



BUBBLES & BREWS



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MALIBU WINE SAFARI

BY JULIE CARLSON

"MOST PEOPLE DON'T HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY to go to Africa on a safari," said Ronlet Berci, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, of why someone should visit Saddlerock Ranch and Malibu Wine Safaris. "It's as close as you can get to exotic animals and being outdoors on the ranch all while embracing the environment." CQ

Nestled amid the wild valleys and rugged hills of the Santa Monica Mountains, Saddlerock Ranch is a unique place where visitors can go on an adventure of a lifetime. Saddlerock Ranch and Malibu Family Wines, owned by the Semler Family, has a storied history, just like the 1,000-acre property that their vineyards sit upon. The property is more than 300 years old and was purchased by Ron and Lisa Semler in 1978. Throughout the years, the family has started many successful business ventures on the property, and they reside there as well.

After the Agoura-Malibu firestorm swept through the area, the Semler's bought the land and began boarding horses on the property in the 1980s. They had a successful avocado distribution company until a drought affected their crops. The family started anew with vineyards as well as animals: zebras, camels,

COURTESY OF MALIBU WINE SAFARIS



On the Giraffe Tour, guests meet resident friendly star Stanley the Giraffe, who was formerly trained in films.



"DRIVERS AND TOUR GUIDES TAKE GUESTS THROUGH THE BACK ROADS OF THE RANCH WHILE PROVIDING A DIALOGUE OF THE HISTORY OF SADDLEROCK, THE SEMLER FAMILY, AND VINEYARDS."



llamas, alpacas, buffalo, a giraffe, and more. Many of the animals were born on the ranch, adopted, or raised in captivity, and have been in the Hollywood industry.

What do wine and safaris have in common?

"Their son, Dakota Semler started Malibu Wine Safari just over three years ago after being inspired by their family trips to African safaris," explained Bert. "The family has had animals on the ranch for more than 30 years as well as the vineyards so his vision was a fluid one into Malibu Wine Safaris." CQ

The company offers a large array of tours both for families and for the over 21 crowd. The most popular tours are the Explorer Tour and the Giraffe Tour. On the latter tour, guests meet resident friendly star Stanley the Giraffe, who was formerly trained in films.

Guests sip on the best of Saddlerock and Semler wines - three reds and three whites and nibble on tasty tapenades - all while exploring scenic stop-offs to learn more about the animals and how to interact with them. If guests are interested in bringing children, Malibu Wine Safaris offers a Family Tour for ages 7 and up. Lemonade is provided to the youngsters. The company also has a Vintner Tour where guests can taste eight varieties of wine, and on the weekends there is a Mimosa Tour. Semler purchases the wines through his father's winery.

Tour vehicles consist of various truck sizes: 9-seater, 12-seater and 21-seater. The Explorer Tour is \$65 per person and lasts 90 minutes. The Giraffe Tour is \$95 per person and is 105 minutes. The Family Tour is an hour at \$55 per person. All of them include beverages and cheese and crackers. Malibu Wine Safaris is open Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Drivers and tour guides take guests through the back roads of the ranch while providing a dialogue of the history of Saddlerock, the Semler Family, and vineyards. There's even an archeological site of caves with drawings from the Chumash tribe, who years ago lived in the area. Guests should wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Visitors can also view Lisa Semler's artwork throughout the ranch.

The animals are cared for by a caring staff which includes a manager of hoofstock; two animal husbandry staff members; and local vet Dr. Stephen Klause, who works with the Greater Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens, Caltech



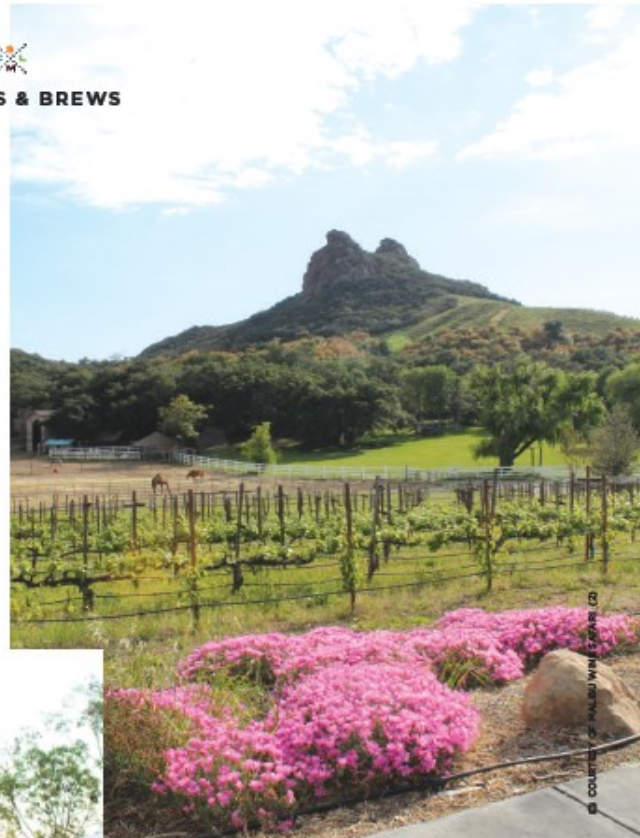
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and Moorpark College – Teaching Zoo. Saddlerock also has 40 full-time ranch hands who assist with the animals and live on the property.

June 21st is World Giraffe Day, an event to celebrate the longest-necked animal. Malibu Wine Safaris has a close relationship with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation in Africa to help raise awareness for the Red List of Threatened giraffes of which only 100,000 remain in the wilds of Africa. A special celebration will be held at Saddlerock Ranch, featuring guest speakers and educational documentary films on these gentle giants.

The Semler's son, Shane, owns Malibu Wine Hikes and Saddlerock Gardens. Saddlerock Ranch also hosts weddings and other special events, and is available for filming locations.

"We're so close to Los Angeles, but it's an easy getaway for a few hours. We also put a lot of time and effort into our wines," said Bercl. "We're very proud of that." ♦



Malibu Wine Safaris
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
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(818) 497-2206

www.lasafaris.com



GET YOUR WINE ON. IN THE WILD...

Explore the 1,000 acre Saddlerock Ranch and vineyard in Malibu. Your trusty guide and driver team will lead the adventure on custom-built open-air Safari vehicles. You'll make stops along the way to take in the scenery, taste local wines, and get up close and personal with animals you never knew were Angelinos too: zebras, camels, alpacas, bison, and even Stanley the Giraffe - all just 30 minutes from LA.



TRY MALIBU'S BEST WINES.

From Bisous to Zinfandel, we have the wines to make your palette scream for more. All of our wines are sourced from local vineyards, featuring the tastes and flavors of the casual wine-making culture alive in the Santa Monica Mountains.



MEET MALIBU'S MOST PHOTOGRAPHED.

Many of our exotics came to Saddlerock Ranch to retire after successful careers in Hollywood. Meet them in person and up close! From Timon and Pumba to Speeder and Shu!, everyone on the Ranch welcomes you with open hooves. This is assuming you have a healthy handful of carrots, pellets, or bananas (provided).



WHAT TO DO AFTER THE SAFARI?

Hit the Malibu Wines tasting room!

And, tell all of your friends - of course! You'll be the trendsetter for sharing the secret of Malibu Wine Safaris. Boom. Look at you, getting cooler.