

Photo: R. Brad Knipstein



# Wineries: A Lucrative Clientele for the Window Design Industry

BY SOPHIA MCDONALD BENNETT

**From Oregon to New York and nearly everywhere in between, wineries are a lucrative business. Interior designers and window treatment professionals who want to work with them will find a wealth of opportunities in this hospitality-focused space.**

*For this article, designers in California showcased two very different projects and talked about what it takes to woo winery clients—no wining and dining required.*

Photo: Aubrie Pick



Photo: Joe Fletcher Photography



## Hayley Knapp Palmer

**H.Palmer Design,  
San Francisco**

**The Project:** *Aperture Cellars, Healdsburg*

Aperture Cellars is a project by Jesse Katz, the son of famed photographer Andy Katz. Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that Katz wanted a tasting room with the look and feel of an art gallery. The space needed to be simple, yet edgy, with as much thought put into form as function.

According to Palmer, the pinnacle of the roof in the ultramodern space was designed to resemble the aperture of a lens. When she was thinking about her design inspiration, Palmer notes, “I stood underneath it and looked out, and I wanted there to feel like there was open flow coming from that space, with few or no barriers.” There also needed to be a strong interplay between the indoors and outdoors so people could view the vineyard and understand the origin of the product they were enjoying.

To that end, the space has floor-to-ceiling windows in several of the private tasting rooms. While that provided the desired views, it also allowed the California sun to beat in at certain points of the day. To provide cooling and light-blocking, Palmer specified solar roller shades from Lutron and modern-looking hardware from J Geiger. The motorized shades can be quickly raised or lowered as needed while providing a neutral presence.



Photo: JD Hudson

## Top Takeaways

### It’s all about the brand.

One of the ways that commercial projects differ from residential projects is that “everything starts with the brand,” Palmer says. “The first conversations are, ‘What is the brand? What is your message? What is the feel? What are you trying to say, and what feelings are you trying to evoke?’ The most important part of hospitality design is a feeling and a story, and that all comes from the brand.” Only once you fully understand that can you start to develop a concept for the project.

### Strike a (technical) balance.

One of the things Palmer loves about hospitality design is the technical side. In a winery project, it’s vital to think about issues such as fire codes, the wearability and longevity of fabric, and compliance with local and state laws. Make sure you

have some understanding of those requirements before diving into any project.

### Window treatments are key.

Palmer is a huge fan of using window fashions in hospitality projects. “They soften the space visually,” she says. “It makes everything feel a little more upscale. It’s a great way to bring in pattern.”

Window treatments can also act as functional objects. “In hospitality, you have to be very conscious of sound bouncing from hard material, so [window coverings] offer a buffer from sound,” says Palmer. That is especially true in double-story rooms. Window treatments can also become an architectural element, dividing rooms into smaller spaces.