

PHIFER PAVITT WINE + ROQUE NAPA : A CREATIVE COLLABORATION

JANUARY 25, 2016 | PASSION



As Found + Gathered ventures into a new year, we are excited to push the concept of creative collaborations. With our new city hosts, gathering series and new makers, designers, artists and companies to feature, we have some lovely ventures on the horizon! We are thrilled to introduce a pair of amazing women who took their own businesses and came together to form a unique, bright and chic partnership.

Suzanne Phifer Pavitt and her husband (self proclaimed “city boy” and “country girl”) started Phifer Pavitt Wine, an “eco-chic winery” off their lovely estate in Napa. This business venture was realized over one of their many once weekly, decision-making “date nights,” which ultimately inspired their Date Night wines. Their two current wine releases are the Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc, which were handcrafted by Phifer Pavitt’s renowned Napa Valley winemakers, Ted Osborne and Gary Warburton. Ted and Gary’s passion for consistently pushing the wine quality to new heights has resulted in outstanding reviews in such periodicals as Wine Spectator.



Raquel Bickford is the owner and Creative Director of Roque, based in Napa Valley. Driven by a desire to create, ROQUE Napa Events are unique visions that come to life in one of the most stunning destinations in the world. Raquel has spent years creating a detailed process that helps her clients develop a vision efficiently and beautifully. After graduating from FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design + Merchandising) and working with international brands, she returned to her home of Napa Valley to bring together her passions of event design and hospitality. For her, the success of ROQUE is built upon dreams realized.

F+G: Found + Gathered is all about the concept of creative collaboration. In a collaboration like this, you both have entirely separate businesses, yet come together and create something so enterprising and unique. Can you touch on the importance of being dynamic women in creative business/endeavors today?

Suzanne and Raquel: As female business owners, we have been delighted at the amount of women in business that are gathering together to assist, connect and uplift one another in their ventures! Suzanne and I really work well together on bringing elevated experiences to life at her Calistoga winery + estate. We are in a dynamic industry, it is with embracing and creating change that our businesses will thrive and stand out from the rest. I am in constant motion, creating space to devote to my business. Being dynamic women for us means making a difference in the clients we serve.



F+G: Roque and Phifer Pavitt Wines both strive to shine in the details. Tell us more about the concept of an “ecochic winery” and being eco conscious in the wine industry. What kind of experience is this (for both events held here and operations of running the winery)?

Suzanne and Raquel: The production of ecofriendly wines has increased dramatically over the last few years. We love seeing client’s reactions as they walk into the Phifer Pavitt Winery. The decor includes numerous ecochic elements, including reclaimed fencing wire ‘chandeliers,’ recycled blue jean insulation, recycled Wyoming snowfencing paneling, a large finished slab of black walnut tree suspended from the ceiling in the upstairs tasting room and a 1946 Farmall tractor just outside the barn. The latest addition to the tasting room consists of four salvaged large wood tables. Repurposing has become a dominant theme. Suzanne and Shane work to reduce the winery’s carbon footprint and preserve natural resources. We have such a blast producing elevated experiences in the winery that are designed to showcase rustic elegance.



F+G: How does that influence the versatility of Roque events when focusing on the green details. Are some of your designs tailored to be “green”?

Suzanne and Raquel: Completely! As a graduate of FIDM, I love chic designs. Working with Phifer Pavitt Wines has pushed me to create more eco-friendly design concepts for the experiences we produce. I love largerthanlife events filled with highlystylized details, which provides more opportunities to create ecochic designs. I’m obsessed with signage designs and invitation suites, which we often repurpose and tailor to be “green.”



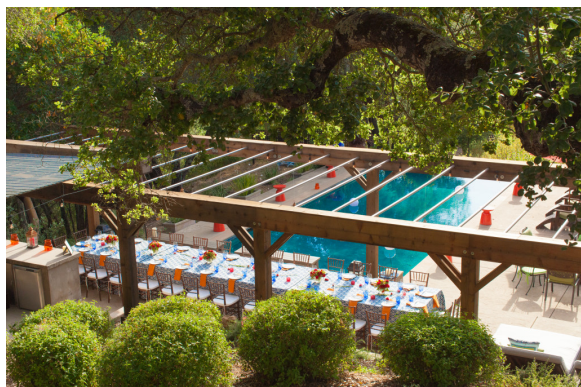
F+G: Suzanne, going into the wine industry, did you know you wanted to incorporate events into the mix as well or is it something that just fell into place?

Suzanne and Raquel: I am all about crafting experiences that endear guests to our wine. Creating memories is very important to me so when Raquel and I partnered, it was the perfect match to create my vision at the winery.

