INFO TO GO

TASTING ROOM Poseidon Vineyard & Obsidian Ridge Winery

Putting down roots in hub of gardens and sculptures

By Carey Sweet

On a recent balmy day at Poseidon Vine-yard & Obsidian Ridge Winery in Sonoma, people lounged on cushy chaises on the wood deck in front of wood deck in front of the tasting room. Others played bocce ball in the shade of olive trees, off an expansive courtyard dotted with gardens and sculptures where more visitors clambered up for photos in a giant blue Adirondack chair. It was a ountersential was a quinte

Wine Country after-noon, with a few small kids running around, their parents lazily watching as they sipped Chardonnay, and severa dogs basking in the sun. eral



The experience: Just opened in August 2013, this is the first tasting room for the winery. But the wine isn't new — the Poseidon Vineyard was planted in 1973 near the Napa County Airport, and still supplies the signature Chardon-nay and Pinot Noir today. The Poseidon brand was front-and-center in

The Poseidon brand was front-and-center in the news this August, however, when the 6.0-magnitude Napa earthquake struck, its epicen-ter at the Napa Valley Marina right next to its vineyards. Remarkably, there was no damage to the property, though during my late October visit to the tasting room, the quake was still a topic among the guests. It was clear the host had joyfully told this ironic story plenty of times since summer: The vineyard was named after the Greek god of the sea, also known as "the earth-shaker" because, according to legged, the earth-shaker" because, according to legend, the deity got a kick out of causing quakes.



Wines are offered inside the tasting room and on the deck.

QUOTABLE TRAVELER

"Choose your country, use

and then go in the opposite

guidebooks to identify the areas

most frequented by foreigners -

Dervla Murphy, Irish author of travel books, including "Full Tilt" (1965)

By Larry Habeage

direction.'

Arpad Molna

seidon Vineyard & Obsidian Ridge Winery is part of Cornerstone S

n: After emi grating from Hungary in 1956, Nicholas and Cath-erine Molnar moved into grape growing in the early '70s, putting their sons to work in the fields. By 1993, the en-trepreneurial family fields. By 1993, the en-trepreneurial family was also importing Hungarian barrels to Napa with their Kadar Hungary cooperage. In 1999, the family planted the Obsidian Ridge vineyard, focus-ing on Cabernet Sauvig-no. Four years later

ing on Cabernet Sauvig non. Four years later, sons Arpad and Peter took over operations, added their longtime enologist Michael Ter-rien as a principal, and founded Tricycle Wine Partners as the parent company. By 2011, the group was ready to move from custom move from custom crush and build their own winery.

The wines: The \$10 tasting fee is a reasonable invest-ment for four wines, poured generously in the alfresco wine bar setting. While Cor-nerstone is a tourist destina-tion, it's also a neighborhood unit's also a neighborhood hub south of the Highways hub south of the Highways the and 12t crossroads. The energy is enjoyable; on my weekend visit, it seemed there were a good number of locals, stopping by after grocery shopping at the Fruit Basket across the street, and on their way to Angelo's Wine Country Deli next door next door.

next door. We choose our quartet from a list of six wines, in-cluding Poseidon Estate Chardonnay 2013 (\$26), the Bench Chardonnay 2012 (\$34) and Estate Pinot Noir 2013 (\$32), plus Obsidian Ridge Estate Syrah 2011 (\$30), Estate Cabernet Sau-vienon 2011 (\$30) and the vignon 2011 (\$30) and the Slope Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 (\$45).

The extras: Big wineries may have their private gardens with a few sculptures, but Cornerstone boasts a Sculp tureWalk of 60 large-scale works that you can wander around, bringing our kids or your leashed dog for a stroll.

If you go: Open daily 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. 23568 Arnold Drive, Sonoma, (707) 255-4929, www.tricyclewine.com.

