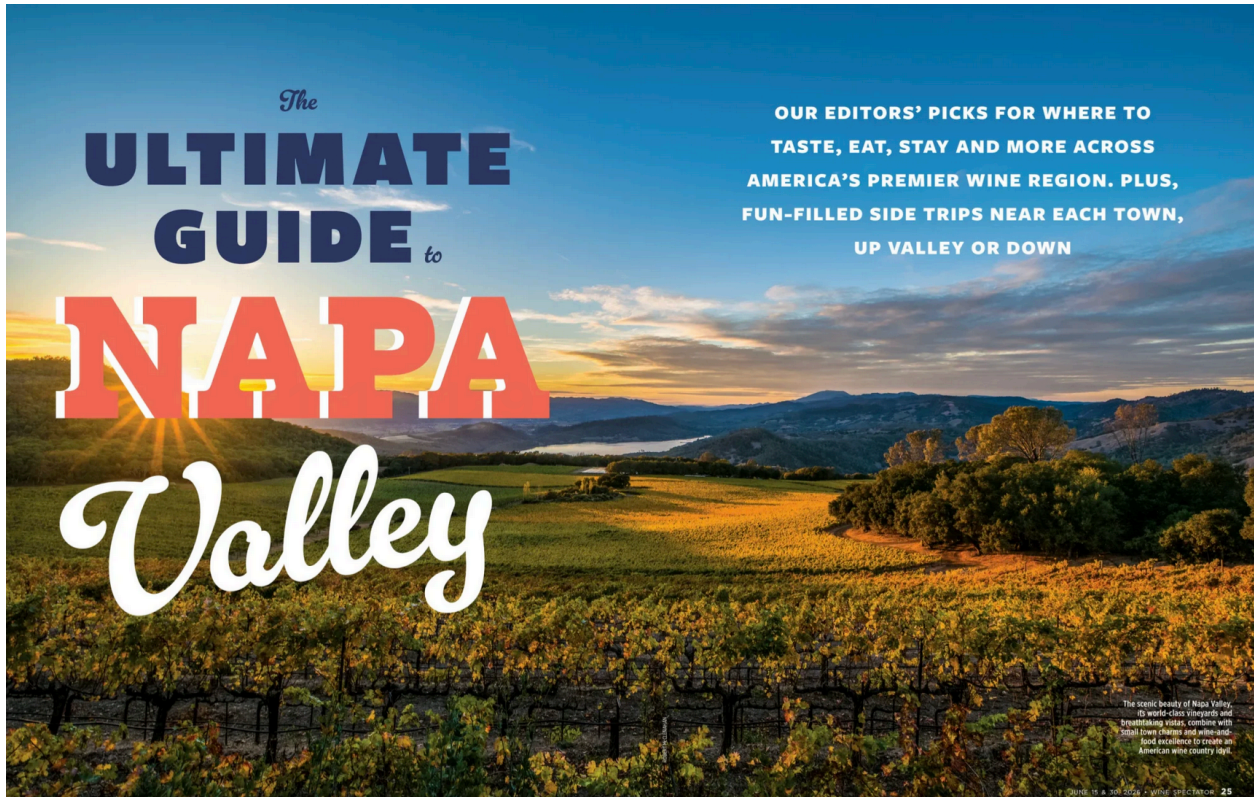




Wine Spectator

June 2026 Issue



The ULTIMATE GUIDE to NAPA Valley

OUR EDITORS' PICKS FOR WHERE TO
TASTE, EAT, STAY AND MORE ACROSS
AMERICA'S PREMIER WINE REGION. PLUS,
FUN-FILLED SIDE TRIPS NEAR EACH TOWN,
UP VALLEY OR DOWN

The scenic beauty of Napa Valley, its world-class vineyards and breathtaking vistas, combine with local food, wine and wine-and-food excellence to create an American wine country ideal.

JUNE 15 & 20, 2026 • WINE SPECTATOR 25



Indian Springs Resort & Spa

CALISTOGA

A WINE COUNTRY RETREAT

Tucked away at the northern end of Napa Valley, the town of Calistoga has long held its own unique vibe. For those looking for a more relaxed version of wine country, Calistoga is a haven.

One reason for that vibe is location: 30 miles north of downtown Napa, where the valley narrows and turns west. The tall evergreen woods of Robert Louis Stevenson State Park and the looming Mount St. Helena make it feel more like a wooded retreat than wide-open farming country.

That retreat aspect is the second distinction—wellness tourism predates wine tourism in Calistoga. The indigenous Wappo valued the geothermal springs and mud baths here and built sweat lodges atop them. Sam Braman, who made his fortune selling equipment to miners during the California Gold Rush, visited the hot springs in 1859 and bought up the northern portion of Rancho Carne Humana, establishing the town and building a resort that still stands today (albeit modernized).

BY MITCH FRANK

Indian Springs. He named his town by combining California with Saratoga Springs, a popular resort in New York state.

To help his tourism destination grow, Braman founded the Napa Valley Railroad, connecting Calistoga to ferry terminals in Vallejo on the bay, making it easy for San Francisco residents to travel upvalley for vacation. The Napa Valley Wine Train travels over portions of the track today. Not all the locals appreciated Braman's changes to their sleepy area—he was shot by residents (he recovered), proving that wariness of overdevelopment is not a new phenomenon for Napa Valley.

