

## Fiddlehead Cellars opens tasting room

Late the afternoon of Aug. 4, I made my first wine-tasting foray to Lompoc. For some time now I've been aware of the city's wine 'ghetto,' located in an industrial area near the intersection of Highways 1 and 246, but I confess: I hadn't ventured forth. Silly me.

On this particular Friday I limited myself to Kathy Joseph's Fiddlehead Cellars. The winemaker recently opened a small but cozy tasting room in a corner of Fiddlehead's massive warehouse off East Chestnut Avenue.

The tasting room is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, as well as by appointment.

A wine buyer visiting from New York City walked in on my heels, and the two of us listened to a Fiddlehead employee detail the winery's growing regions and appellations as he poured us tastes. Winemaker Joseph focuses her talents just on pinot noir (Santa Rita Hills and Willamette Valley, Oregon) and sauvignon blanc (Santa Ynez Valley), and the wines are exquisite.

In addition to producing top-rated wines, Joseph likes to have fun with her product. Consider the names of certain Fiddlehead varietals: 'Pinkie,' or Pink Fiddle, a 'playful' 2005 pinot noir rose with grapes from Fiddlestix vineyard on Santa Rosa Road. Or 'Sweetie,' a late-harvest sauvignon blanc with a hint of Muscat blanc. Another Fiddlehead wine is the rare pinot noir 'Doyle,' named after her husband, her 'Sweetie,' Joseph explains.

The grapes in Sweetie came from Vogelzang vineyards in the Santa Ynez Valley, 'a haven for sauvignon blanc," notes Joseph on her Web site. Other vineyards from which Joseph culls grapes are Stolpman and Westerly, and Fiddlehead Cellars' own Fiddlestix Vineyard. This site is located on Santa Rosa Road, in the heart of Santa Rita Hills and where excellent pinot noir factors of soil and climate meet.

Along with many other vintners, Joseph will participate in the Celebration of Harvest Oct. 14, with a special tasting event the next day, Sunday. The Annual Library Tasting and Sale, at 'Fiddle Headquarters' in Lompoc, will see Joseph and her staff pulling out older treasures for tasting and purchase.

The library tasting will be open to the public from 1 to 4 p.m., and will include appetizers to complement the wines.

Information: [www.fiddleheadcellars.com](http://www.fiddleheadcellars.com), (530) 756-4550, 1597 E. Chestnut Ave., Lompoc.

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