Nearby: Cline Cellars, 24737 Arnold Drive, Sonoma, (707) 940-4000. www. clinecellars.com. Jacuzzi Family Vine-yards, 24724 Arnold Drive, Sonoma. (707) 931-7576. www.jacuzziwines.com. Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards, 23555 Arnold Drive, Sonoma. 707-996-7256. www.gloriaferrer.com

What's hot: Although

there's no substitute for common sense and be-ing street-smart, having

immediate access to a 911 call and a record of your situation add a

Rating: **

ARMCHAIR TRAVELER

Name: iWitness, for iOS, Android.

Cost: \$2.99 per month, \$29.99 per year.

What it does: It con-nects to emergency ser-

App contacts emergency

services internationally

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER By Christopher Ellio

Rental car firm won't give a break on incorrect date

Our daughter, Anna, who is currently • in Germany, recently made a reserva-• tion on Sixt.com, the website of a Euro-pene car rental company. She reports that she found the rate on Kayak.com, which she accessed from her laptop. She then was taken to a payment page on Sixt.com without any inter-vening page to confirm the date entered, which she asserts she entered correctly. Anna typed in her credit card number and was presented with a confirmation and receipt that showed the reser-vation. It was for the wrong date – Oct. 26 in-stead of Oct. 19. stead of Oct. 19.

She immediately e-mailed the company to ange the reservation and was sent a messa She immediately e-matter a change the reservation and was sent a messag German that she'd booked a prepaid rate that age in

Graman that she'd booked a prepaid rates shage in German that she'd booked a prepaid rates that couldn't be changed. She contacted Sixt by phone and learned that the only car it could offer her, due to the shortage of cars resulting from the German rail strike, would cost her almost three times the original rental price. She got in touch with the customer-service department and was referred back to the same e-mail address (reservierung@sixt.com) that she had e-mailed originally in an attempt to correct the reservation. Having apparently reached a dead end, she booked a car with Hertz, but she still would like the charge from Sixt re-funded. Le this something you can beln us with? I'm

funded. Is this something you can help us with? I'm writing you because the charge is coming to ou credit card, which is shared by our daughter. I don't know where else she, or we, can turn. David Coats, Minneap

A: Looks as if something got lost in translation between Kayak.com, which searches many travel sites, and Sixt.com. Here's how it breaks down for Anna: Kayak will find you a low price for a rental, but you have to read all the restric-tions carefully. Your daughter should have heen taken to a nave that which searches man n taken to a page that bee explained the terms of he r reservation.

her reservation. The giveaway was when she was asked to provide a credit card number. If you're "secur-ing" a reservation with a card, chances are it's a restricted rate. In other words, once you click on the "buy" button, you're stuck. stuck.

European websites can be tricky. As I note in my latest book, "How to Be the World's Smartest Be the World's Smartest Traveler" (National Geo-graphic), many Europe-an websites handle dates differently — instead of month-day-year, it's day-month-year. That confuses some American customers. When that confusion is combined with a nonrefundable, nonchangeable rate, it can add up to trouble. can add up to trouble I reviewed the e-mails exchanged between your daughter and Sixt, but it

n't clear where the problem happened. It could have been a glitch in the site or user error. Regardless, Sixt should have reviewed the prob-lem. Often, companies can fix an honest mistake if it's caught fast enough. You also could have ap-pealed this to someone higher up at Sixt. In the end Anna was in the site or user error

In the end, Anna was responsible for review-ing the terms of her res-ervation before booking. ervation before booking. But from where I'm sit-ting, it's difficult to deter-mine whether this was an oversight or a tech-nical problem. Sixt wasn't obligated to re-fund Anna's rental, but I think it owed her more than the boilerplate resonces it sent her response it sent her. I asked Sixt to review

your daughter's rental. It agreed to cancel her nonrefundable rese nonrefundable reserva-tion and refund the 54 euros that had been charged to her card. Please ask Anna to read the terms before she clicks on the button next time time.

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the iWitness app, and at the touch of a button or the screen, or by shaking the phone, you can start recording your predicament (for five min-utes) and/or call 911.



the "calling 911" alarm sounded sounded. Luckily you have five sec-onds to cancel if it's not a real emergen-

Worth it: I put this app in the mostused area of my phone. Even if you use it only it could once

Witness Once, it could be a lifesaver. - Jen Leo, Los Angeles Times





Tricycle Wine Pa