NEWS RELEASE

Winery Internship With Your Wine Advisor, Lokelani

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OUR INTREPID WINE ADVISOR GETS A WINERY INTERNSHIP

One of the coolest parts of working for nakedwines.com is that you have the opportunity to leave the office, and get your hands dirty working side by side with rockstar winemakers!

Our world-class wine advisor, Lokelani Stewart, got to do some work at the Angel-funded winery in Kenwood recently. Loke is a legend – she's helped literally thousands of Angels discover wines they'll love... and she's also a real wordsmith too, so without further ado, here's what Loke wrote about her incredible experience working at the winery.

Lokelani, wine advisor:
I have had the rare pleasure of working with our winemakers, tasting all of their wines and then helping our Angels find their new favorites! Nothing makes me happier than knowing that a lovingly-crafted, Angel funded wine becomes part of a wedding celebration or toasting to the birth of a new baby – being a wine advisor is a pretty special job!

Lots of valves, t's, tri clover clamps and reducers on
the parts wall

Up until recently, I lived about 10 minutes away from our Kenwood Wine Studio, where a lot of Naked Talent brews. Within the doors of our winery, it is as though one steps through to another world. The cool climate is

home to French oak barrels and towering stainless steel tanks, holding the precious liquid of grape harvests, slowly and in quiet solitude, melding to the artistic creation of our winemakers.

I was given the opportunity to do an internship at our winery, working with the fabulously talented **Franc Dusak**! Because our Kenwood winery is home to future vintages of about 25 of our different winemakers, it is not uncommon to bump into a few different winemakers in a day, all working hard at making their wine.

Ken Deis poses with his wine

On the first day of my internship, I arrived at 7:00 a.m, with birds singing, cool breezes dancing softly across the grapevines and glorious California sunshine warming the air. I was greeted at the doors by Jorge, who gave me a guided tour and showed me their daily operations. Each section of the winery has a name – we have the "Barrel room" with barrels stacked to the ceiling, fermenting delicious wines like Ken Deis Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon or some sumptuous and buttery Chardonnay by Matt Iaconis. We have a "Red Room" and a "White Room", a "Catwalk", which overlooks the splendor of Kenwood's vineyards and a "Crushpad". Franc Dusak, who is the kindest, most patient and lovely person took the day explaining every process and procedure that happens at the winery. I asked him what every piece of equipment was and does, no matter how little or insignificant it seemed, and with graciousness and patience he explained it to all to me. I had the time of life!

During my internship, I sacrificed wearing my 4-inch heels, lipstick, jewelry, perfume and all other girly paraphernalia for proper winery clothes! I bought a pair of heavy soled flats, jeans and comfy t-shirts to climb our mountain-high barrel room, stir the wines in those barrels, taste the wines in progress, slashing that lavish liquid all over me! Such fun! I toyed with the idea of wearing an all white outfit to get a "natural" purple tie-dyed memento to take home!

I had a 3 day adventure, at our winery, having winemakers like Jim Olsen explain the differences between the yeast that they use. He shared the different flavors and reasons why various strains are used, as though they were incorporating herbs and spices to impart flavor to a fabulous meal. Jac Cole and Matt Iaconis generously shared their new vintage samplings. I worked with Matt, in our little white laboratory, watching him blend oak fermented and buttery chardonnay with his stainless steel fermented chardonnay. All the grapes came from the same vineyard but the taste was so radically different, he wanted to blend them to achieve a perfect balance. Jac Cole has an engaging warmth and humor, who on multiple occasions has been responsible for making me laugh till my stomach hurts! But at the winery, he chatted with me about his new unoaked chardonnay, oak fermented chardonnay and his upcoming red blend. He is a legend, a treasure who selflessly shares his wealth of experience while letting you drink his wine!

Camille Benitah, who originates from Bordeaux, France, was making Cabernet Franc from fruit grown by a local vintner in Napa. She compared wine to making a great “stew”. Wine, like any great meal, takes time to prepare and in the case of wine, sometimes years, she explained.

We have so many wines and projects happening at the winery, we even have hand-drawn maps to show where every winemaker’s new vintage is located. I took immense pleasure in getting to update those maps! I wandered all over our winery and up the catwalk, writing down each and every single vintage, where the grapes came from and the winemakers behind each barrel.

After that experience, I used every opportunity to head out on the weekend, spending time at our winery, with our winemakers, getting to learn new and fascinating aspects of working with the fruit of the vine. This August, marks 3 years of my working here at Naked, and while my time at the winery gave me a greater sense of appreciation of how the virtuous circle truly helps winemakers and wine drinkers, it also gave me tremendous pride in seeing first hand, how awesome Angel funding is truly changing the way wine is made!

–Lokelani, your Naked Wine Advisor

The post **Winery internship with your wine advisor, Lokelani** appeared first on **The Truth About Wine**.

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