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# Romantic Getaway Guide to Sonoma

**Jenner, Glen Ellen, Healdsburg, Sonoma, 8 Days**

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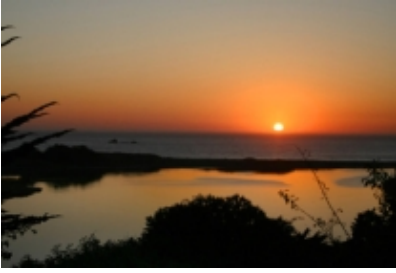
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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** The essence of romance is stripping away the distractions and pressures of daily life and finding a place to hide away together. In Sonoma, you can toast your future to the tune of crashing waves in a coastal hideout, or wine and dine in Zagat-rated and Michelin-starred comfort. Best of all, in place of chain hotels and big branded resorts, Sonoma offers intimate, boutique inns and hotels where luxurious settings and personalized service make it easy to feel that loving feeling. Take a beach walk or a stroll through town, picnic in a vineyard, soak in a mineral pool under the stars. With few crowds and no loud tasting room louts, Sonoma makes it easy to enjoy wine country culture while getting further off the beaten path.

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - Glen Ellen



### Wildwood Farm Nursery

Nursery with exotic plants, eclectic sculpture and organic produce for sale



### Kenwood Inn and Spa

Sun-dappled courtyards, a luxurious spa and pool, and rooms dripping with romance set this Tuscan-style spa retreat apart



### A. Rafanelli Winery

Wine Business!



### Applewood Inn

Romantic Tuscan farmhouse setting is gorgeous as ever; food's fresher and hipper thanks to creative new chef



### River's End

Continental sensibilities, the freshest seafood on the coast, and spectacular sunset views

## Day 2 - Sonoma



### girl and the fig (the)

Quality local stuffs

## Day 3 - Healdsburg



### Hop Kiln Winery

Taste fab zins and artisanal mustard, and feed the ducks!



### Prohibition

Hip wine bar with a "secret" entrance pays homage to the glamour of 1920s-era underground nightclubs.

## Day 4 - Healdsburg



### Barn Diva

One of the most "happening" arrivals on the Healdsburg dining scene is BarnDiva, an eclectic combination of restaurant, bar and gallery in what appears to be a country barn transported to the downtown plaza.



### Zichichi Family Vineyards

Small friendly newer boutique winery



### Dry Creek Vineyard

It Isn't Dry

## Day 5 - Healdsburg, Sonoma, Jenner

# Day 1 - Glen Ellen



## QUICK NOTE

**contact:**  
tel: 888-833-4181  
<http://www.wildwoodmaples.com/>

**location:**  
10300 Sonoma Hwy  
Kenwood CA 95442

## 1 Wildwood Farm Nursery

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Visit in spring to see the dogwoods bloom, in summer to enjoy the bounty of fresh fruit and produce, or in the fall to celebrate the vivid color of the Japanese maples.

**DESCRIPTION:** Wildwood Farm, located next to Kenwood Inn and Spa on the Sonoma Highway, is a garden and nursery specializing in maples, dogwood, and other ornamental trees and shrubs. It's also a sculpture garden and outdoor gallery, featuring works by West Coast artists designed to be displayed outdoors. There are gigantic cast iron sculptures, stone carvings, ornamental birdbaths, and ceramics. Stop by to make a purchase for your garden, or just to take a stroll through the gorgeous grounds.

