

Lompoc Wine Ghetto Part 2

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Daniel Gross educates and pours at Flying Goat Cellars tasting room in the Lompoc Wine Ghetto.
Patricia Decker

Antonio also offers a full lineup of Moretti wines in his [Moretti Wines](#) tasting room, that are sourced from outside of the Sta. Rita Hills AVA. Many of the wines channel his Italian heritage, an example is the refreshing [2011 Moretti Bianchetto](#), a Tocai Friulano, Arneis, and Malvasia Bianca blend, pear, apple, and lychee fruit, with jasmine, lemon blossom, and honeysuckle aromas, and a frame of limestone minerality. The [Moretti Rosso Mio 2010](#), another Italian varietal blend of Dolcetto, Barbera, and Nebbiolo, charms with its combination of dark fruit, lively acidity, and earthiness, with a long finish. This [wine](#) would work well with a wide variety of food, such as grilled meat, hard cheeses, pizza, pastas, stews, and cured meats.

[Flying Goat Cellars](#), whose motto is “Pinot and Sparkling Wine without Pretense” specializes in vineyard specific Pinot Noir, mostly from the Santa Maria Valley and Sta. Rita Hills AVAs. Named after winemaker [Norman Yost](#)’s two pygmy goats, it’s an invitation to have fun with wine. Inside their colorful and comfy tasting room, adorned with impressionist paintings of the rolling hills, their own [Lompoc Wine Ghetto](#) graffiti, and wine-isms written on the wall behind the bar, such as “Wine is bottled poetry”, and “Drinks well with others”, comes a friendly greeting, an invitation to taste their current lineup of wines, and insight into why these wines taste the way they do. Tasting Room

Associate Daniel Gross deftly pours and educates, and guides you through the vineyards that make up these wines. The tasting flight typically is five wines, a Pinot Gris, and four vineyard specific Pinot Noirs for \$10.

My favorite Flying Goat Pinots are the **Flying Goat Cellars 2010 Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir** (full-bodied, black plum and cherry, depth of flavor and soft tannins), the **Flying Goat Cellars 2009 Garey Ranch Vineyard Pinot Noir** (black cherry, dark plum and forest floor, think more earthy with ripe fruit and savory notes), and the **Flying Goat Cellars 2008 Rio Vista Vineyard Dijon Clones Pinot Noir** (a rich, intense, textured Pinot with spice, smoke, lavender, and plums). They make one white wine, great for summer, the **Flying Goat Cellars 2012 Pinot Gris**. Crisp and delightful, with quince, agave nectar, and dried apricot aromas and flavors, it has texture, and great to pair with Thai curries, and triple cream cheeses. On weekends, the Bubbles Bar is open, pouring their Goat Bubbles Rosé, **Crémant**, Blanc de Blancs, and Blanc de Noirs, a delightful way to tickle your taste buds.

The **Lompoc Wine Ghetto** has so many quality wines to taste, you might need to return a few times to do it justice. It's a great day trip for a group of friends, who can share tastings and experience more wines together. Since the wines are made in small batches, in the true sense of boutique wines, the lineup can change as the wineries run out of certain vintages. Most of the tasting rooms are open Thursday through Sunday, from 11-4, but call for an appointment if you wish to visit outside of normal tasting hours. As a bonus, you might witness grapes being processed during harvest, or wines bottled on an assembly line. Often the winemaker is there, pouring his wine for your enjoyment. Above all, make the pilgrimage and spend the day in the Lompoc Wine Ghetto, so many great wines, friendly and knowledgeable pourers, and passionate winemakers, and bring a cooler, you will buy wine to take home, to channel some of that Ghetto vibe once you've returned home with your wine booty.



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