F+G: Being farm fresh and local, as well as versatile and budget friendly are all things Roque and Phifer Pavitt uniquely combine to create such special events. Tell us more about the behindthe-scenes operations of this kind of partnership.

Suzanne and Raquel: Raquel actually pursued me and convinced me that I was this hidden

gem in the industry. Raquel is a key ambassador in the event world so I am honored to have this amazing partnership with her. She provides me with insight into the industry through guidance with not just events, but with marketing and business opportunities as well. We share the same goals. We strive to produce memories that are created with intention and are elegantly approached.



F+G: What is the best part about being located in wine country? (Napa, Calistoga respectively)

Suzanne and Raquel: There are so many things I love about Napa, all of which I draw inspiration from. The rolling hills, vineyard rows as far as the eye could see, the colors of the seasons changing and the fact that I get to call this place home. Napa is a haven of Michelin starred restaurants. Some of my favorite dining memories are at the two 3 Michelin Starred Napa Restaurants The French Laundry and The Restaurant at Meadowood. The chefs are really producing works of art, cultivating dining experiences like no other. A true inspiration for me to bring culinary greatness to my events.



I've been a fitness gogetter since I was 14 and there's no better way to explore Napa than hitting the hiking trails. Napa has majestic views that will make you think you're in Tuscany.

Since Napa is a destination spot, I really enjoying meeting clients and taking them through all that Napa has to offer. Napa's food, outdoors, wineries and locations continue to inspire the events I produce.

F+G: This being a collaborative effort, where do you each draw inspiration from when putting on these events?

Suzanne and Raquel: I'm first inspired by everything Napa has to offer, but a lot of my inspiration comes from our clients. I love when my brides send me sneak peeks of their wedding gowns or lifestyle clients share what their wife's favorite colors and foods are! It's such a push for me to create their dream event, because this is probably one of the most important events in their lifetime. I know how special and happy I am when someone provides me with excellent service and hospitality, so my goal is to do the same. I'm also inspired by successful businesses and entrepreneurs. Knowing that my friends are doing a great job in their careers is amazing, they also happen to be my top vendors!



F+G: You both started your own businesses, do you have any advice for someone seeking to do the same?

Suzanne and Raquel: The first is to focus my advice is to do one thing perfectly, not ten things poorly. Juggling multiple ventures will spread you thin and definitely limit both your effectiveness and productivity. Businesses built around your strengths and

talents will have a greater chance of success. It's important to be profitable, but if your heart isn't in it, you will not be successful. There's no book on becoming the perfect entrepreneur, so the most important thing you can do is learn from your mistakes and never make the same mistake twice. Finally, be healthy. I promise that you will be much more productive when you take better care of yourself. Entrepreneurship is a lifestyle, not a 9to5 profession. Working to the point of exhaustion will burn you out and make you less productive. Pure Barre is my current go to fitness regimen. I'm also striving to eat and use 90% organic/nongmo food and products right now. Eat right, exercise and find time for yourself!

F+G: Events always bring people together and create some fun and lasting memories. Any that particularly stick out to you?

Suzanne and Raquel: It is always the moment when the event has finally arrived and your client sees the design for the first time. Their look is priceless and I will never forget it. We always have a moment where we quickly reflect on all of the phone conversations, numerous email exchanges and inperson meetings where we finally see our efforts come to life in such a beautiful way. That moment is when we establish a relationship that lasts a lifetime.



F+G: Just for fun, if Roque Napa could host an event anywhere in the world, featuring Phifer Pavitt wines (representing Northern California wines!) where would you choose? Or, dream event?

Suzanne and Raquel: Well, Southern California is the next logical place for ROQUE to expand so I would have to say Vibiana. Located in the Historic Core of Downtown Los Angeles, Vibiana was originally the City's first cathedral, but it has been beautifully transformed into a versatile wedding, events and performing arts venue. I would love to host an event there because the possibilities are

endless. Vibiana's Main Hall offers a beautiful customizable backdrop that I just want to dive into! I have so many ideas, and the Garden Courtyard is just gorgeous. I'm also interested in Vibiana because of its extensive dining and craft libations program run by Los Angeles restaurateur Chef Neal Fraser. As a food and wine enthusiast, I love when chefs collaborate on the menu for guests. The images I see of weddings and events at Vibiana are simply dreamy and I can't wait until we host an event there.

Bonus! Raquel on Phifer Pavitt Wines

I am absolutely in love with the 2011 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley release. Winemaker, Ted Osborne + Vintner, Suzanne Phifer Pavitt, carefully constructs each wine with elegance and approachability in mind. The 2011 is fantastic because it is ready to drink. Smooth velvety textures, raspberry and chocolate notes. Perfect wine for fall celebrations!

Photography and Introductions provided by Phifer Pavitt Wine + ROQUE Napa (and Marin Kristine Photography)