

# Traveling to California?

By Susan M. Revier



Wilson Creek Winery & Vineyards

If you travel to Southern California, make it a point to go to Temecula (north and slightly east of San Diego) and visit the beautiful wine country located there. A must-do is a visit to Wilson Creek Winery. It is a beautiful place. They have a wonderful wine tasting room (remember wine is gluten free!), gorgeous grounds, and best of all, a restaurant, Creekside Grille, with a gluten-free menu.



Executive Chef Steve Stawinski and one of my nephews worked together to develop the gluten-free menu as well as their prepa-

ration protocols and training for their servers.

The Creekside Grille Gluten-Free Menu changes with the season. Here are the items on the Gluten-Free Summer Menu.

## Starters

- Pulled Pork
- Salt and Pepper Sautéed Calamari Salad
- Jalapeno Lime Shrimp Ceviche
- Broiled Heirloom Tomato Caprese

## Salads

- The Vineyard
- Deanna's Summer Cobb
- Crow's Pass Panzanilla

## Sandwiches

- House Roasted Turkey
- Creekside Burger
- Chicken Mascarpone
- Salmon BLT

## Creekside Specialties

- Shelton Farms Chicken
- Sustainable Seasonal Fish
- Never Ever Flat Iron Steak
- BBQ Bison Back Ribs
- Salmon Penne

Details about each of the offerings listed above may be found at [www.wilsoncreekwinery.com](http://www.wilsoncreekwinery.com) by clicking on Restaurant – New Gluten-Free Menu – Gluten-Free Menu Available Here.

The website states:

“Most of our items are naturally gluten free because Chef Steve makes all his sauces from scratch. Most fresh fish and steak items are already gluten free. Chef Steve has worked hard on finding tasty gluten-free pasta and a home-made gluten-free bread. Chef prepares gluten-free items using separate cutting boards

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and knives to avoid cross-contact. We also offer an amazing flourless chocolate dessert. All wine is naturally gluten free, and we also offer tasty gluten-free beer.”

The Creekside Grille Gluten-Free Kitchen Protocols give us a look at the care this restaurant takes to ensure safe preparation of our gluten-free meals. The

term “mise en place” in the protocols means to have all your ingredients prepared and ready to go before you start cooking.

### **Creekside Grille Gluten-Free Kitchen Protocols**

#### **Preparation Protocols:**

1. Flour is to be used strictly away from the Line and any other mise en place. When possible, the use of the dry storage room is the preferred location of prep involving flour.
2. The cutting of bread is to be done strictly away from the Line, and any other mise en place. When possible, the use of the dry storage room is the preferred location of prep involving bread cutting.
3. When the use of a premade food item/sauce is employed, the ingredient label will be kept near the Line in order to research any questions as to the genuine degree of gluten containment as well as reassure those who may be affected.
4. Our kitchen at times uses beef and chicken bases. When sauces are made using base, it will be noted in red permanent ink on the Date/Time Sticker. When transferring the sauce/stock from one container to the next, a new sticker will be affixed to the container until the completed use of it.
5. When writing specials in the morning, and the resulting prep work is executed, care must be taken to allow otherwise GF specials to remain GF.

#### **Line Protocols**

1. Prep work involving flour, puff pastry, bread, flat bread, crackers, croutons, crostini, pies, or bruschetta is strictly prohibited on or near the Line. Sidework/prep of that nature is to be done away from the Line, preferably in the Dry Storage Room when possible.
2. Upon a GF order coming in, all station chefs and the expeditor will be notified as such. Extra care will be given to any condiments needed for that order.
3. The use of the grill and flat top is strictly prohibited with Gluten-Free orders. Instead, the use of a clean sauté pan will be mandatory.
4. A new cutting board, stainless steel bowl, utensils, and a clean knife will be required of all GF orders. If assistance in this area is required, prep staff and kitchen management will be available. Importance is placed primarily on the validity of truly being GF, and secondarily on speed.
5. The use of kosher salt from the box will be required instead of one of our signature salts or rubs as contamination can occur.
6. Orders being filled will be plated on the proper *black* china plates, and will never be plated on white ones. This includes cups of soup.
7. Cutting bread on the Pantry 2 station will no longer be allowed.
8. Whenever possible, the use of mise en place for GF orders is to come from the walk-in, dry storage, or warehouse/freezer areas. Only in rare circumstances should Line mise be used.

