TOP 10 YOUNTVILLE WINERIES

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THE LITTLE APPELLATION THAT COULD

Boasting the very first vineyards in the Napa Valley and planted by George Yount in the mid-1800's, Yountville became an appellation in 1998. Although relatively small (about 2,700 or so acres are under vine) it is the home of some of the top growers and vintners in Napa Valley. Diversity of soils and microclimates facilitate a number of varietals, besides Cabernet Sauvignon, to thrive. There are some terrific Sauvignon Blancs and a stellar Petite Syrah or two. Don't let its size fool you. This viticultural area is overflowing with wine gems no discerning drinker can afford to miss.

HERB LAMB

I adore Jennifer and the late Herb Lamb. They are the sweetest people on the planet and a joy to be around. The Lambs bought a small, steep hillside rocky property in 1987, cleared the trees and planted what turned out to be stunning Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard. Miniscule yields and intense fruit attracted winemaker Helen Turley, who sourced fruit from Herb Lamb for Colgin Vineyards. Made in a whopping 100 case lots, their HL and Two Old Dogs Cabernet sell out in two shakes of a Lamb's tail. Don't forget their stunning Sauvignon Blanc, my summer obsession.

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Ilona Thompson is Editor-in-Chief at PalateXposure, a destination site for oenophiles, gourmands and luxury travelers. She also recently launched #Wine, a site dedicated to wines and spirits reviews, and #Photography, a site devoted to high-quality wine, food, and travel related photography.

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