

Dana Volk's Happy Mommy Wines

Santa Ynez Valley Vintner Launches Affordable Line of Personality-Driven Wines



FUN WITH GRAPES: While she works hard to express the vineyard and vintage in her flagship Dana V. wines, Dana Volk believes her personality comes through in her Happy Mommy Wines. | Credit: Happy Mommy Wines | Credit: Mike Mesikep

By **Matt Kettmann**

Fri May 05, 2023 | 12:44pm

With years of experience working for industry powerhouses like E & J Gallo and Jackson Family Wines from Edna Valley and Sonoma County respectively all the way down to Argentina, Dana Volk returned to her native Santa Ynez Valley in 2011 with a stacked winemaking résumé. But during stints at Bridlewood and Byron, she found the workload was no longer conducive to her role as a mother to two children, both on the autism spectrum.

Seeking more freedom, she began developing her own brand, today known as Dana V. Wines. She crafts single-vineyard expressions —pinot noir from Duvarita west of the Sta. Rita Hills, Bordeaux blends from Happy Canyon, among a few others — that she sells through her Solvang tasting room, which opened five years ago.

“I can make a damn good bottle of wine at this point, because I learned from the best,” Volk told me over lunch recently, explaining that the concept behind Dana V. is highlighting the uniqueness of each terroir and vintage. “Everything is different every year.”

But ever since 2017, she’s also wanted to develop a line of more affordable wines that showcase an easygoing, replicable style rather than the nuances of vineyard and vintage, and one that celebrates parents like her who juggle child-rearing with careers. Earlier this year, Volk released Happy Mommy Wines to do just that, offering a chardonnay called “Date Night White”, the “Girls’ Night White” sauvignon blanc, a grenache-based “Take me Away Rosé!”, and the “Kids in Bed Red”, a juicy Rhône blend. All sport the Happy Mommy tagline “It’s Me Time!” and are priced between \$15 and \$24.

“Whereas terroir comes through in Dana V., Happy Mommy is more of my personality,” said Volk, who makes the wines at the former Bridlewood Winery, now called Milestone. “We have so much fun there, and we get along so well. I swear that comes through in the bottle. We all have a positive attitude.”

The brand is building steam, which is no surprise, because the wines punch far above their price tag — especially the red, which is fresh, juicy, and pleasingly complex for just \$24. “I’ve had so much fun with them,” said Volk of these wines. “I wanted to create a brand for other women like me, who enjoy a fine glass of wine and a little ‘me time’ now and again. Happy Mommy Wines is dedicated to them.”

See happymommywines.com, or try the Dana V. Wines at 1588 Mission St., Solvang; (805) 688-3488. See danavwines.com.

Thu Jun 29, 2023 | 18:31pm

<https://www.independent.com/2023/05/05/dana-volks-happy-mommy-wines/>



Matt Kettmann

Senior Editor

