

Sunset

NAPA VALLEY NEWCOMERS

Annulus

After years in non-wine careers, Napa Valley residents Luke Evnin and Deann Wright have pursued their wine dream with the launch of their Annulus label. Luke, a life science venture capitalist focused on cancer research, and Deann, an attorney and medical researcher specializing in rare autoimmune diseases, have always envisioned a family wine endeavor. Thanks to their exceptional winemaking team and vineyard sources, their dream is now a reality with the debut of a trio of 2021 Cabernet Sauvignons.

Their winemaking journey has been guided by notable figures like their late neighbor Barbara Eisele and acclaimed winemaker Nigel Kinsman, whose commitment to historic vineyards aligns with Evnin and Wright's vision. Kinsman's classical approach emphasizes purity of fruit and vineyard expression, resulting in wines that reflect their unique origins rather than a standardized style.

Annulus wines are crafted from two distinct heritage vineyards: Vine Hill Ranch in Oakville, a vineyard that produces fruit with fine tannins and rich aromatics, and Beckstoffer Las Piedras, planted in the 1840s as the first vineyard in St. Helena. Its gravelly soil, known as "Las Piedras" or "the stones," contributes to its distinctive wine character.

Annulus' debut wines include the 2021 Beckstoffer Las Piedras Cabernet Sauvignon (\$250), featuring dark fruit and minerality; the 2021 Vine Hill Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon (\$250), with cranberries, chocolate, and a complex fruit profile; and the 2021 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (\$175), known for its blueberry, plum, and sage notes. These wines are crafted at Wheeler Farms in St. Helena, with blending expertise from Consulting Oenologist Michel Rolland.



ANNULUS