

DIABLO GETAWAYS/
RELAXING RETREATS

NAPA: A LUXURIOUS HIDEAWAY

Relaxation is built into the DNA of Napa Valley. Begin your restful journey at Calmére Estate Winery, just 45 minutes away from the Golden Gate Bridge. Calmére—founded by sisters Lisa and Ariana Peju more than 35 years after the establishment of their family's beloved Peju Province Winery—takes its name from the French words for “calm” and “sea,” evoking the 100-acre estate's spectacular location and breathtaking views of the San Francisco Bay and the city skyline in the distance. Calmére's production is focused on their award-winning Chardonnay and Pinot Noir wines, and the winery's seated tasting experience features up to five pours (either in the tasting room or outside on the terrace). With the olive trees growing through the deck, and the sound of bocce players in the background as you sip, a tasting at Calmére will give you a moment to breathe.

The city of Napa and its surrounding area promise lots of ways to enjoy world-class meals and some of the best wine on the globe. The Napa Valley Wine Train is a particular fan favorite, welcoming guests aboard a 100-year-old railcar for a 36-mile round trip through some of Wine Country's most idyllic terrain. The Napa Valley Wine Train also features many themed experiences throughout the year, including murder-mystery dinners and romantic journeys. As tranquil as Napa Valley is while you're immersed in it, there's nothing quite like seeing it from the sky. Balloons Above the Valley has been hosting aerial viewings via hot-air balloon for more than 40 years and offers a variety of travel, food, and wine packages.

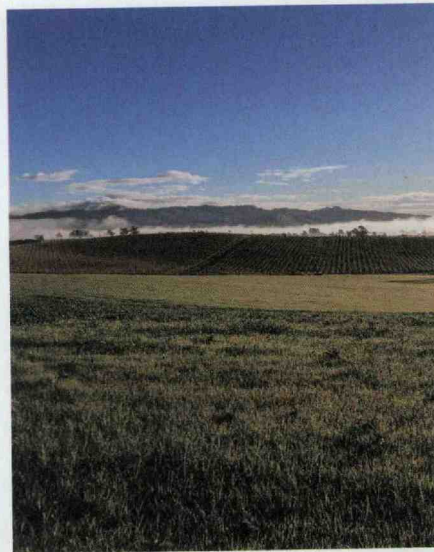
If you're on the hunt for live entertainment, don't miss the Napa Valley Opera House, a historic landmark used as a performing-arts venue. The upstairs space is devoted to the J&M Cellars Ballroom at the Margrit Mondavi Theatre, and the first floor is home to Blue Note Napa, a renowned jazz and supper club. This month, Blue Note Napa will host Greg Adams and East Bay Soul from October 19–20 and actor Dennis Quaid and Jamie James from October 25–26.

Nearby, Calistoga is home to the Old Faithful Geyser of California, one of only three geysers on the globe to erupt regularly. In the 1860s, Calistoga became a prime spa destination, and today, many local spas take advantage of the ar-



ea's natural resources. Indian Springs Calistoga offers classic treatments using materials from their property, including mineral water from their own four geysers, while the Roman Spa Hot Springs Resort is the ideal location for a couple's treatment or girls' trip. The spa at Solage, an Auberge Resort measures 20,000 square feet, offering its own selection of mineral water and mud therapies. Solage's Bathhouse has something for everyone, with geothermal pools measuring in temperature from 105 degrees down to icy cold. Whatever treatment you choose, your body and mind are sure to feel refreshed.

Before your trip ends, don't miss the 1881 Napa Wine History Museum and Tasting Salon. The first museum in Napa Valley documenting wine history, 1881 Napa displays items such as antique decanters and almost 200 his-



TOP: SCOTT CHERBEGIA. BOTTOM: CALMÉRE ESTATE WINERY. NICOLE MARRINO

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toric and handcrafted relics from Europe and the United States, as well as historical details about the 16 sub-appellations of Napa Valley. The museum's Founder's Gallery focuses on the valley's pioneers with photos, stories, and artifacts, while the Early California Wine Trade Exhibition Archive contains objects on loan that harken back to the heyday of California wine, including bottles from the 1800s, wine-trade signs, and historic labels.

1881 Napa also has its own tasting room and patio space for hosting comparative tastings, which are centered on Cabernet Sauvignon (with rosé, whites, and other reds available as well). The flights are crafted to reflect the wide variety of terroir in Napa Valley, and wines are available from most of the Napa Valley appellations.

1881 Napa has many historic ties—it is located in a Victorian home believed to be among the oldest in the area, and the museum and tasting room are situated next to Oakville Grocery, which was founded in 1881 and is the oldest continually operating store of its kind in California, having sold goods to the pioneers who first arrived in the valley and turned it into a thriving wine country. Jean-Charles Boisset,

the man behind Boisset Collection wines, which includes Raymond Vineyards and Buena Vista Winery, created the 1881 Napa space.

LODI: A SPARKLING SANCTUARY

In the midst of the Central Valley, 40 miles or so south of the heart of Sacramento, lies Lodi, which has burst onto the scene as a prime getaway destination for wine tasting, with a number of beautiful parks and activities for the outdoor enthusiast to enjoy. If you or your children are animal lovers, start at the Micke Grove Park and Zoo. The five-acre haven provides the chance to see more than 50 different animal species, including amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, mammals, and birds. While you're at the park, consider visiting Wortley Lake, the Japanese Garden, San Joaquin County Historical Museum, and the Fun Town at Micke Grove amusement park, all of which are located nearby.

Lodi is a favorite with bikers, too, who soak up the town's Mediterranean climate while travel-

ing local country roads. If you're into bird-watching, bike to the Cosumnes River Preserve, while a cycling trip to the Delta provides a glimpse of the towns that dot the Sacramento River.

Many cyclists make a point to take a break at one of the more than 85 wineries in the Lodi area. The over-eighty-year-old Weibel Family Winery—currently run by a third-generation winemaker who emphasizes “quality, everyday” pours—is an ideal destination if you're a fan of sparkling wines (as well as of reds and whites). Weibel's sparkling wines have won a variety of awards, including Gold in the *San Francisco Chronicle* Wine Competition, and the title of Best Sparkling Wine of San Joaquin County. Among fan favorites are the Stanford Brut, Almond Sparkling, Peach Mango Sparkling, and Strawberry Sparkling, but the Weibel tasting room also offers a variety of specialty drinks, including specialty Mimosas of the Month, wine slushies, and a sparkling-wine mix/food pairing dubbed “Flights and Bites.” At the Weibel tasting room, simply write the names of the wines you'd like to try on the glass surface of the bar, take a sip, relax, and enjoy your time away.

WEIBEL FAMILY WINERY