



[[San Juan Silver Stage](#) | July 2020 | By [Kathryn R. Burke](#)]
<https://silverstage.news/07-20-wine-and-art>

Many wineries have outdoor tasting rooms and terraces, like the ones pictured [Azura Winery](#) or [Qutori](#), both in Paonia. Larger facilities, like the [AppleShed](#) in Cedaredge, home of [Williams Cellars](#), can comfortably host private gatherings without violating social-distancing rules. The size of the space determines the size of the guest list. [Alfred Eames](#), also in Paonia, does not have a tasting room and is open to visitors only by appointment.

Qutori, Azura, and Williams Cellars also host or display artistic activities. Azura is also a gallery; wine-tasters may browse and shop for art, jewelry, sculpture, and of course...wine. Qutori hosts art classes—inside in winter, outside on the patio in summer. Starting this month, “Let’s Make Art” takes place Friday afternoons with a self-guided “Paint on the Patio” class. Qutori has expanded their tasting room to an area of about 50’ x 60’, which is now a “tasting bar” adjoining their deli and coffee shop. Lots of room to social distance while sipping, munching, and tasting wine.

It’s a similar story at the AppleShed, which has both a deli and a tasting bar and located in the gallery—so totally surrounded by art. On any given day, you may see someone working with their easel set up in one of the side rooms or galleries.

It’s long been a tradition to serve wine with art—in galleries, at art and music events, and gatherings. My son had his wedding rehearsal dinner in an art gallery, where we enjoyed fine wines and fine art in what can best be described as a “sumptuous” setting. It was lovely.

Many wine labels, like those of Qutori, Alfred Eames, and Williams Cellars, are works of art, creatively describing what's in the bottle as well as adorning the vessel itself. Eames is known for its Spanish wines, and their labels speak of Alfred's years living and working in that country. Besides being a winemaker, Julie Bennet at Qutori is also an artist and graphic designer. Her colorful, clever wine labels attest to her talents. Williams Cellars is co-owned by renowned artist Connie Williams, who creates many of their wine's striking labels. Some are also designed by AppleShed gallery artists.

Many wineries adorn their tasting rooms and facilities with paintings and sculptures, along with artistic photographs from the winery and surrounding vineyards. Artistic imagery is a common component of wine-serving and -tasting facilities. Perfect pairings.

It not just what's in the wine, but how and where you serve it. Think of some of the picturesque table settings you've seen at wine dinners and wine tastings, each a work of art. Table décor is an art form in and of itself. Just ask places like [Fabula](#), [Tiffany's, Etc.](#), and [Heirlooms for Hospice](#). Both specialize in helping you design a beautiful table. And at AppleShed in Cedaredge, you can find it all in one place: the wine, the art, and table settings.

With the (unwelcome) changes brought about by Covid, how we combine art and wine has changed—old needs and new ways to meet them. At a recent featured artist gathering at the [Montrose Center for the Arts \(MCA\)](#), we used red tape to put directional arrows along the carpet, leading patrons past the art on display—it was a silent auction fundraiser—to the wine table. We served the wine in disposable plastic glasses rather than the have-to-be-washed crystal normally used. No food. Masks lifted to sip wine, lowered to walk about, visit, peruse art. The event doubled as the artist's reception for July's featured artist, pastelist Barbara Kendrick. Strange to visit with her and other artists and guests when their faces were covered, and hard to understand what they were saying with mouths behind masks. Jokes were made about making special masks with a hole in them to put a straw through for sipping wine while remaining covered. Strange new world.

All of the local galleries and art centers have changed how they honor their artists, sell their artwork, and still find a way to have both wine and art. [Blue Sage](#) in Paonia, [GMAEC](#) in Cedaredge, MCA and [Magic Circle Players](#) in Montrose, the [Wright Opera House](#) in Ouray, and the [Sherbino](#) in Ridgway all combine visual and performing arts with the serving of wine. The 610 Courtyard in Ridgway now hosts

a weekly Wine Wednesday, offering jazz as a component of the event that can seat 16 people at a time, twice a night. Innovative.

However it happens, and whoever hosts it, the result is the same: People still love to pair their art with wine. Covid may have thrown us a curveball, but we're just finding more clever ways to create a perfect pairing of wine and art.