



## **Ancient Peaks Winery - Margarita Adventures Tour(s) of the Historic Santa Margarita Ranch**

Santa Margarita Ranch comprises approximately 13,000 acres and has a long established history of agricultural production, ecological protection, and recreational/educational activities. Agricultural, Recreational, and Ecological Tourism respectful of the environment has been one of many adjunct activities that have occurred on this working landscape for more than 200 years. Historically there have been a variety of agricultural and recreational tourism activities that occur throughout the Santa Margarita Ranch. Some of these activities include Ranch Tours. Ranch Tours have included tours on foot, horseback, bicycle, vehicle, train, hot air balloon, and periodically even aircraft.

Margarita Adventures in conjunction with Ancient Peaks Winery, continues this long standing tradition by providing Ranch tours that involve the visitor/customer with a comprehensive Ranch experience. The Margarita Adventures tours do not focus on a single aspect of the Ranch, rather they provides an opportunity for the visitor to experience the many facets that make up the Santa Margarita Ranch in a fun and social environment.

Margarita Adventures conducts a variety of educational activities including touring our visitors into the heart of the Ranch where they are able to learn about our working vineyard which co-exists alongside a long established working cattle ranch. They also traverse and see unspoiled natural landscapes that include wildlife, oak woodlands, native grasses, wetlands, and learn about our unique geology. Our visitors are able to observe how a working landscape, when managed correctly, co-exists with, and complements the surrounding environment. Our tours are intended to educate our visitors about the Ranch's history and the various agricultural products we produce. They learn about the connection of these crops, whether wine grapes, cattle, or other, from the field to their table. This experience is often the visitor's first direct experience with agriculture and the tour is aimed at increasing the consumer's appreciation of local, appropriately grown products so that when they leave they will hopefully make informed choices in the grocery when they shop. These tours emphasize the importance of respecting the environment while utilizing "best agricultural practices". We showcase how agricultural practices can make a difference not only in the quality of the agricultural products, but also in maintaining the quality of the natural environment.

The Margarita Adventures "canopy tour" tour is only one component of our existing Agricultural and Ecological Tours. The canopy tour is partially conducted via zip-line(s). The canopy tour provides a unique perspective for our visitors to see and enjoy some of the ranch's ecological attributes as well as agricultural activities. The canopy tour is an optional component



of the Margarita Adventures tour. The canopy tour currently consists of four (4) separate, but consecutive zip lines totaling over 3,000 lineal feet. These lines are accessed from existing ranch roads and are mid-tour off of one of the ground tour routes. Commercial use of the zip lines was implemented after approval of our business license by the County Planning Department. The zip-lines were installed with very little impact. Construction of the zip-lines included installation of heavy, structural steel beams planted in the ground with engineered anchors and supports. The actual lines were then threaded to the poles, just like a phone line. Our longest span is approximately 1,350 feet, just over one quarter of a mile.

The Margarita Adventures tour is generally done via a passenger van. The tour van is limited to a maximum of 10 guests. A typical itinerary for the canopy tour is outlined below:

12:45 – 1:00 pm:

Tour participants arrive at Ancient Peaks Tasting room, sign a waiver, view historic photos in the tasting room, and receive an introduction to the unique geographical positioning/setting of the Ranch.

1:00 pm:

Tour participants load into the van which then leaves Ancient Peaks Winery/Office.

1:00 – 1:30 pm:

The tours typically enter at the "1 mile gate" into the Ranch. This segment of the tour passes through the grazing area known as the "Remeck" field. This field provides an opportunity to share the Ranch's use of "pulse grazing" management practices, which were implemented throughout the Santa Margarita Ranch beginning in 1999. Our visitors are shown how these rotational grazing practices have led to the proliferation of native grasses as well as the natural regeneration of the native oak trees. Because of these practices, native grass and natural oak tree regeneration is occurring throughout the Ranch. This portion of the tour focuses on these resources and the beneficial nature of rotational grazing practices.

