

Wine Spectator

Surf's Up for Central Coast Vintners

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• It was *Sideways* meets *Big Wednesday* at the inaugural Central Coast Longboard Surf Classic this past Sunday, as local winemakers and brewers paddled out at Pismo Beach for an exhibition match. A sunny day with surf in the three- to four-foot range set the stage for the vintners, including Mike Chase of Denner Vineyards and Terry Culton of Adelaida Cellars, to face off in 15-minute heats. Josh Beckett, winemaker at Peachy Canyon and Chronic Cellars, took top honors in the finals. "I got really lucky," Beckett said. "It was hit or miss on the wave selection." He gained an edge when the leash-less runner-up, Aaron Jackson of Aaron Wines ("an exceptional surfer" according to Beckett), lost his board after a wave. "I got a few more waves while he was chasing his board." The event capped off the first Wine, Waves and Beyond, a four-day festival celebrating two of the Central Coast's most enticing assets, its surfing scene and its wineries. Proceeds go to the non-profit Association of Amputee Surfers, which promotes the inspiration, education and rehabilitation of the disabled, with a focus on veterans. Beckett, a surfer since the age of 15, was also one of the organizers. Plans are already underway for next year's event, and Beckett hopes to expand the competition to winemakers from beyond the Central Coast. "It's amazing how many people in the wine industry surf," Beckett said. "They just started coming out of the woodwork."

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