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The Creekside Grille servers’ training is conducted in accordance with the following guidelines:

### What I inform our servers on

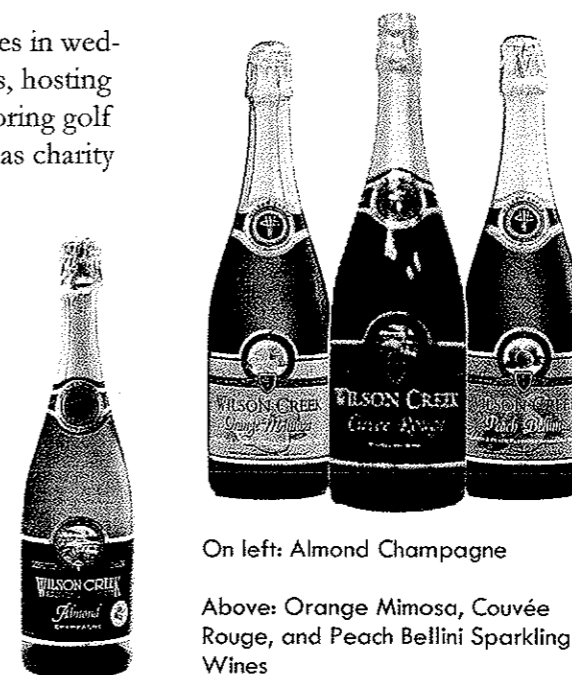
1. **COMMUNICATE** to ease the guest’s stress: Assume any GF guest is very worried about eating out. Getting “glutened” is no fun, and is extremely harmful. So we need to let the guest know that we are on it, in terms of ingredients used and avoiding cross-contact. We celiacs need a lot of reinforcement that everything is going to be OK. So *communicate, communicate, communicate* to ease the GF guest’s stress.
2. **Avoiding cross-contact**: Make sure, from the hostess, to the bussers, to the servers, to the kitchen, etc. that no crumb of gluten gets in that guest’s food.
  - Use separate utensils for GF salads
  - double-check on all sauces and dressing to make sure it is GF
  - do not serve fried anything to a GF guest due to cross-contact
  - use **black** plates on everything for checks and balances
  - when serving each appetizer or entrée restate that it is indeed GF, so the guest doesn't have to ask if it is
3. **DOUBLE check**: Gluten can be found in teriyaki sauce, soy sauce, salad dressings, BBQ sauces, etc. So **DOUBLE CHECK** on everything. Again, do not make the guest ask you to double check. That is our responsibility to do so.

As you can see, great care is taken to make sure that gluten-free guests at the Creekside Grille are well taken care of.

The winery specializes in weddings, holiday parties, hosting concerts, and sponsoring golf tournaments as well as charity events.

They have won numerous awards for their wines. My personal favorite is actually their champagne. It’s Almond Champagne and is to die for! Three of their sparkling wines – Peach Bellini, Orange Mimosa, and Cuvée

Rouge – are also excellent. They are available at Specs Liquor Stores here in Texas.



On left: Almond Champagne

Above: Orange Mimosa, Cuvée Rouge, and Peach Bellini Sparkling Wines

I’m a bit partial to this winery. My brother, Gerry, his wife, Rosie, and their children Bill, Mick, and Libby own and operate the winery. It is truly a family affair. Their story and all the information you could possibly want to know (including how to order their wines) is available on their website, [wilsoncreekwinery.com](http://wilsoncreekwinery.com). It shows all aspects of the winery. If you become a wine club member you receive a beautiful newsletter, published six times a year. You also receive discounts on wine orders. It is truly a treat to visit the winery. Visitors often remark on how friendly everyone is. The Wilson family makes everyone feel welcome!

My nephew, Mick Wilson, (who worked with Executive Chef Stawinski on the gluten-free as-

pect of the restaurant) and his wife Deanna have both been diagnosed with celiac disease.

Here is their story, as told by Mick:

## Gluten-free items now essential at Winery restaurant

By Mick Wilson



Mick and Deanna Wilson

**I** am one of the owners of the family-owned Wilson Creek Winery in Temecula, California.

I was diagnosed with celiac disease three years ago. I had “silent celiac” in that I didn’t have any of the typical symptoms. I had symptoms fifteen years ago, but the doctors misdiagnosed it as IBS or stress.

I had an endoscopy and the doctor took a biopsy and BAM, I found out I had this disease that I never heard of before. After some immediate research on the

disease, I realized that many of those symptoms were ones my wife (Deanna Wilson) wrestled with for years. Soon after, Deanna got tested for celiac, and BAM!, we are now the “Celiac Poster Couple.”

I knew my diet would change for the rest of my life. Since I eat lunch daily at our winery restaurant I worked closely with our executive chef of the Creekside Grille Restaurant at Wilson Creek Winery. Hey, if I am going to eat at this restaurant almost every day I want to know

the GF items are truly GF. Through a lot of research, training, trial and error, we came up with a tasty gluten-free menu, consisting of over 5 appetizers, 8 entrees, and creative desserts. It was a challenge to get our kitchen, servers, and hosts trained about the needs of gluten-free guests, but we think we have it down.

So, now, many gluten-free guests frequent the Creekside Grille. The word has gotten out to where some guests are requesting GF items for weddings and banquets.

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Wilson Creek Winery & Vineyards  
35960 Rancho California Rd  
Temecula CA 92591

Tasting Room  
Hours: Monday through Sunday  
10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Creekside Grille  
Hours: Monday through Sunday  
11:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Phone: 951-699-9463