

S B L S

Santa Barbara Life & Style Magazine

September/October 2020



LOCAL ESCAPES

2021 Jaguar F-Type Convertible



Written by Tyler Drinkwater
Photographed by Silas Fallstich

While jet setting is off the table for the moment, creative, and safe getaways can be found—figuratively and literally—in your backyard. My wife and I were craving an experience outside of drinking wine at home. We're both cautious and haven't ventured out since quarantine began. Upon hearing Folded Hills Winery and Farmstead offers socially distant sipping in their vast outdoor setting, we dress up for the occasion, hop into the Jaguar F-Type convertible, and set out for a scenic ride to the vineyard.

What better way to put the 380 horsepower drop-top to use than a quick jaunt up the PCH? The sun shining, the sea breeze rustling through the open cabin make it easy to forget that we are in isolation.

Our destination is tucked away in Gaviota, which translates to seagull in Spanish. Here sits the 600-acre family estate. The pristine property is the vision of husband and wife Andy and Kim Busch. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri the Busch family

moved to Santa Barbara in 2002 and purchased the ranch in 2004. Andy and Kim fell in love with Santa Barbara while Andy was captain of the US Men's Polo team in 1998 playing in Santa Barbara for the summer. When Andy retired from professional polo it was farm life he desired.

Cut to the family setting up Folded Hills Winery on land that had been a vineyard site prior to Prohibition. The family dug into the soil (pun intended) and learned as much as they could about what would grow best. It was not the more famed and recognizable varieties of Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, or Pinot Noir. Rather it was the varieties from the Rhône Valley in France such as Grenache, Syrah, Grenache Blanc, Marsanne, and Clairette Blanche. In total the estate features 12 acres of red varietals and 3 acres of white varietals.

In keeping with the exceptional pedigree of the estate, Folded Hills wines are free from residual sugar, entirely made vegan, use only native yeasts, and are farmed organically following the biodynamic calendar.

SUNWIND & WINE

A quick getaway to Folded Hills Winery & Farmstead for good views and even better wine



Andy says he had been a beer drinker up until starting the vineyard; no doubt due to his family's legacy in the beer world. After all, Andy is the fourth generation—Adolphus Busch is Andy's great-grandfather—of the Anheuser-Busch family. What better way to pay homage to his family legacy of alcohol and horses than by stabling a couple of the famous Budweiser Clydesdales—named Gus and Dolph, both 18.2 hands and 2400 lbs—on the property behind the vineyard, kept company by Little Joe, Andy's prized polo pony.

We traverse the expanse of the ranch on a 6-person UTV; the obvious highlights are the stunning tasting room, rustic farmstead—which sells produce from the 18 acres of row crops on the ranch—next to the small stables housing llamas, pigs, and goats, as well as the vineyards, pastures, polo field, and boathouse for the private lake on property. Each corner of the property is as perfectly kept and manicured as if it were ready to be snapped for a Ralph Lauren photoshoot, which has taken place on the grounds.

A small private tasting awaits us on the dock of the lake where we sit and chat with Andy. He speaks of the natural beauty of the property and his early morning ritual of watching the sunrise with coffee on

his deck overlooking the polo field and lake. As we talk, we sip the rose gold "Lilly" Rosé named after Lilly Anheuser who married Adolphus Busch in 1861.

Winemaker Angela Osborne of "A Tribute to Grace" was responsible for crafting the stunning Rhône style wines which are part of our tasting. Each wine is varietally specific with unique character and excitement making each sip of each label more fun than one previously. Just as picture perfect as the property, the wines stand up and deliver their own version of elegance.

After making our way to feed Zazu the zebra and meandering through the cattle that roam the ranch freely, we return to the farmstead for some home-baked treats and to retrieve our car. I can't help but think about the majesty of the Clydesdales with their inherent power masked in quiet sophistication, a perfect analogy for the Jaguar convertible. We had just seen what two horse power looks like in animal form, now it's time to feel what 380 horsepower feels like in engineering. *

foldedhills.com

“Just as picture perfect as the property, the wines stand up and deliver their own version of elegance.”

