

Springtime Secret: Three Napa Valley Estates, Three Stories, and the Season Before the Rush

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Visiting Napa Valley in springtime is like finding out that Napa has been keeping a secret. With California's Mediterranean climate, the valley is greener in spring than in summer, and the grapevines during budbreak are at their most charming, as pops of baby chartreuse leaves reveal the first signs that the valley is waking up.

This is the wine season's prelude. As the year unfolds, there will be weddings and warm nights and the rush of harvest, but spring is a glorious time that should not be missed.

Regardless of the season, some things always say Napa: history, terroir, and family. Enjoy all three while taking in the peace, beauty, and freshness of spring in Napa, with tasting appointments that reveal different sides of the valley.

Larkmead Vineyards: Where Napa's Past Lives in the Present

Starting at the top of the valley between St. Helena and Calistoga, Larkmead Vineyards represents Napa's incredible history. It was founded in 1895 and has been stewarded by the Solari-Baker family since 1948. The estate has found its own voice beyond its storied past, yet it remains one of Napa's foundational estates.

Larkmead's is a classic luxury tasting, complete with vineyard guide, cellar visit, and a tasting with a view. A sweep of vineyards and quiet grandeur asks you to stop and take in the 115 contiguous acres of estate vineyards from which

the blocks are farmed and vinified separately, then blended to honor the site's complexity. And the sustainability story is real: the estate received CCOF organic status in 2023 and holds Napa Green Winery and Napa Green Land certifications.

The tasting experience often begins in The Gallery, where more than twenty original works by proprietor Kate Solari Baker showcase Napa Valley's light and landscape. Her paintings don't simply decorate the space; they orient you toward place and the details that make this valley feel alive.



Next, you step into the vineyard blocks that supply the estate's wines, and the tasting becomes less about notes and more about connection. Seeing the rows up close—feeling the slope, the exposure, the subtle shifts from block to block—gives context to what's in the glass.

“By walking through the vineyard blocks we harvest, and tasting wines in the place they are made,” Silva shared, “Guests begin to see the connection between the land, the seasons, and the care in every bottle.”