



Mystery Shoppers Visit Alpha Omega

By [V Files™](#) June 25, 2018

Alpha Omega Winery was founded in 2006 by vintners Robin and Michelle Baggett. The Baggetts began their foray in the wine industry through their well-known first winery endeavor, Tolosa, which was established in 1998 in San Luis Obispo's Edna Valley. The Baggett's launched Alpha Omega with the intention to create exceptional Bordeaux varietals representative of Napa Valley's unique terroirs. Mostly known for their single vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Alpha Omega farms their fruit among thirteen of the region's seventeen AVA's within some of Napa's most historic vineyards, including Beckstoffer's To Kalon, Missouri Hopper, Dr. Crane and Las Piedras, Georges III, Stagecoach, and Sunshine Valley. Winemaking duo Jean Hoefliger and Michel Rolland (consultant) set out to create "wines that express their passion for excellence" and that they have, winning accolades and garnering consistently high acclaim from Robert Parker.

A tasting experience at Alpha Omega is professionally choreographed, from the types of tastings and areas to indulge. The décor is casual-elegant, and includes a walk in tasting bar and a spanning outdoor covered patio abutted against a reflecting pool that expands the length of the patio. Five fountains in the center of the pool sooth the mood even on a frenetic Saturday afternoon. Private single vineyard tastings are hosted in well-appointed suites adorning the main tasting room and adjoining buildings.

Whether you walk in off the street or have a pre-reserved appointment, the staff are all primed and positioned to instill a sense of organized hospitality that accommodates every type of guest.

Whether it be the valet who takes your car at the door, the concierge stand where you check in, or your assigned host who is called to escort you to your tasting experience, it is a well-oiled machine.

Alpha Omega offers various levels of tasting experiences and tours ranging from \$50 for a sampling of current releases, to a private tasting of To Kalon Single vineyard vintages for \$150. Outside of the wines that are poured and a short wait to assign seating and a host, a walk-in tasting experience was treated at the same service level as a private tasting, where a host is pre-assigned and a room is set up with glassware and accoutrements anticipating your arrival. Once you arrive and check in, a host is assigned, and upon introduction, they already know your name. Not only is this an endearing way to make an initial impression on a guest, it is also a savvy strategy to collect important contact/guest information at the very beginning of the experience.

During the walk in tasting experiences, hosts were engaging, spending enough time to connect with their guests, but were also able to manage several other parties without leaving anyone for want. Wines were all presented factually, with focus on the foundation of the Alpha Omega story. It was apparent many of the guests had been there before, perhaps visiting as wine club members, as many were relaxed on the sofas and seemed to know some of hosts by name. Anywhere one ended up being stationed, there was a comfort level among the staff and guests that instantly made visitors feel at home.

Private Client Tastings rank in the top echelon of how experiences should feel when sampling such a premier line up of Napa Cabernets. These sessions were hosted by senior, well-seasoned, professional staff who were obviously career trained in sales, wine knowledge or hospitality (or all of the above). They took the time to understand each guest's preferences, got to know enough to connect and qualify buyers and did a great job positioning wines variably so they would appeal to each palate. When it came time to decide on a purchase, creative options were presented which would appeal to buyers preferences. Inquiring as to interest in joining a club or positioning an invitation to stay in touch were presented as integral to the conversation, not as an afterthought when it came time to close out.



DTC Best Practices Rating

Alpha Omega is the first winery in our V Files™ series that scored the highest in all five categories. They are a fine example of a winery that knows how to not only produce outstanding Cabernet among a sea of formidable competitors, but how consistency, sales training, white glove customer service and a little finesse can capture the attention of prospective new customers, while also galvanizing relationships with their committed base.

Alpha Omega

1155 Mee Lane

St. Helena, CA 94574

www.aowinery.com

DTC BEST PRACTICES – WHAT THEY DID WELL:

1. Varied/ placed options for tasting areas
2. Well-choreographed assignment of hospitality and sales staff
3. Engaging Staff, well trained on how to connect with guests; positioning value proposition
4. Product knowledge- Consistent presentation of brand story
5. Built in processes to collect guest information and follow up correspondence