Once through the "Remeck" field, the tour embarks into one of several vineyards. The first vineyard is the Moore Ridge Vineyard. This Ridge Vineyard is over 300 acres and includes blocks of cabernet sauvignon, zinfandel, syrah, petit verdot, and malbec. Driving through the vineyard, our visitors are provided an overview of the farming practices utilized in our vineyard(s), which have led to the Santa Margarita Vineyards receiving SIP (Sustainability in Practice) Certification. The SIP Certification program is managed by the Central Coast Vineyard Team, a nonprofit grower group, whose mission is to promote sustainable winegrowing on California's Central Coast and beyond.



1:30 – 2:30 pm:

The Canopy (zip-line) Tour occurs in an area of the Ranch called "Horseshoe". This area is called "Horseshoe" because it is an area above the vineyards that when looking down at the vineyards, the edge of the vineyards has the visual character of a horseshoe. The canopy tour includes an orientation to the different areas of the Ranch, a safety talk, harness set up, and riding the lines.

This is a social activity, and like most wine activities, done in groups, often friends, family's or team building. Thus, this portion of the tour is spent enjoying the views and watching others ride. Actual ride time is about 2 minutes per Ag adventurer. Not all Ranch tour guests ride the zip line. Guests who are not 'riding' simply enjoy walking around, taking in the vistas, and living in the moment. The canopy tour provides the riders, as well as the non-riders, with an aerial view of the Ranch allowing them to see how the agricultural uses and natural environment are interconnected.

2:30 – 3:15 pm:

The remainder of the tour heads along the Trout Creek area. The tour travels existing Ranch roads past several irrigation reservoirs and stock ponds to the southern edge of the Ranchos historic boundary, then back into the vineyards. This segment of the tour focuses on the unique geology of the Ranch and includes an opportunity to view a wide array of wildlife. The tour passes through Oyster Ridge, an uplifted, ancient sea bed that includes vast areas of petrified oyster shells. This geological feature and its mineral composition (high calcium content) is one of the original reasons that Robert Mondavi selected this particular area of the Santa Margarita Ranch to plant the initial vineyards in 1999.

The tour describes the geological features and how these unique formations contribute to the quality and complexity of the "Oyster Ridge" wines. These vineyards include the following varietals: cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon, and merlot. In addition to seeing the geology, this portion of the tour often provides an opportunity for visitors to see the most diverse wildlife since the tour traverses a variety of ecosystems. The numerous drainages and water features attract a variety of birds, including raptors, waterfowl, and game birds. The Ranch is also home to numerous terrestrial species that are likewise drawn to these man made water features. This portion of the tour provides views of some of the most iconic parts of the vineyard and ranch.

The long and unique history of the Ranch is a topic of discussion throughout all portions of the tour. Our guides provide an overview of the history of the Ranch beginning with the prehistoric period and continuing through the Native Americans, Mission, Rancho, early United States through modern day periods. Every tour guide has their favorite story to share, and sharing this history keeps the Ranch history alive and in the minds of our visitors.



