

# ENOFYLZ Wine Blog

## A Taste of @DateNightWine with Phifer Pavitt

December 26, 2014  
Martin D. Redmond

I recently received a couple of wine samples from Napa Valley based **Phifer Pavitt Winery**. **It's a winery that's completely new to me.**

I don't know why, but coming across new to me wineries is always a bit of a surprise. That's because...well...I'm a promiscuous wine lover that "gets around" so to speak. Between my daily consumption, my travels in the wine blog-o-sphere, wine country travel, trade tastings and receiving samples, I taste hundreds, upon hundreds of wines annually. Furthermore, I'm familiar with many more by word of mouth, and/or reputation.

Despite my vinous promiscuity, I really shouldn't be surprised. There probably 600-700 wineries where I live in Northern California. So, it should be a surprise when come across a new to me winery.

Good thing I love a good surprise! It's very exciting for me to try new to me wine because I don't have any preconceived notion about the winery or wines on way or another.

Here's the 411 on Phifer Pavitt...

**From the Winery...** [Phifer Pavitt Winery](#) *is a dream of Suzanne Phifer and Shane Pavitt, who purchased twenty-three acres on Silverado Trail in 1999. Over the course of several years of 'date nights,' the couple hatched the idea of their own Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon in 2005. The winery opened in November 2010 and is housed in a historic "Napa Valley vernacular" barn, with a board-and batten façade and metal roof, nestled into a scenic spot looking out over views of Napa Valley. The barn was found in nearby Franz Valley where it was situated for more than 100 years before being relocated to its current home. The barn was 'repurposed' into a winery; repurposing has become a dominant theme. Suzanne and Shane work to reduce the winery's carbon footprint and preserve natural resources. The decor includes numerous eco-chic elements, including reclaimed barbed wire 'chandeliers,' recycled blue jean insulation, recycled Wyoming snow-fencing paneling, a 1946 Farmall tractor and a walnut slab suspended from the*

*ceiling in the upstairs tasting room. The latest addition to the tasting room consists of four salvaged large wood slab tables.*

Phifer Pavitt produces two wines – the Date Night Cabernet Sauvignon, and Sauvignon Blanc. They source their fruit from several Napa Valley vineyards. Until this year, when a second source near the town of Yountville was added, the Cab was sourced from **Temple Family Vineyards’ Lakespring Ranch in Pope Valley. The Lakespring Ranch vineyard is farmed organically.** The Sauvignon Blanc grapes are sourced from the **sustainably farmed** Juliana Vineyards, also in Pope Valley. They have plans to produce a sparkling wine in the future.

Their annual case production is about 1,450 cases. They are open for tours and tastings Mondays – Saturdays by appointment only at 11:00a.m. or 1:00 p.m., at a cost of \$40/person.

## The Wines

# 2013 Phifer Pavitt Sauvignon Blanc Date Night

Phifer Pavitt’s first vintage of the Sauvignon Blanc was 2010. This wine is made in a Bordeaux Blanc style. The hand-picked fruit was whole-cluster pressed, and the wine was fermented in stainless steel utilizing two special yeast strains particularly suited to enhancing the Sancerre-like qualities of the fruit. The lees were stirred weekly for five months. No malolactic fermentation was allowed. **Retail – \$30; abv – 14.5%**



**My tasting notes follow:**

Pale golden color with peach, key lime, grapefruit, guava and subtle grassy aromas. On the palate, it's medium-bodied with a very pleasing supple texture and very good acidity. It shows delicious guava, key lime, peach, and a hint of grapefruit flavors, and a lingering sweet finish.

**Rating: A-**

## **2011 Phifer Pavitt Cabernet Sauvignon Date Night**

Phifer Pavitt has been producing their Cabernet Sauvignon since 2005. This vintage of a blend of 98% Cabernet Sauvignon and 2% Petit Verdot. After fermentation on native yeasts, the wine was aged 18 months in 75% new 225 Liter French Oak barrels. Bottled unfiltered and unfined. **Retail – \$80; abv – 14.5%**



**My tasting note follows:**

Ruby color with lifted, very appealing cassis, black cherry, violets, tobacco, caramel, sweet spice aromas, along hints of eucalyptus, and cedarwood. On the palate, it's medium-bodied, persistent and fresh with a silky texture and black cherry, plum, cassis, graphite, tobacco, and spice flavors. Long finish.

**Rating; A** - These are charming, delicious well-made wines worth checking out, especially the Cab!

*Follow my reviews on [Vivino](#)*

*Wines were provided as samples for review. Many thanks to Phifer Pavitt and Julie Ann Kodmur.*

**Ratings Key:**

(A+) – 95-100/Extraordinary

**(A) – 92-95/Outstanding**

**(A-) – 89-91/Very Good to Outstanding**

**(B+) – 86-88/Very good**

**(B) – 80-85/Good**

**(C) – 70-79/Bleh**

**(D) – 50-69/#Fail**