Gardeners all over the west know Wildwood Farm, which specializes in exotic varieties of decorative trees and rare plants. Proud of their selection of more than 300 different Japanese maples and 40 types of dogwood, Wildwood Farms has also expanded their stock to include Ginkgo biloba trees and other hard-to-find trees and shrubs. But that's only one reason to visit. Owners Sara and Ricardo Monte and their son, landscape gardener Joe Monte, also display an eclectic and adventurous selection of sculpture and garden art by artists of both local and national renown. Stroll among gigantic abstract cast iron structures and insects, or sit and contemplate elegant

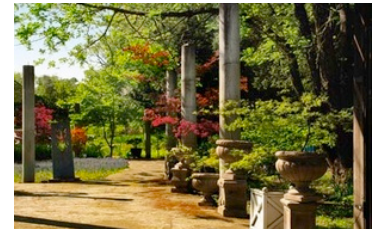


Photo courtesy of Melanie Haiken

stone carvings and ceramic sculptures. New in 2009 is an organic vegetable garden and orchard planted by Joe, and a farmstand selling the garden's heirloom produce.  
© NileGuide

**contact:**

tel: +1 707 833 1293  
fax: +1 707 833 1247  
<http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/california-kenwood-kenwoodinnandspa.html>

**location:**

10400 Sonoma Highway  
Kenwood CA 95452

**2 Kenwood Inn and Spa**

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

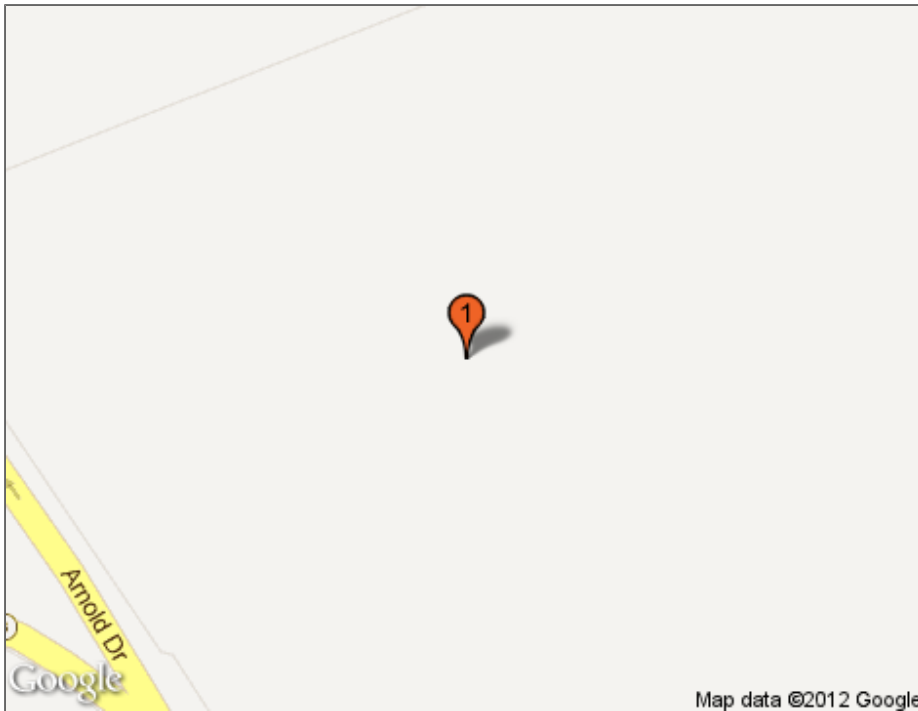
The award-winning restaurant at Kenwood Inn and Spa is open only to guests. So plan on eating dinner at the Inn; the olive oil tasting menu and the wine pairing appetizer menu are also not to be missed.

**DESCRIPTION:** Located in the Valley of the Moon in California's Sonoma County, the Kenwood Inn and Spa is designed in the spirit of a Mediterranean Villa. Each of the Inn's 29 guestrooms are appointed with fireplaces, featherbeds, Italian linens and luxurious robes. The intimate hideaway offers a dining room and wine bar exclusively for Inn guests, spa featuring ARCONA products and vinotherapy, two heated pools, sunning terraces, a steam room and hot tub. Wake up each morning with a complimentary signature breakfast that includes a daily feature like eggs over grilled farm bread with asparagus and tomato basil cream sauce.



