, and a recognizable sense of structure that Napa drinkers look for.

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2024 sauvignon blanc [*stainless + neutral oak*]

\$16|~~\$58~~



grapefruit • white peach • river stone

Vibrant Sauvignon Blanc with lemon zest, grapefruit, and ripe white peach, backed by a little pineapple and a stony edge that keeps everything crisp. The texture is light but not thin, with a clean, mouthwatering finish that keeps the fruit feeling bright rather than sweet. Aged in stainless steel, the wine stays focused and energetic, letting the citrus and orchard fruit carry the palate.

Peju has been family-owned in Rutherford since 1983, working with Bordeaux varieties that thrive in Napa Valley's warm days and cool evenings. While Cabernet often gets the attention, Sauvignon Blanc has long been part of the valley's story, showing how Napa can deliver both ripe fruit and real freshness in the same glass.

Fun Fact: Sauvignon Blanc naturally produces aromatic compounds called methoxypyrazines, which are responsible for the herbal notes people associate with the grape — things like basil, lemongrass, and sometimes even a hint of jalapeño.

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2022 merlot [*french + american oak*]

\$40|\$144



black plum • cocoa • velvety

Plush Merlot with black plum, ripe cherry, and blackberry layered with cocoa, vanilla, and warm baking spice. The texture is soft and velvety through the middle, but there is enough structure underneath to keep the wine composed and balanced. The 2022 vintage brought generous fruit in Napa, and this wine spent about 16 months in French and American oak, roughly 40% new, which adds polish and depth while letting the dark fruit stay expressive.

As Napa Valley began gaining international attention in the late 1970s and early 1980s, producers started focusing on the Bordeaux varieties that performed best in the region's climate. Merlot quickly proved it could thrive here, developing generous fruit and a softer texture while still holding the structure that Napa wines became known for.

Fun Fact: The name 'Merlot' comes from the French word *merle*, meaning blackbird, a reference to the grape's deep color and the birds that are famously fond of the fruit.

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2022 cabernet sauvignon [*french + american oak*]

\$30|\$108



blackberry • cocoa • firm tannins

Classic Napa Cabernet with blackberry, cassis, and dark cherry layered with cocoa, toasted oak, and a little clove spice. The texture is full and structured, with tannins that give the wine shape without feeling harsh. The wine spends about 19 months in French and American oak, roughly 40% new, which adds the cocoa and baking-spice notes while rounding the edges of the tannins and letting the dark fruit stay front and center.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the famous 1976 'Judgment of Paris', the blind tasting that occurred, less than a decade before Peju was founded, where Napa Valley Cabernets stunned the wine world by beating top Bordeaux. That moment helped establish Napa as one of the great Cabernet regions on the planet.

Fun Fact: The winning Napa Cabernet in the tasting was from Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, a result that shocked the French judges and instantly changed global perceptions of California wine.