

ViciVino.com Background Information

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ViciVino.com (pronounced **vee**-chee **vee**-noh) was born from its founder's love of food, wine and travel (not necessarily in that order). Lori Lapidés started working on the website in late 2007, but in a larger sense this is the sum of her life's work up until now.

The ViciVino.com website has six main sections: Educational Wine Tours, Vintique, Articles and Recipes, Wine Region Info, a discussion forum and the blog *Wine Region Travels with Lori*.

The ViciVino.com Educational Wine Tours focus on learning through hands-on experiences in the vineyards, wineries, tasting rooms and dining rooms of the California Wine Regions. Using ViciVino.com's tour service, wine travelers will learn about wines and vines from the experts, from walking through vineyards, comparative tasting, and from trying different food and wine pairings. Customers answer a questionnaire on the website with the parameters of the trip – how many days, which region(s) to visit, restaurant and hotel prices, other activities desired, children and/or dogs accompanying – and ViciVino.com prepares a personalized tour. Seeker Tours are the ViciVino.com personalized itinerary service, a great low-budget option for wine region travel. Explorer Tours are self-guided, with a detailed daily agenda prepared specifically for each wine

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travel group. ViciVino.com makes all reservations; all the travelers need to do is show up. And the Ultimate Adventurer Tours are all-inclusive up-scale tours, with ViciVino.com's world-class wine experts as personal guides.

Vintage is ViciVino.com's unique boutique, where visitors can shop for wine-related items for use at home, and for gift giving. We are fortunate to be the first on-line store featuring the painting of rising artist Marie Massey. There are also gourmet foods and chocolates, glass art, and other great items for wine lovers.

The *Articles & Recipes* include interviews with wine industry personalities (such as winemakers, winery and vineyard owners), an *Ask the Winemaker* column (which has a question and answer format with our wine consultant Winemaker B), some of our favorite recipes and wine pairing tips, and frequently asked questions (FAQ) about wine, wine tasting and wine travel.

The *Wine Region Info* pages include a summary of each region, followed by detailed data on wineries, lodging, restaurants, spas and other activities in the region. Information available to users includes contact information with the website address, and more detailed survey information from the ViciVino.com staff. ViciVino.com has developed detailed survey forms for the wineries, hotels, restaurants, etc., and their experienced staff visits these locations to personally get the data. Typical data collected includes knowledge and friendliness of staff, charge for tastings, hours of operation, picnic areas, interesting art and/or architecture, if they are child-friendly, dog-friendly, plus other data to help travelers better plan their trips to the wine regions. ViciVino.com began by

focusing on the California wine regions and will soon expand coverage to the rest of the California regions, and then on to other wine regions such as Oregon, Washington, the New York Finger Lakes region, and Australia and New Zealand, eventually covering wine regions worldwide.

ViciVino.com has both a *discussion forum* and a *blog*. The discussion forum enables any visitor to ViciVino.com to write about their personal experiences while traveling, or even after having a great wine drinking experience at home. It also allows visitors to submit questions to the winemaker, which may be answered either in the forum or in an *Ask the Winemaker* column on the website. While the discussion forum provides detailed experiences about specific wineries and wine regions, the blog – *Wine Region Travels with Lori* – provides ViciVino.com’s founder, Lori Lapidés, with a more personal outlet for her observations of the wine and food related world.

Lori Lapidés

The founder of ViciVino.com is Lori Lapidés, wine lover, trained chef, ex-travel agent and serial entrepreneur. Her resume includes running her own bookkeeping service from the age of 22 and then founding a gourmet food catalogue/gift basket company, “Whet Your Appetite!”. After her boys were in high school, Lori went back to college full-time and got her Culinary and Business Certificates from Diablo Valley College, including doing a two-month internship in Paris. She then went on to get her certificate as a travel agent. In the course of moving around the country with her husband, she has lived in a few of the wine

regions: the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, the Santa Barbara area, and for the last 18 years in the San Francisco Bay Area.

She has worked for travel agencies, hotels, caterers and restaurants, and has enjoyed visiting wineries in regions near to home and others around the world. Lori's love of wine, food, travel and the people involved in these pursuits really comes through in the website. More information on Lori, and personal travel stories, can be found in the [About Us](#) section of the website.

About the name, ViciVino.com

“Veni, vidi, vici!” (I came, I saw, I conquered!) was the response of Julius Caesar, when asked by the Roman Senate about his recent victory over Pharnaces II in Turkey. ViciVino.com is dedicated to making wine travels in different wine regions easier and more enjoyable, through education and tours. The website reflects the founder's love of wine and travel by providing an enjoyable environment for learning about grape growing, wine making, food and wine pairing, and wine travel. Knowledgeable and experienced wine travel planners at ViciVino.com design the perfect wine travel experiences, with the goal that at the end of each wine journey – at home, on the ViciVino.com website, in the wine regions – wine travelers will say, “**Veni, vidi, vici ... vino!**”

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