Melanie Haiken

# Day 2 - Sonoma



## QUICK NOTE

### contact:

tel: 707- 938 3634

fax: 707- 938 2064

<http://www.thegirlandthefig.com>

### location:

110 West Spain Street  
Sonoma CA 95476

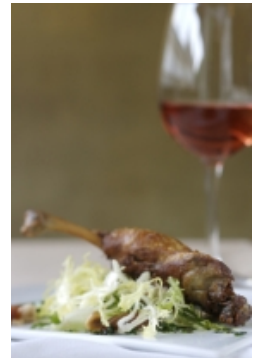
### hours:

M-Th 11:30a-10p, F-Sa

11:30a-11p, Su 11:30a-10p

## 1 girl and the fig (the)

**DESCRIPTION:** On the ground level of Sonoma Hotel, The Girl and the Fig offers eclectic French cuisine. The decor is casual and laid back and can get loud when the crowd streams in. Braised pork loin, steak tartare, duck confit, croque monsieur, pan seared duck, salami and brie sandwich, niman ranch jambon, salmon nicoise and homemade fig cake are some of the menu listings. Moreover, the bar has a great selection of French wines and cocktails. Reservations are the way to go. © wcities.com



# Day 3 - Healdsburg



## QUICK NOTE

### contact:

tel: +1 707 433 6491  
<http://www.hopkilwinery.com/>

### location:

6050 Westside Road  
Healdsburg CA 95448

## 1 Hop Kiln Winery

**DESCRIPTION:** Once a kiln used for roasting locally grown hops, the aptly named Hop Kiln winery makes a great stop for tasting specialty wines, learning a bit of local history, and taking some snaps in a spectacular setting. Located on Westside road at the south end of Dry Creek valley, Hop Kiln is equidistant from Healdsburg and from the Russian River valley, and should be included in either itinerary. A gorgeous example of local stonemasonry, the historic hop kiln itself dates back to 1905 and is surrounded by vintage gardens and orchards of gnarled fig trees, roses, and other heirloom plantings. The duck pond is a favorite of kids, who will want to throw bread crumbs to the quacking resident ducks. Picnics a must.

© NileGuide



Melanie Haiken

### contact:

tel: (707) 473-9463 (WINE)  
<http://www.speakeasywineclub.com/>

### location:

340 Healdsburg Avenue  
Healdsburg CA 95448

### hours:

11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

## 2 Prohibition

**DESCRIPTION:** Hidden behind a small retail storefront selling wine-related gifts, Prohibition is accessed through a "secret" entrance accessed through an antique telephone booth. Once inside, you find yourself in a mid-century moderne-style wine bar where small tables made from burnished cask lids are enclosed behind silky draperies and local wines are on "tap" at the sleek semi-circular bar.

Among the artisanal beers on tap are Prohibition Ale, Speakeasy Ales and Lagers, White Lighting, and other small-



