

# Wine Spectator

## Wine Wanderlust Guide: April 2018

Plan your travels with wine in mind: This month, taste well-known classic wines and new discoveries alike at events in California and Oregon, more than 240 outstanding wines will be poured at the Wine Spectator Grand Tour, and get your fill of local cuisine at a Virginia food-and-wine festival

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*Want to explore wine around the world? Wine Spectator's monthly guide opens the door, with insider tips, upcoming events and seasonal packages, and once-in-a-lifetime cultural experiences.*

### Journeys in Wine and Food

*Ready for the next adventure? Look for these wine travel experiences this April.*

#### California

If you want to explore wines from and inspired by France's Rhône Valley, the Paso Robles Hospice du Rhône wine weekend in California on April 26-28 is a great place to start. The international conference features seminars and tastings with more than 100 producers from both the Rhône and around the world specializing in Rhône-style wines, along with plenty of fine dining pairing opportunities.

The weekend pass is sold out, but **tickets are still available** for individual tastings and meals. The Tasty Twosome package grants access to the opening and closing wine tastings of the event (\$222 per person), and individual passes can be purchased separately. The Rhône-Around Dinner Series features five opportunities (two on Thursday and three on Friday) to enjoy meals from Paso Robles restaurants for \$150 each. (Hurry, **tickets are going fast!**) There's also a Rosé Lunch on Friday, a lunch and live auction on Saturday and the Farewell Dinner on Saturday (all \$100 per person). If you're looking to fit in some education, you can attend any or all of the four master classes that range from \$122 to \$175 and offer in-depth looks at the art, science and history of Rhône-style wine.

The month of April is also celebrated as "Down to Earth" month by California wineries and regions invested in sustainable practices, and the roster is full of participants. A vintners' festival celebrates more than 100 wineries in Santa Barbara on April 21, and the following weekend of April 27-29 has strong options too: Stags Leap District wineries give open-house tours at the Vineyard to Vintner event (a percentage of ticket sales will go to the Napa Valley Community Foundation) while Healdsburg features some 40 local wineries at the Passport to Dry Creek Valley event.

A highlight this year is the Signature Sonoma Valley weekend, which brings together more than 80 wineries of Sonoma County with a hyper-local focus. On Friday and Saturday morning, guests can choose from two event options. A handful of small-group wine lunches (\$175 per person) take place in private homes or winery rooms that highlight distinctive architecture, interior design or striking landscapes in a historical context. For example, Buena Vista winery, deemed a California Historic Landmark, will host lunch in its Champagne cellar, which was renovated in 2012 to replicate the interior as it first appeared in the 1850s. Or you can opt for one of the vineyard immersions, which dive into topics like the Moon Mountain District's many volcanic soils and Los Carneros' varying cool-climate Chardonnays. New this year is the Retrospective event on Saturday afternoon (\$250 per person), a vertical tasting from Hanzell Vineyards in an exclusive tasting moderated by Culinary Institute of America professor Robert Bath. On Sunday, "Bubbles & Brunch" (\$65 per person) is the final send-off, offering local sparkling wines in the Sonoma Plaza town square. If you want a fuller look at the many wineries here, consider the weekend package, which offers these events plus a few more, including a Legends Dinner with winemakers, a VIP reception and transportation to everything, for \$1,750 per person. **Tickets are available through the event's website.**

More than 30 Mendocino wineries will be pouring at Taste of Mendocino in San Francisco April 7. **Tickets are \$60.**

There are several more events affiliated with Down to Earth month. **Check out the full list and ticket prices.**