

A photograph of a modern winery building with a wide, overhanging roof and large glass walls. The building is situated on a hillside overlooking a vast vineyard and rolling mountains under a clear blue sky. The architecture is minimalist and contemporary, with a focus on natural materials like wood and stone.

THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF WINE

25 SPECTACULAR CALIFORNIA WINERIES

HEATHER SANDY HEBERT



PRESQU'ILE WINERY

A SENSE OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

LOCATION: SANTA MARIA

ARCHITECTURE: TAYLOR LOMBARDO ARCHITECTS

In French Creole, *presqu'île* means “almost an island”—the perfect name for a winery perched lightly on the ridgeline, very nearly an island amid the vineyards. With its clean, contemporary lines and butterfly roofline, Presqu'île Winery seems about to take off in flight.

Set atop the Santa Maria Mesa in northern Santa Barbara County, Presqu'île is quite unlike any other winery in this part of the state, set apart not only by its remarkable architecture but by its weather: cool, breezy, and often foggy. Located on 240 acres once deemed too cool to grow grapes, Presqu'île is one of the westernmost wineries on California's central coast and benefits from the only two transverse mountain ranges—running east-west rather than north-south—on the western coast of the Americas. This rare convergence of geography and geology creates a natural funnel, drawing cool air off the Pacific Ocean, which, combined with one of the longest growing seasons in California, shapes a true cool-climate, wine-growing region.

The site is nothing short of spectacular. Panoramic views run all the way from the eastern to the western borders of the Santa Maria AVA, with vistas of Santa Maria Valley to one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other. “Once we opened, all

the Santa Maria locals said they had no idea these views existed,” says president Matt Murphy.

Presqu'île was built as a family business: a multigenerational collaboration between Madison and Suzanne Murphy, their children, Matt, Anna, and Jonathan, and their daughters-in-law, Amanda and Lindsey. Like so many residents of the California wine country, they hail from parts beyond, with deep roots in agriculture: four generations of Murphys farmed land in Louisiana. Matthew Murphy's great-grandfather established a beloved family compound on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, naming it Presqu'île, after a point that projected almost like an island into the gulf.

When Presqu'île was destroyed in 2005 by Hurricane Katrina, the family decided to restart out West, following oldest son Matt, who had already fallen in love with the wine business in California. Led by Matt, the family searched for the ideal site to establish a foothold and plant Pinot Noir. In 2007, they purchased their coveted estate, just sixteen miles from the Pacific Ocean. The estate is a tapestry of vineyard blocks, all sustainably certified. In honor of the compound they had lost, they named it Presqu'île. This was their Presqu'île West.

From the beginning of the family's collaboration