

TOP STORY EDITOR'S PICK

## Napa's RD Winery hosts Lunar New Year celebration

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Lion dancers at RD Winery's Lunar New Year celebration on Saturday, Feb. 21.

Paulo Dumlao/Courtesy photo

Napa's Vietnamese-owned RD Winery hosted its third Lunar New Year event this past weekend, bringing together a blend of cultures to usher in the Year of the Horse.

Lunar New Year is a 15-day celebration of the new year of the lunisolar calendar. It is the most celebrated holiday in China, and is also celebrated in other East Asian countries, like Vietnam, according to National Geographic.

For attendee Megan Scott, who grew up celebrating Chinese New Year in San Francisco, RD Winery's Lunar New Year celebration on Feb. 21 offered an opportunity to participate in the festivities close to home.



“This is a winery that I love,” Scott said. “That is close to my house, and having cultural celebrations like this is important for our community to showcase different celebrations and to make it really accessible to everyone by having it here. It’s something I want to support.”

The event featured a dance floor with music by DJ Aurelio, a Lion Dance performance from Leung’s White Crane Dragon and Lion Dance Association, and food provided by Cooked by Gio’s Filipino food truck.

“I think it's a very interesting dynamic, here especially, there's a really good opportunity for the cultures, Asian cultures, to come through together,” said Paulo Dumlao, who attended the event with his partner Sam Chen and his sister Trish Dumlao. “And a lot of people are excited about this. We have Filipino food. We're serving wine from a Vietnamese (winery), and then we're celebrating the Lunar New Year.”

RD Winery prides itself on bringing diversity into the wine industry, as the first Vietnamese-owned winery in Napa, and operating with a woman as CEO, according to its hospitality director Kandace Markovich Wilson. Wilson highlighted the opportunity to celebrate that diversity with the holiday.

“Lunar New Year is an opportunity to celebrate positivity and create a little luck for the upcoming year,” Wilson stated. “It is our hope to provide a space for anyone to come and enjoy a glass of wine in a comfortable environment and learn a little more about our unique perspective in the wine industry.”

RD Winery was originally founded in 2012 by Vietnamese businessman Dong Van Nguyen as an export-only winery that produced wines for the Vietnamese market. It wasn’t until 2019 that CEO Mailynh Phan brought the wines to the U.S. market, with the tasting room, located at 3 Executive Way in Napa, opening in the summer of 2020, according to RD Winery’s website.

The winery produces three different tiers of wine: Fifth Moon, the everyday wine collection; Hundred Knot, Sonoma and Napa Valley-appellation wines; and its highest-tier wines, Khoai.

After a challenging few years for the wine industry, Phan hopes that the new year brings positive change.

“When we opened, it was in 2020 so we had COVID, and then we had the fires,” Phan recalled. “So it's been challenging. It's been an uphill battle. So every year, I just hope that more people find us, and the people who do, our team usually resonates with them, and our story resonates with them, and that's all we can hope for.”

RD Winery hosts events outside of the Lunar New Year celebration, including an upcoming presentation on river otters on March 5 and a spring cherry blossom wine and paint night on April 11. These special events are in addition to the winery's regular tastings and more specialized experiences, like an Asian-Inspired Wine and Food Pairing menu available on weekends and a Wine and Chocolate Pairing.

RD Winery is open Thursday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday and Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit **[rdwinery.com](https://rdwinery.com)**.