editor

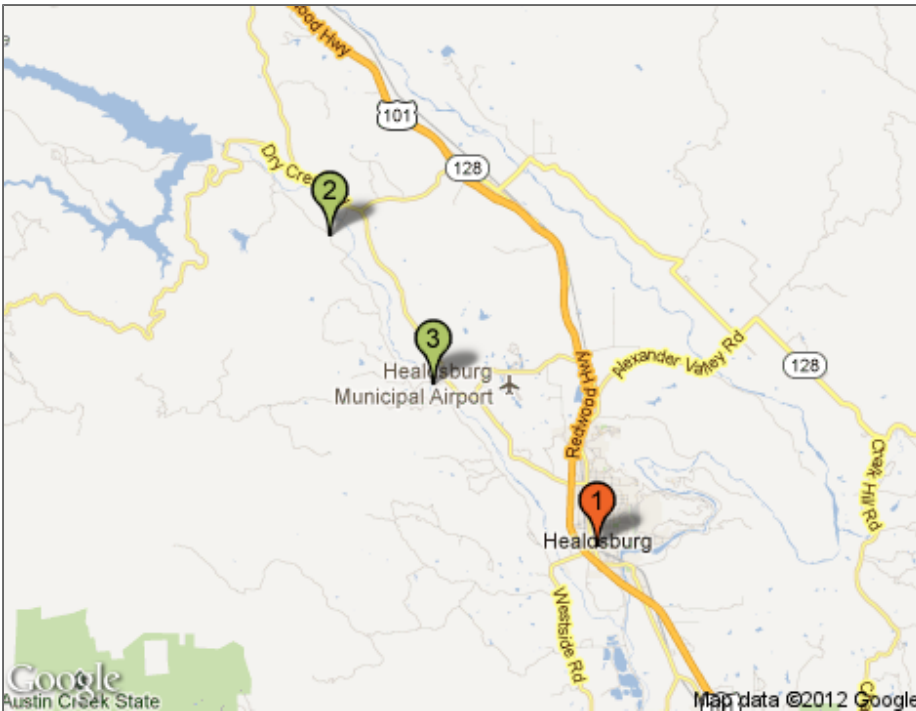
batch brews. House-designed cocktails are cutely named after iconic pre-War stars and characters; I don't know if the hipsters who will flock to this joint will order a drink called "Bubbles LaRue," but only time will tell.

With the full name of Prohibition: A Speakeasy Wine Club, it doubles as a wine club; members will receive two bottles of award-winning local wine every two months, or six bottles every six months, depending on the arrangement. Sure to be a popular stop on wine country getaways, Prohibition seems destined to be a locals' hangout as well.

© NileGuide

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# Day 4 - Healdsburg



## QUICK NOTE

**contact:**  
tel: 707- 431 0100  
<http://www.barndiva.com/>

**location:**  
231 Center Street  
Healdsburg CA 95448

## 1 Barn Diva

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

BarnDiva has become enormously popular for events, weddings and parties, and it's often hard to get in, so call ahead if you want dinner or brunch. Dogs are allowed for Sunday brunch in the garden.

**DESCRIPTION:** A founding member of Fork & Shovel, an alliance of chefs and local farmers, BarnDiva is the ultimate farm-to-table dining experience. The staff proudly explains that scraps from the kitchen feed the chickens, which in turn produce the eggs used in tonight's meal. The used cooking oil is recycled to run the farm's tractors. But none of this is done in hippie fashion; everything looks polish, artistic, upscale. Owners Jil, Geoffrey and Lukka Feldman have backgrounds in architecture, design and photography as well as food and hospitality, so the whole enterprise feels sophisticated and cultivated.

While chef Ryan Fancher is a "name" thanks to his three-year stint at The French Laundry and role in opening New York's Per Se, Barndiva doesn't stand on ceremony. The bar is warm and friendly, the back patio an almost perfect copy of a Provencal garden cafe. The rustic yet elegant interior feels like a country barn cross-pollinated with a downtown loft. The list of local purveyors on the menu is as long or longer than the list of available dishes; local cheeses, figs, olive oil, heirloom



Barn Diva

vegetables, and local seafood, free-range chicken, and grass-fed beef are the centerpieces of every meal. But at BarnDiva, cocktails are treated as goals unto themselves, and concoctions such as the Basque Lolita, A Kiss with a Slap and Maharani of Cooch-Behar now have their own fans who return just to sample the latest creative combination of flavors.

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**contact:**

tel: 707 433 4410

fax: 707 433 6358

<http://www.zichichifamilyvineyard.com>

**location:**

8626 W. Dry Creek Rd  
Healdsburg CA 95448

## 2 Zichichi Family Vineyards

**DESCRIPTION:** Zichichi Family Vineyard and Winery was founded in 2000. It is run by Steve and Kristin Zichichi, who decided to open their own winery after years of selling their grapes to other local wine producers. Taste the Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Syrah, and jammy Zinfandel right at the redwood bar in their tasting room. If you're lucky, you may even get to go in back for a barrel tasting! © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Zichichi Family Vineyard and Winery

