

People & Places

Pairing wine with experiences

Kat Doescher says there's more to wine than what's in the bottle

By JULIA HOLLISTER
For the Capital Press

SONOMA, Calif. — Winemaker Kat Doescher takes a different approach when it comes to wine pairings: She pairs the wine with the experience.

"Wines aren't just for pairing with food," she said. "With the rise of social media they're also for pairing with experiences."

"I often think about how our Chardonnay might be good at the beach when it's warm and how the Zinfandels are great for hanging out in front of a fire on a winter night," she said. "All of the wines have to be balanced and excellent expressions of their varietals, but they also have to form that memory connection with the consumer that will keep them coming back for it when the mood strikes."

Doescher grew up in the Mojave Desert north of Los Angeles.

"It's a land of tumble weeds and shopping malls," she said. "When I graduated high school at 17 I went north to Humboldt State for school and have been in Northern California ever since."

She acknowledges that science has always been the way her mind works although she didn't focus on it until high school, when she got interested in chemistry.

"Living in Sonoma County, the land of wine, was re-



Courtesy of Kat Doescher

Kat Doescher moved from the laboratory to making wine in Sonoma County, Calif. Wine has to "form that memory connection with the consumer that will keep them coming back for it when the mood strikes."

Western Innovator

Kat Doescher

Residence: Petaluma, Calif.

Age: 39

Education: Humboldt State University, Arcata, Calif.

Occupation: Winemaker

Quote: "Wine's ability to create moments originates with where the grapes are grown. The breathtaking views in the vineyard are inspirational in crafting the final product."



ally what brought me into winemaking," she said. "I had spent many years in a traditional environmental lab job that stressed me out and kept me locked inside. When it was finally time to make a

quality-of-life change, I took a job in a wine lab and grew from there."

Doescher has worked at Valley of the Moon Winery for 11 harvests. After it was purchased by the Stewart

family in 2012, the property was returned to its original name, Madrone Estate Winery. She makes wine for Madrone, Valley of the Moon and Lake Sonoma Winery, which are sub-appellation wines for restaurants.

David Wells, director of public relations for Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, acknowledged her passion for wine.

"With her 10-plus years of winemaking in the Valley, Kat truly understands the terroir of the vineyards she cultivates grapes from," he said. "The wines that Madrone Estate Winery and Lake Sonoma Winery have been re-

leasing speak for themselves and the appellations that they come from."

In spite of the success of California wines there is a ripe challenge hanging on the vine.

"The biggest challenge that I have seen for California winemakers is distinguishing yourself in a big field," she said. "There are so many great wineries producing fabulous wines out there that finding a way to make your wines stand out is something you have to constantly be working for."

For her wines, the experience helps make the difference.

Calendar

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Friday, Feb. 10

University of Idaho Cropping School. 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Best Western Plus Caldwell Inn & Suites, 908 Specht Ave., Caldwell, Idaho. This event will have presentations on fertilizer and irrigation water management, crop diseases, falling numbers, soil health, precision ag, unmanned aerial systems and a drone flight demonstration (weather permitting). CEUs available. The cost is \$20 and includes breakfast and lunch. owalsh@uidaho.edu, 208-722-6701

Friday-Sunday

Feb. 10-12

2017 Women's Conference. Chico Hot Springs, 163 Chico Road, Pray, Mont. Women's leadership, communication and other agriculture-related topics will be discussed. Sponsored by the Montana Farmers Union. montanafarmersunion.com

Tuesday-Thursday

Feb. 14-16

World Ag Expo. International Agri-Center, 4500 Laspina St., Tulare, Calif. The nation's largest agricultural exhibition celebrates its 50th year. www.worldagexpo.com

Practical Food Safety & HACCP. The Riverside Hotel, 2900 Chinden Blvd., Boise, Idaho. HACCP, or Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points, is a preventive system for the control of health-threatening food hazards during food processing. The comprehensive three-day workshop is designed for individuals responsible for implementing and managing a HACCP system in a food processing facility. Participants who pass a final test will receive a certificate of completion. <http://bit.ly/2f2iJ9Q>

Wednesday, Feb. 15

Soil Health Workshop. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Best Western Burley Inn and Convention Center, 800 N. Overland Ave., Burley, Idaho. Keynote speaker Marlon Winger, Natural Resources Conservation Service state agronomist, will give a presentation titled "Is It a Cover Crop or a Biological Primer?" Other topics will include cover crops as they relate to eradicating blight

and integrated pest management, as well as presentations on biofumigation and NRCS programs and projects.