Calistoga today still offers that rustic, relaxed feel paired with sophisticated escape. You can stroll the old downtown stretch of Lincoln Road, which feels like an 1800s California town, despite the coffee shops and art galleries. You can head out to the wineries, which feel a little less formal than those farther down the valley. And you can visit the spas or hiking trails to revive from a day of tastings.

WHERE TO TASTE

Calistoga's location brings with it some differences from the heart of Napa Valley. Because it's farther from the bay, temperatures can get warm on summer days. But evening Pacific winds drawn through the Chalk Hill Gap cool the vines. There's

also a higher percentage of volcanic soil here. The wineries range from secluded spots to the modernist, perched lookout of Sterling Vineyards to the faux Tuscan castle of Castello di Amorosa. As a bonus, Howell Mountain's wineries are a worthy excursion.

Hourglass

4208 Silverado Trail / hourglasswinery.com

More than five years after the Glass Fire tore through, destroying several buildings, Hourglass forges on, with consulting winemaker Tony Blagi producing outstanding Bordeaux-style blends from two estate vineyards. Founded by couple Jeff Smith and Carolyn Duryea, the winery at their Bluevine estate blends into the eastern hills of the valley, with a round, hobbiton-style door opening into the hillside and into the winery. Guests pass through the winery and down into the aging tunnels deep underground to find a peaceful tasting room and a flight of multiple wines.

Larkmead Vineyards

1000 Larkmead Lane / larkmead.com

Larkmead's Howard Backen-designed tasting salon looks fairly new, but there are plenty of hints that this is a winery with real history. The property was founded in 1895 by Lillie Hitchcock Coit, a San Francisco woman whose wealthy parents gave her a Napa farm to get her out of the bustling city. She responded by converting the land into a winery, which survived through Prohibition by producing sacramental wine and then was purchased by the Solari family in 1948. Located at one of the narrowest, warmest points of the valley, Larkmead is surrounded by its vineyards, primarily Cabernet with some Sauvignon Blanc and a bit of Tocai Friulano. A visit includes a tour of the vineyards followed by a seated tasting paired with cheese and charcuterie in the comfortable tasting room, or in the pergola when the weather is nice. And in this part of the valley, it usually is.



Larkmead Vineyards



Schramberg

Schramberg

1400 Schramberg Road / schramberg.com

Napa locals thought Jack and Jamie Davies were fools when they fled Los Angeles in 1964 and bought the old Schram place in the foothills of Spring Mountain with its crumbling buildings and abandoned tunnels. Instead, the Davises helped kick-start Napa Valley's modern era, part of a migration of young, enthusiastic winemakers into the region. The couple cleared out the tunnels to age their sparkling wine and began producing bubbly that rivals Champagne. Schramberg is still owned by the family today. Guests can enjoy a tour of the tunnels and learn more about sparkling winemaking, then taste six wines from both Schramberg and Davies Vineyard, their nearby still-wine project.

Aubert
333 Silverado Trail
aubertwinery.com

NOTE: Currently tastings are limited as they renovate the hospitality space, but soon they will have expanded capacity.

Bennett Lane
2540 CA-208
bennettlane.com

CADE Estate
260 Howell Mountain Road S.
cadestate.com

Castello di Amorosa
4245 St. Helena Highway
castelloamorosa.com

Frank Family
2091 Larkmead Lane
frankfamilyvineyards.com

Girard
1077 Dunneal Lane
girardwinery.com

Lola Wines
916 Foothill Blvd.
lolawines.com

Outpost Wines
2095 Summit Lake Drive
outpostwines.com

Rivers-Marie
900 Foothill Blvd.
riversmarie.com

Spire Collection
299 Bennett Lane
spirecollection.com

Sterling Vineyards
1171 Dunneal Lane
sterlingvineyards.com

Tamber Bay
1251 Tubbs Lane
tamberbay.com

Tank Garage
1020 Foothill Blvd.
tankgarage.com

Trois Noix
665 Silverado Trail N.
troisnoix.com

Vine Cliff
1400 Silverado Trail
vinecliff.com



Wine Spectator

June 2026 Issue



Wine Spectator

WineSpectator.com

The Ultimate Travel Guide to NAPA VALLEY

WHERE TO TASTE

Calistoga's location brings with it some differences from the heart of Napa Valley. Because it's farther from the bay, temperatures can get warm on summer days. But evening Pacific winds drawn through the Chalk Hill Gap cool the vines. There's

also a higher percentage of volcanic soil here. The wineries range from secluded spots to the modernist, perched lookout of Sterling Vineyards to the faux Tuscan castle of Castello di Amorosa. As a bonus, Howell Mountain's wineries are a worthy excursion.

Larkmead Vineyards

1100 Larkmead Lane | larkmead.com

Larkmead's Howard Backen-designed tasting salon looks fairly new, but there are plenty of hints that this is a winery with real history. The property was founded in 1895 by Lillie Hitchcock Colt, a San Francisco woman whose wealthy parents gave her a Napa farm to get her out of the corrupting city. She responded by converting the land into a winery, which survived through Prohibition by producing sacramental wine and then was purchased by the Solari family in 1948. Located at one of the narrowest, warmest points of the valley, Larkmead is surrounded by its vineyards, primarily Cabernet with some Sauvignon Blanc and a bit of Tocai Friulano. A visit includes a tour of the vineyards followed by a seated tasting paired with cheese and charcuterie in the comfortable tasting room, or in the pergola when the weather is nice. And in this part of the valley, it usually is.



Larkmead Vineyards