**contact:**

tel: +1 707 433 1000

fax: +1 707 433 5329

<http://www.drycreekvineyard.com/>

**location:**

3770 Lambert Bridge Road  
Healdsburg CA 95448

## 3 Dry Creek Vineyard

**DESCRIPTION:** Would you like to sip your wine from a crystal glass, expound your opinion on it and keep the glass as a souvenir? Too good to be true? Not at the Dry Creek Vineyard, which offers all this at a reasonable price. If you are a member, you can enjoy it for free. Designated one of the "Top 10 Wineries in the U.S.", the winery owns beautiful picnic grounds, where you can enjoy a nice lunch—or take in the sights and aromas while munching on the Dry Creek General Store's hefty sandwiches. White wines abound here, and you will also find a decent selection of recipes on their site, paired with their many spirits. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Dry Creek Vineyard

**hours:**

Daily 10:30a-4:30p

# Day 5 - Healdsburg, Sonoma, Jenner



## QUICK NOTE

### contact:

tel: +1 707 433 1385

fax: +1 707 433 3836

<http://www.arafanelliwinery.com/>

### location:

4685 West Dry Creek Road  
Healdsburg CA 95448

## 1 A. Rafanelli Winery

**DESCRIPTION:** A. Rafanelli Winery is located on the Dry Creek Valley overlooking the hillside vineyards. This is a small family owned business, which has been growing grapes and making wine for four generations. Furthermore, it uses the traditional wine making processes, such as open top fermentation and non-filtration. Some of the specialties include Zinfandel, Cabernet, Sauvignon and Merlot. The wines are not available at retail stores and can be bought only at this winery, so if you visiting Sonoma, don't miss out on these high quality blends. Wine tasting is available by appointment only. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of : A. Rafanelli Winery

### contact:

tel: 707-869-9093

[dineatapplewood.com](http://dineatapplewood.com)

### location:

13555 HWY 116  
Guerneville CA 95446

### hours:

Dinner: Tuesday - Saturday:  
6:00pm - 8:30pm

## 2 Applewood Inn

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The restaurant is worth a trip on its own, but your night will be much more relaxing if you stay overnight at the secluded, Euro-inspired inn - and you can drink more wine.

**DESCRIPTION:** You don't have to trust Zagat and Michelin to tell you that Applewood is one of Sonoma County's top dining destinations -- though in fact both rate this wine country find highly. Rather, ask SF Bay Area residents where they dine



when they want a romantic gourmet dinner in the Russian River valley, and Applewood will be one of the first names mentioned. Despite this restaurant's long and respected history, it feels fresh and new thanks to the arrival two years ago of chef Bruce Frieseke, a Sonoma boy made good who worked in Paris and San Francisco before returning to his Russian River roots. An even newer arrival is young sommelier Christopher John, whose enthusiasm for the local appellations he's just discovering is palpable and fun to share.

Applewood's menu of beloved Tuscan farmhouse favorites maintains its classic selection, but many dishes have been refreshed to better highlight local ingredients. The overall impression is one of lightening - a salad of tender butter lettuce and Laura Chenel chevre felt farmer's market fresh, and there are more seafood selections to balance the beef, pork, and lamb choices. It's hard to single out any one item from the stellar menu, but the appetizer of Muscovy duck sausage paté topped with an egg yolk poached in red wine is a don't-miss, as are the dark chocolate cannolis for dessert.

Applewood is thriving once again under the fresh stewardship of Carlos Pinna and Sylvia Ranyak, who bought the inn in November 2009 and have ambitious plans to green the facilities and expand the services offered. Among the exciting new offerings will be cooking classes focusing on rustic Tuscan cuisine, to be held in a new, modern kitchen in the historic Belden House. So guests who love to come and eat the latest dishes on offer at Applewood will now have the chance to cook them themselves, too.

