

STROLL & SIP

Explore Scottsdale's walkable wine trail

Arizona's wine industry is growing by leaps and bounds, but given the grapes are primarily grown in the southern and northern areas of the state, it can be hard to "sip local." That's where Old Town Scottsdale's wine trail comes into play, featuring several tasting rooms just a short walk from one another.

BY ALISON BAILIN BATZ



Merkin Vineyards Old Town

Merkin serves wines from Merkin Vineyards and Caduceus Cellars, both founded by Maynard James Keenan, who is also known for his music career as the front man for Tool, A Perfect Circle, and Puscifer. Both brands make high-elevation wines in the tradition of Spain and Italy. The tasting room offers wine by the glass and bottle as well as Arizona craft beers and non-alcoholic options, plus an impressive food menu. There is also a storefront that features both brands, Keenan's Puscifer label, and select bottles from sister Arizona wineries for purchase. www.merkinoldtownscottsdale.com.

LDV Winery

Along the Scottsdale Waterfront in the former Herb Box space, and in walking distance from Merkin, the LDV Winery tasting room brings a piece of LDV's vineyard – located near the Chiricahua Mountains in southeastern Arizona – to the heart of Old Town. LDV Winery specializes in wines produced from Rhone-varietal grapes including viognier, grenache, syrah, and petite sirah. The tasting room offers several flight options as well as wines by the glass, bottle and for purchase. There are also snacks and cheese plates for purchase as well as regular events. www.ldvwinery.com.

Carlson Creek

Located near Merkin and LDV, this hot spot is one of three tasting rooms from the family-owned boutique winery Carlson Creek Vineyard. The 2,300-square-foot space, which was previously an art gallery and still shows the works of artists each month, offers guests the opportunity to taste more than a dozen of its varietals ranging from chardonnay, sauvignon blanc and muscat to sangiovese, mourvedre and grenache rosé. For pairing, cheese boards are also available with an assortment of artisan cheeses, meats, marinated olives, nuts and dried fruits. www.carlsoncreek.com.

Aridus Wine Company

Aridus Wine Company, which is headquartered in Willcox, made headlines last year when it was named among the top hot brands by Wine Business Monthly. Its growing location – in the Chiricahua Hills appellation – was of particular interest to the judging panel as well as its proactive work toward becoming an entirely estate-sourced operation. The modern tasting room currently offers tasting flights that focus on wines made using a blend of the best of Old World and New World styles as well as snacks and charcuterie boxes. www.ariduswineco.com.

Salvatore Vineyards Scottsdale

This tasting room and brand is owned by the Domanico family, whose roots are in Sicily and mainland Italy. The family, who also own the Passion Cellars label, grows its grapes in Willcox, and the vineyard is known for its crisp, fruit-forward white wines and complex red wines. At the tasting room, guests can mix and match flights with both Passion Cellars and Salvatore options (generally the reserve wines are under the Salvatore brand) and pair them with cheese plates. www.passioncellars.com.