Thursday, Feb. 16

Keeping Your Family Business Communication on Track. 7:30 to 9 a.m. Hayden's Lakefront Grill, 8187 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Road, Tualatin, Ore. This session will provide tools and techniques that attendees can use right away to cultivate better communication among family members, employees, and shareholders. Presented by: Mark Wickman, Family Business Counsel. \$40 per person. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2fPK987>

Soil Acidity Workshop. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mirabeau Park Hotel and Convention Center, 1100 N. Sullivan Road, Spokane Valley, Wash. Washington State University Extension educator Steve Van Vleet plans to show farmers how to manage nutrients and increase soil pH levels. \$50 by Feb. 10. <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2736297>

Thursday-Friday

Feb. 16-17

Oregon Board of Agriculture meeting. 8:30 a.m. Oregon Department of Agriculture Hearing Room, 635 Capitol St. NE, Salem, Ore. Legislative developments, the Japanese beetle eradication program and other issues will be discussed during the two-day meeting. <http://bit.ly/2cKsbhX>

Friday, Feb. 17

Farm Bureau Women's Legislative Reception, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Oregon State Capitol Galleria, 900 Court St. NE, Salem, Ore. Join the Oregon Farm Bureau Women's Advisory Council for coffee and cake to kick off the 2017 legislative session and recognize the important roles women play in Oregon agriculture. www.oregonfb.org

Rural Farmers' Market Workshops. 1-3:45 p.m. Adair Clubhouse, 6097 NE Ebony Lane, Corvallis, Ore. This interactive series of workshops and small group discussions will focus on topics particularly relevant to rural, small scale or resource limited farmers' markets. Travel scholarships available. Sponsored by the Oregon Farmers Markets Association. Free, RSVP required. Website: <http://bit.ly/2iatQ6Q>

Soil acidity workshop. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Marcus Whitman Hotel, 6 W. Rose St., Walla Walla, Wash. Washington State University Extension educator Steve Van Vleet

plans to show farmers how to manage nutrients and increase soil pH levels. \$50 by Feb. 10. <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2736297>

Saturday, Feb. 18

Oregon State University Extension Service Small Farms Program. 9 a.m.-5:15 p.m. LaSells Stewart Center and CH2M Hill Alumni Center, 875 SW 26th St., Corvallis, Ore. A day-long event geared toward farmers, agricultural professionals, food policy advocates, students and managers of farmers' markets. Twenty-seven educational sessions are offered on a variety of topics relevant to the Oregon small farmers and include a track in Spanish. Cost: \$75 by Feb. 10, \$150 at the door. <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sfc>

Monday-Tuesday

Feb. 20-21

Larry Branan Idaho Ag Summit. Red Lion Downtown Hotel, 1800 W Fairview Ave., Boise, Idaho. www.idahoagsummit.org

Wednesday, Feb. 22

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District annual meeting and celebration. 5:30-8:30 p.m. Macleay Conference and Retreat Center, 2887 74th Ave. SE, Salem, Ore. RSVP by Feb. 7 to janice.calkins@marionswcd.net or call 503-391-9927.