The dining room atmosphere is lively and casual, with stone fireplaces at either end and a lively bar by the entrance where guests can gather for a pre-dinner drink. Applewood promises to be even more festive as the weather warms up; Pippa and Ranyak plan to put tables out in the inn's lovely central courtyard and have live music on weekends nights.

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**contact:**

tel: (707) 865-2484  
www.ilovesunsets.com

**location:**

11048 Highway 1  
Jenner CA 95450

**hours:**

Lunch: Friday - Monday:  
12:00pm - 3:30pm; Dinner:  
Friday - Monday: 5:00pm -  
8:30pm

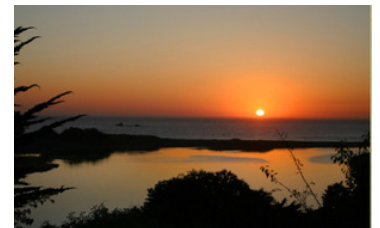
### 3 River's End

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

There aren't enough window tables for everyone to have one, so go early and enjoy one of bartender Patrick Keane's artisanal cocktails on the deck until your table of choice is available.

**DESCRIPTION:** Everything about River's End is an unexpected delight, from the friendly, unpretentious atmosphere to the thoughtfully organized menu listing one joyfully inventive dish after another.

Named for its breathtakingly romantic location, River's End overlooks the mouth of the Russian River where the placid waters mix with the crashing waves of the Pacific. Repeat guests know to time dinnertime reservations for the sunset hour, and to come early for handcrafted cocktails or "bubbles



Melanie Haiken

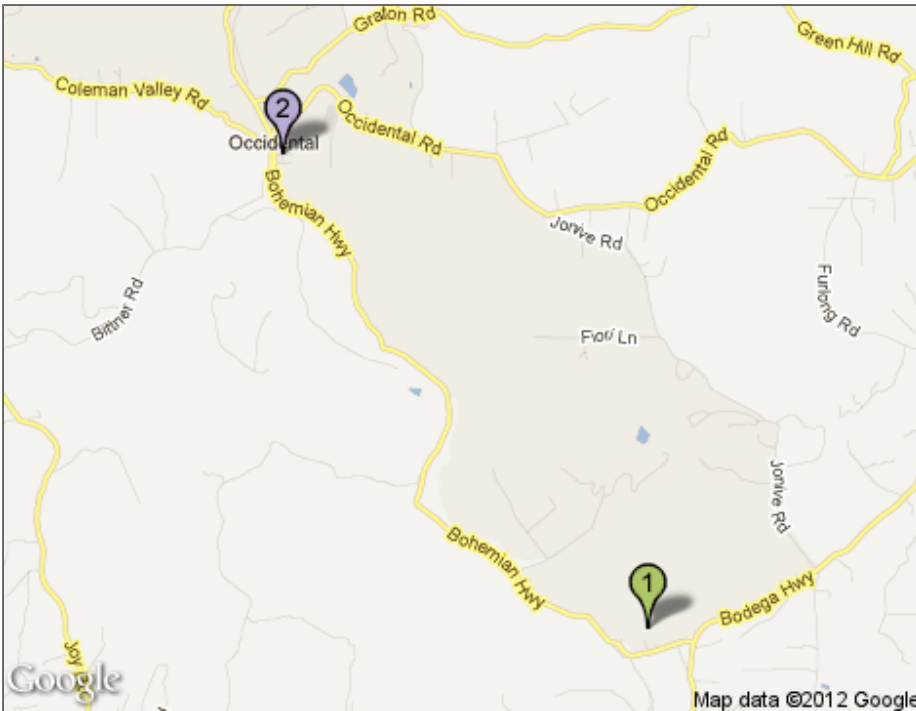
and oysters," to be savored while toasting the fiery sky from the riverside deck.

