



# This Winery Was Voted #2 Best Tasting Room in the U.S. and Its Location Might Surprise You

Casandra Karpiak Jan 15, 2025 Updated Jan 15, 2025



Image Credit: Casandra Karpiak.

PREV

NEXT

Dying rays of late November sunlight flooded through the floor-to-ceiling windows of Los Milics Vineyards' tasting room, sending shades of amber and gold dancing across the steel walls. Towering monolithic columns rise from the desert landscape and stand like sentinels in the heart of the vineyard, demanding admiration.

Tucked away in southern Arizona, it seemed like an unlikely location for a winery awarded the #2 Best Tasting Room in the Country by USA Today in 2024.

I arrived at Los Milics in Elgin, Arizona, a short 51 miles from Tucson International Airport. On long desert highways, I passed undulating hills and rocky mountain vistas.

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Heading straight for the tasting room, I sipped on its award-winning Rosé, marveling at the stunning views of the rolling hills and sprawling vineyards stretching endlessly around me. Varietals like Vermentino, Tempranillo, and Petit Verdot thrive in this region's unique soil and climate, producing bold and complex wines that catch the attention of wine critics and enthusiasts alike.

The winery is a breathtaking blend of world-class architecture, award-winning wines, and the profound vision of founder Pavé Milic.

It's exactly what I envisioned when I first heard about Los Milics Vineyards two years prior. I first met winemaker Pavé Milics at the James Beard-nominated [EnB restaurant in Scottsdale](#), he co-owns, a place where he has consistently championed the connection between food, wine, and community.

At the heart of Los Milics Vineyards is Milic, whose story is as compelling as the wines he produces. Born to a Colombian mother and a Yugoslavian father, Milic's hospitality and wine career has been nothing short of extraordinary.

From fine-dining restaurants in New York and Napa, his love affair with [Arizona wine](#) began in 2007 when he curated an all-Arizona wine list for FNB — a bold move that earned national acclaim. Pavé's passion culminated in 2018 with the foundation of Los Milics Vineyards.

"We always knew we wanted to add this idea of adding the architecture to the experience. It's one thing to experience Arizona wine country through the lens of wine and food, but then you add the layer of architectural abstraction. The idea of placing the tasting room in the middle of the vineyards is so that you have to walk through them to get to the building" shares Milic of his vision for the breathtaking property.

## A Modernist Masterpiece

The first thing I notice upon arriving at Los Milics is its architecture. It resembles a contemporary Stonehenge and is a

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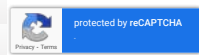
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stunning visual contrast against the rugged desert landscape.

The award-winning Chen + Suchart Studio designed the space, and international outlets celebrate its sleek design and seamless integration with the landscape. Floor-to-ceiling windows frame sweeping views of the Mustang Mountains and the iconic "Biscuit," as locals lovingly refer to the rocky landmark. It creates a serene, almost otherworldly experience.

On cooler days, the expansive patio invites guests to enjoy the high desert breeze, perfectly paired with a glass of wine. Here, wine aficionados and casual visitors can unwind in a sophisticated and welcoming space.

Arizona wines occupy a fascinating space, balancing delicately between the traditions of the Old World and the innovation of the New. This poetic philosophy is evident in every bottle crafted at Los Milics. From nurturing the vines in the meticulously managed vineyards to hand-selecting blends, every step of the process honors innovation and tradition.

The dedication to quality has not gone unnoticed. At the March 2024 Arizona Governor's Cup, the winery claimed Best White, Best Rosé, and Best in Show awards, solidifying its place as a leader in the state's wine scene. USA Today named Los Milics one of the ["Best New Winery Experiences in the U.S."](#) in 2023, and it's easy to see why.

## A Haven in the High Desert

It was an unexpected pleasure to wake up amid the Arizona vines. The newly built modern and minimalist desert dwellings drop a king-size bed from the ceiling at the touch of a button, transitioning a large living space into a cozy bedroom.

My first morning, I woke up to the sun rising over the vineyards, with a hot cup of coffee in hand and endless views that were nothing short of awe-inspiring. Standing amidst a vineyard, surrounded by uninterrupted landscape views, is an experience that feels comforting and invigorating.

When I arrived, the nine casitas had only recently opened and, like many new establishments, were still experiencing a few initial growing pains. The contactless keypad entry to my casita didn't work, but help was a quick phone call away. The minimalist design of the units was almost too clever, with ample closets hiding behind stylish wood panels that took a few tries to find.

The sleek modern interior design, a nod to Arizona's desert landscape, and floor-to-ceiling windows filled the space with natural light and paired well with the uninterrupted vistas. A large walk-in shower, plush robes, and high-end bath amenities enhanced a luxurious stay.

A short walk back to the tasting room for dinner, I dined on a seasonal menu with dishes like pan-fried sea bass and duck confit. Each course was expertly paired with Los Milics wines, showcasing the impressive range of varietals produced onsite. A delightful panna cotta smothered in wine reduction was the pièce de résistance.

An impressive number of guests filled the restaurant on an otherwise ordinary November evening — quite unexpected for a venue tucked away in such a remote location.

"We are getting people from Sierra Vista, Patagonia, [Bisbee](#), and Tucson who are hearing about the restaurant and just driving in," adds Pam Hait, Media Relations for Los Milics Vineyard.

## More Than a Winery — A Community

Beyond the incredible wines and striking architecture, Los Milics embodies a sense of community. Pavle's deep ties to Arizona's culinary and wine industries have allowed him to foster relationships far beyond the vineyard.

Through his column "Pavle-On-Juice" in [Phoenix Magazine](#), he shares stories of the region's winemakers and grape growers, further cementing the importance of Arizona's wine industry on a national stage.

By visiting Los Milics, you're supporting a thriving industry that continues to challenge expectations and inspire innovation.

"To be able to expand beyond your walls and be part of a larger conversation that showcases what happens within this state, that all sounds really good. But really, the true value in that is the richness in the relationships you develop and that you ferment," ruminates Milic.

### Insider Tip:

If you [find yourself in Scottsdale](#), be sure to visit Los Milics' second tasting room — an urban oasis that brings the vineyard experience to the heart of the city.

Arizona's wine industry is young, dynamic, and filled with stories waiting to be shared. At Los Milics, you're tasting the heart and soul of Arizona in every sip and becoming part of a narrative redefining what New World winemaking can be.

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