

## Wine tour Cottonwood: Alcantara

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Take a large swath of volcanically-coated Verde Valley land near two flowing bodies of water, with a deep rock underlayment of limestone, add irrigation, plant grapes, work really hard, spend beaucoup bucks, and you have conditions that “a French winemaker would die for”, says owner Barbara Predmore. This is [Alcantara Vineyards](#).

Situated at the end of a dirt road that is accessed off Route 260 between Cottonwood and I-17, this

winery/vineyard is one of several Verde Valley operations that have garnered public attention over the past several years. Now that the fruit is becoming more mature and starting to yield significant harvests, the true nature of the [local terroir](#) is beginning to shine. This is a “must stop” for a real down-home wine tasting experience.

Actually, the tasting room is a house and is one of those interesting Southwest haciendas that immediately makes you feel comfortable. Pull up a stool at the kitchen bar or taste out on the patio, it doesn't matter. It's all a perfect setting for relaxing contemplation of the grape and ideally should be the last stop of the day because you won't want to leave.

Since they also own property in Edna Valley California, not all the fruit that goes into their wines is local, but this is clearly shown on the tasting menu and also provides an excellent way to contrast Alcantara's wines. By using some of the California selections as a basis for comparison, it is possible to see just how far these Arizona wines have come. Make note of this and select accordingly.

An interesting flight to try is all whites. It includes varietals such as Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, Viognier, and Sauvignon Blanc, but these will vary according to availability. There is enough variety and power just in these to keep the taste buds going and challenge your powers of expression. The variations in flavor, alcohol levels, and character are enough to keep just about anyone interested. Only true champs will want to go on to the reds after these.

But if you are a red wine fan, be sure to check out the 2007 Nebbiolo (\$35). This one is sourced from California fruit and is one of those American-Italians that just came out perfect. It has a soft bouquet of earthy berries and follows through on the palate with a fine tannic structure

that only a these grapes can provide. It provides an interesting contrast to their other reds, so keep some in the glass to return to.

Enjoy this beautiful example of a developing Arizona property and take a bit of the Verde Valley right on home.