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## Travel Blog

### How to See Sonoma by Bike

Posted by [Fodor's Guest Blogger](#) on July 02, 2012 at 11:00:34 AM EDT  
 Posted in [Trip Ideas & Itineraries](#) Tagged: [Sonoma](#), [Napa](#), [California](#), [Wine](#), [Winery](#), [Bikes](#)

By *Trish Friesen*

In [California](#), an open road awaits without visits to the gas station or fast food joints. A far cry from Route 66, this roadway is slower and its surroundings beg for a bevy of stops for a different kind of fuel: wine. Clad in atypical wine tasting garb—i.e. stretchy shorts and a tank—and wind rushing through your helmet, there's one goal for the day: visit five wineries by bike along backroads of [Sonoma](#). Following the curvy lines of the vines on two wheels, your self-propelled mode of transportation burns off California wine country's indulgences as you ride. And that's the best kind of road trip, no?

We've assembled five biking-friendly wineries in Sonoma and recommend you visit them in the listed order from first sip to spittoon. Cheers!

Book Your Bike: Many Sonoma hotels have free bikes or rentals available. You can also hire your wheels in Sonoma's main square at [Sonoma Valley Bike Tours](#).



#### Ravenswood

Up a winding incline, [the Ravenswood](#) tasting room overlooks her vines in the same way a castle overlooks her kingdom. Park your ride at the top and saunter in for a sip and swirl of the limited-production reserve list (especially since most major liquor stores carry many of Ravenswood's high-production wines).

Insider Tip: Share a tasting. Most wineries charge \$5-\$20 for basic to premium tastings, and if you're not using the spittoon after that flight of

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pinot, you may start to feel it. Remember, there are four wineries left...

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## Gundlach Bundschu

The second stop is one of the best photo ops for your wine country by wheels whirlwind. Cycle past what seems like infinite rows of vines along an arrow-straight road into the family-owned [Gundlach Bundschu's](#) main hub. The intimate tasting room seems small for the amount of grapes hanging about, but it's this intimacy which allows for the greatest lessons in Gundlach's gewurztraminer or tempranillo vintages.

Insider Tip: Most tasting rooms are heavily air conditioned. Bring a light jacket or sweater along if you plan on unwinding at the wine bar.



## Buena Vista Winery

Founded in 1857, [Buena Vista](#) is California's first premium winery. Purposefully the third stop in our wine *tour de Sonoma*, you'll want to "sip" awhile at the stone-built and ivy-covered winery. Bring a picnic blanket; all the calories burned on the bike will be lost feasting on cheese and baguettes in the winery's shaded picnic area.

Insider Tip: Bring some plain crackers to munch on between tastings. Not only will it cleanse your palette, but also ensure there's sustenance to balance your sips.



## Bartholomew Park Winery

Just a short ride from Sonoma's picturesque town square, you'll find a Tuscan-inspired, white-washed estate amid a sea of textured green vines. Dedicated to organic farming practices and certified in the art since 2005, [Bartholomew Park Winery](#) is passionate about producing micro-lot, single-vineyard wines. Stock up while you're there (or return later by car), because the boutique wines are only sold on-site or through their wine club.

Insider Tip: No winery is more than 15 minutes from the next, so you're not looking at Tour De France-esque distances or difficulty.



## Sebastiani

The last stop is virtually in town, just a stone's throw away from Sonoma's main square.

Though it's not set in the rolling hills of Sonoma's backcountry, [Sebastiani](#) boasts the biggest tasting room of them all with a lengthy bar. Big doesn't mean less friendly or watered down here. In 2001 the vineyard divested itself of nearly 8000 cases of bulk wine to focus on small-batch production. Park yourself at the bar for a taste of the winery's award-winning Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon with grapes sourced from the appellations of Sonoma county.

Insider Tip: Avoid a backpack full of vino and go back in the afternoon or the next day by car to pick up your purchases.

### THINKING OF A TRIP TO SONOMA?

For up-to-the-minute hotel and restaurant recommendations, plus the best planning advice, check out our [Napa and Sonoma Travel Guide](#).

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