

TOWN&COUNTRY

This Wine Train Takes You Through America's Top Vineyards

by MADISON FLAGER AUG 17, 2017



Napa Valley Wine Tours has made drinking on public transportation just about the classiest thing you could do with your Sunday afternoon.

The Northern California railroad track, which was **built in 1864** and converted into a wine train in 1989, runs from Napa to St. Helena and back, bringing passengers to famous wineries and serving gourmet multi-course meals along the way, all in the spirit of early travel.

Passengers can dress up for a Murder Mystery themed dinner ride, visit the Castello di Amorosa on The Castle Winery tour, or impress a date with the [Romance on the Rails](#) package. The company has more than a dozen different tours, each of which starts with a [glass of wine](#) or bubbly (as long as you're over 21) and continues with plenty more delicious food and drinks.

Winery options range from traveling to a single winery or several – including [Raymond Vineyards](#), [Beringer Winery](#), and [Robert Mondavi Winery](#) – while private "Meet the Maker" tours bring local winemakers onboard for a four-hour "pairing adventure."

While airplane food today is [notoriously bad](#), these trains will make you rethink what can be done in a tiny kitchen. Menu options include lemon ricotta ravioli, heirloom tomato gazpacho, and brown butter seared cornbread, and most have a suggested wine pairing.

The company uses railroad cars that have been restored to their early-20th century charm, and were built to showcase California's stunning natural landscapes on the train. The Vista Dome railcar features an exceptionally spectacular view, and was one of the first 10 full-length domed railcars built.

The train has three onboard kitchens, with dozens of chefs preparing each meal by hand. Trips generally last between three and six hours, and start at \$146 per person for a trip on the [Gourmet Express](#).

While the tours aren't exactly cheap, you're definitely paying for the experience, and the more expensive trips include entrance and wine tastings at the wineries you visit. Trains run every day, and you can find the various schedules on [Napa Valley's website](#).