Oregon Ryegrass Commission meeting. 6-8 p.m. Cascade Grill restaurant, 110 Opal St. NE, Albany, Ore. www.ryegrass.com

Wednesday-Friday

Feb. 22-24

2017 Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting and Conference. Monte Carlo Resort and Casino, 3770 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, Nevada. www.familyfarmalliance.org

Saturday-Sunday

Feb. 25-26

Second Annual Mid-Valley Winter Ag Fest. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. Polk County Fairgrounds and Event Center, 520 S Pacific Highway W, Rickreall, Ore. This event will promote all aspects of local ag commerce and provide a family friendly event that is fun and educational for kids. Proceeds will benefit Polk County 4-H and FFA. www.mwagfest.com

Thursday-Friday

March 2-3

Idaho Hay and Forage Conference. Best Western Inn, 800

N. Overland Ave., Burley, Idaho. Speakers will include Dan Underlander, a University of Wisconsin forage specialist; Steve Orloff, a University of California Extension adviser; and Doug Robison, senior vice president of Northwest Farm Credit Services. www.idahohay.com

Wednesday, March 8

Taxes and Succession Planning. Noon-1 p.m. Join us for a free online webinar and an introduction to how planning ahead for estate and gift taxes can help address family and business needs and meet retirement goals for the current generation. Presented by: Carol Wachter and Heather Tomsick, Deloitte Tax LLP, and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gW7KjQ>

Wednesday, March 15

Agricultural Biodiversity on Farms: Conservation Practices Working for Western Farmers. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. McMenamins Edgefield, 2126 SW Halsey St., Troutdale, Ore. A first-of-its-kind conference on the benefits of agricultural biodiversity in Western farming systems and the practices that support it. Sponsored by the Oregon State University Integrated Plant Protection Center, the Xerces Society and Oregon Tilth. <http://bit.ly/2kpWRSK>

Thursday, March 16

Building Family Business Value from the Inside Out. 7:30 to 9 a.m. BridgePort BrewPub, 1313 NW Marshall St., Portland. Much can be done to build the value of the business from inside the enterprise, and the earlier the process begins, the more sustainable the results will be. In addition to building value, most businesses become more efficient and profitable along the way. Presented by Francis Brown, Key Private Bank and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gR3KC0>

Friday-Sunday

March 24-26

18th Annual Northwest Horse Fair and Expo. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. Linn County Fair and Expo Center, 3700 Knox Butte Road, Albany, Ore. Three days of clinics, seminars and performances for horse enthusiasts. Cost: Adults \$12 a day, children ages 6-12 \$6 a day. Parking \$4. www.equinepromotions.net

Friday-Monday

March 24-27

Oregon FFA State Convention. Deschutes Fair & Expo Center, 3800 S.E. Airport Way, Redmond, Ore. www.oregonffa.com

Tuesday, April 11

Do Your Kids Want the Business? Planning for Yes or No. 7:30 to 9 a.m. Hayden's Lakefront Grill, 8187 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Road, Tualatin, Ore. Presented by Steve Bennett, Farleigh Wada Witt and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2h3k8Ck>

Thursday, May 18

Family Business Charters. 7:30 to 9 a.m. BridgePort BrewPub, 1313 NW Marshall St., Portland. A family business charter sets forth the essential rules, obligations, and responsibilities relating to ownership and management of the business, as well as the family values that will help sustain the business for future generations. Presented by A. Jeffery Bird, Lane Powell PC and the Austin Family Business Program, Oregon State University. \$40 per person. 800-859-7609, <http://bit.ly/2gPuLYY>

Wednesday-Friday

March 28-30

International Mass Timber Conference. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland, Ore. Explores the entire supply chain for cross-laminated timber (CLT), nail-laminated timber, glulam panels, laminated veneer lumber and other mass timber, and the opportunities and obstacles for mass timber building in global construction. Benefit from 80 speakers, 4 focused educational tracks, 60 exhibits (and poster presentations) in the exhibit hall, multiple networking receptions, and one of the largest gatherings of CLT and mass timber experts in the world. www.masstimberconference.com

Friday-Saturday

March 31-April 1

High Desert Stampede. Bank of the Cascades Center, 3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond, Ore. High Desert Stampede, in concert with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, will be presenting a full rodeo performance lineup complete with bull, bareback and saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, team roping, calf roping and barrel racing. www.highdesertstampede.com

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