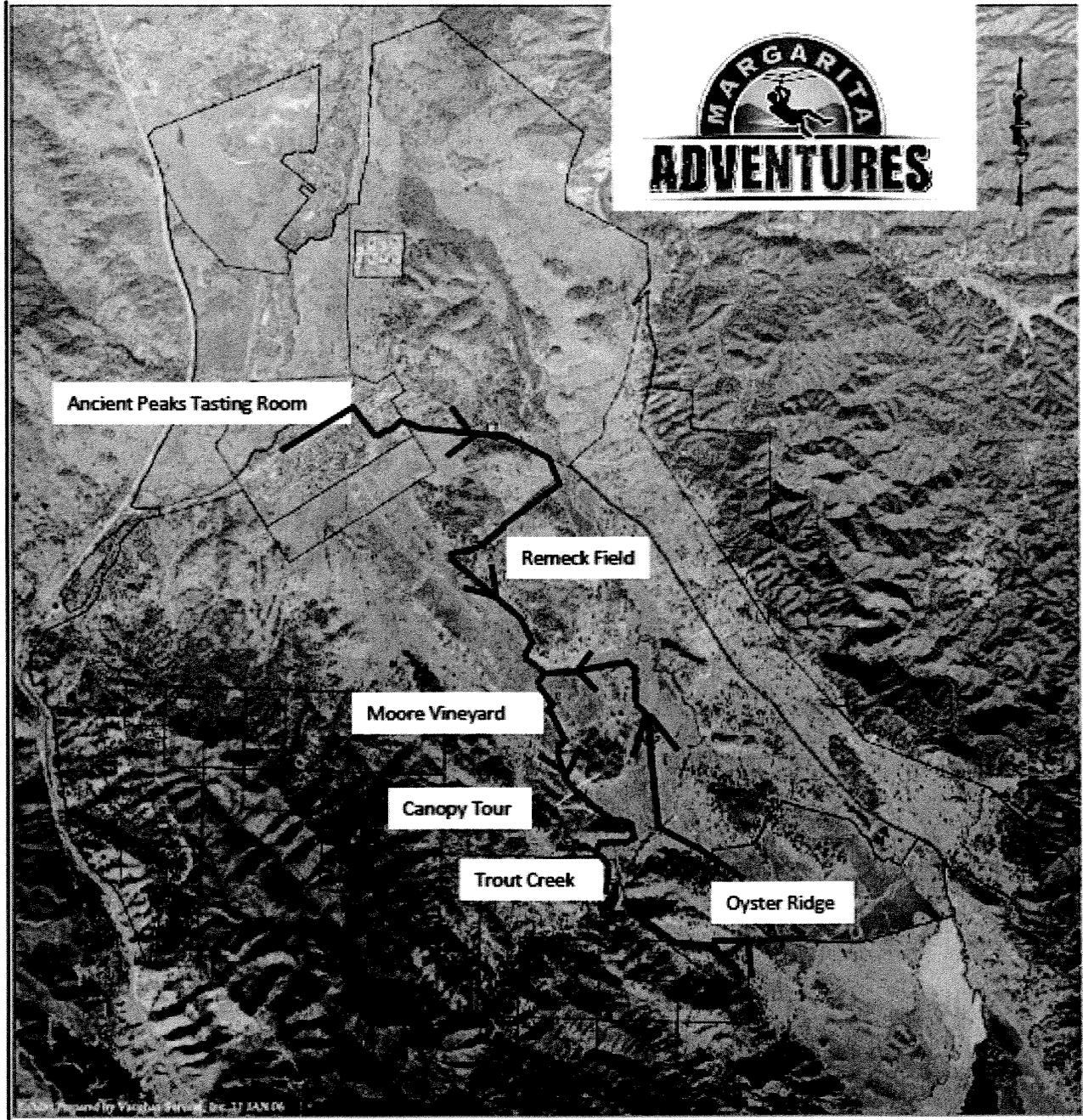
3:15 – 3:30 pm:

Drop off back at the Ancient Peaks Winery/Office, gather belongings, use facilities etc.

3:30 – 4:30 pm:

Guests head to the Ancient Peaks Tasting Room for complimentary wine tasting for all guests 21 and older. Guests will then learn about the winemaker, winemaking and the unique varietals that Ancient Peaks produces. The tasting room experience is the moment our visitors "connect the pieces" they have experienced during their 2.5 hours tour. The entire experience educates the visitor on the Ranch's active stewardship practices. Often an owner and/or our winemakers are present in the tasting room providing our visitor/ guests with the personal connection to the wine, the land, and our people.

This personal connection, whether it be through the physical experience of the Ranch tour or by meeting the people behind the label, are factors that lead a consumer to become loyal to the "brand" and become a repeat customer. Brand loyalty is important as it contributes to the sale of the agricultural product. Brand loyalty may mean joining the wine club, purchasing Ancient Peaks Wines at the tasting room, or purchasing Ancient Peaks Wines, or any other wine grown on the Central Coast for that matter, in their local grocery store when they return to their distant communities. The Santa Margarita Ranch has always been, and continues to be a combination of agriculture, business, education, and recreation rolled into one.



**Margarita Adventures  
Agricultural and Ecological Tour  
Route "C" Alignment**