



## Windmill Winery

LIKE SURPRISES, especially pleasant ones. And it was a very pleasant surprise when we discovered the Windmill Winery on a recent road trip to Florence. It sits just a few miles west of town, and while it's still an all-American farm, owner Harold Christ has added specialty vegetables, a nursery and, most impressive, a stunning wedding location that features a brick aqueduct and 100-year-old barn. We actually heard about it at the Inmate Store over by the State Prison when someone asked me if I had been there. I hadn't, but it sure sounded like a place I needed to stop by.

Driving in on the railroad-tie entry, your eyes quickly dart around trying to take it all in. It doesn't take long for Christ to drive up on a 1952 John Deere and welcome us. Christ is a bit of a nostalgic guy, so he proudly points out that he still uses his large John Deere collection to farm. He tells us the aqueduct was made from salvaged brick from the old Jewel Box Pawn shop that was torn down in Phoenix, and the barn is a 1910 model he found in Green Bay and reassembled here.

"It had 50 coats of white paint on it," Christ points out.

He adds that after he had it sandblasted and steam cleaned, "It became something really special."

When I first walked in I thought, "How lucky is this guy to be able to build a brand-new barn like this," having no idea it was a century old.

We also were lucky on our Friday afternoon visit to the Windmill Winery to get there just before a wedding. Unfortunately, the bride was running late and we didn't really get a chance to ask her why she picked the Windmill Winery, but I can tell you the beauty of the bride and the location were a perfect match for a perfect wedding day. I also have to tell you that I did get a little preoccupied driving Harold's tractor, so maybe I could have talked to the bride a little more had I not left her for a John Deere.

The bottom line is that the Windmill Winery has something perfect for everybody — although not everyone will be able to drive the tractors. And it's not only a good place to stop when you're in Florence, it's a good reason to go to Florence in the first place. **H**

DAN DAVIS, host of *Highroads with Dan Davis*, takes readers on an exploration of hidden gems and out-of-the-way places.



if you go

The Windmill  
Winery

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