This isn't one of those seaside restaurants where the view trumps the food, however; everything we ate was mysteriously delicious enough to have us dissecting the details of dishes from first to last bite. We ate every crispy leaf of the kicking ahi salad, with its zingy Mandarin orange vinaigrette, and had to take multiple photos of the technicolor beet salad, a rainbow tower of farm-fresh beets layered with mascarpone and goat cheeses. The eclectic entrees feature pan-seared duck and roasted elk in addition to more standard fare, but the star of the show is the Dungeness crab tasting menu, which showcases the day's catch in a variety of playful combinations. The best restaurants reflect the personalities of their owners; you know instantly upon entering that you couldn't be anywhere else. River's End is such a place; owner Bert Rangel seems to be everywhere, greeting guests personally and conveying his ebullient delight at having landed in this gorgeous location to one and all. River's End is a true family affair; on Sunday nights, Rangel's two young daughters help with hostessing and sauce-tasting duties, and guests couldn't stop smiling at their cheerful enthusiasm.

While dinner at River's End makes the perfect anchor point for a romantic weekend, many people also make the trek up the coast for a sunny lunch or romantic dinner alone. With Goat Rock just one of several spectacular beaches nearby, River's End makes the perfect cap to a day of beachcombing. t © NileGuide

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# Day 6 - Sonoma



## QUICK NOTE

**contact:**  
tel: (707) 823-8231  
<http://www.osmosis.com/>

**location:**  
209 Bohemian Highway  
Freestone CA 95472

## 1 Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

This treatment will leave you as limp as a wet noodle; schedule it at the end of the day for a perfectly relaxed evening

**DESCRIPTION:** Like a magical trip to ancient Kyoto, a visit to Osmosis day spa and sanctuary feels like an escape to another time and place. Oddly located in the tiny town of Freestone, west of Sebastopol, this holistic therapy spa is less about pampering and more like giving yourself the gift of a health-boosting treatment. Despite the name, an "enzyme bath" is more akin to a ritual sauna than a soak. Used by Japanese practitioners as a detoxification procedure, an enzyme bath involves immersing your body into a hot bed of fermenting cedar chips, which raises your internal core temperature and allows your body to sweat out toxins. Osmosis founder Michael Stusser is a serious believer in the importance of alternative healing, and hires only the best massage therapists available. So take advantage of the deep relaxation you'll feel after your bath and indulge in a massage as well, and you'll leave feeling restored, relaxed, and energized beyond what you thought possible. © NileGuide



Melanie Haiken

**contact:**

tel: 800-522-6324

<http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/california-occidental-theinnatoccidentalofsonomawinecountry.html>

**location:**

3657 Church Street  
Occidental CA 95465

**2 Inn at Occidental of Sonoma Wine Country**

**OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:**

Choose a room with a jacuzzi tub for an in-room spa experience

**DESCRIPTION:** The only AAA 4-Diamond, Mobil 4-Star Inn north of San Francisco. This Elegant Victorian Inn is the best kept secret of the Sonoma Wine Country. An ultimate experience for those who expect nothing less...a secluded place perfect for rejuvenating mind and body...just one hour north of the Golden Gate surrounded by countryside and redwoods of unsurpassed beauty-near the Sonoma coast. Furnished with original art and antiques. Local wineries, enzyme baths and massage, golf, tennis, kayaking, hiking, biking, horsebacking.



more at [BedandBreakfast.com](http://BedandBreakfast.com)

# Sonoma Snapshot

## Local Info

Known to locals as the "real wine country," Sonoma County has fewer tourists and at least as many working farms and wineries as Napa, giving it more the sense of a country getaway. Towns at the southern end of the county, just 45 minutes north of San Francisco are close enough for day trips or weekends, while the northern end of the county maintains a rugged remoteness perfect for getting away from it all. Laid-back and back to nature are the key concepts in Sonoma; with an incredible rock-studded coastline to the west and the Russian River making lazy Z-curves through the valley, there are endless opportunities for hiking, biking, beachcombing, and water sports of all kinds.

Epicurean culture is rooted in the rich soil that has yielded world-class wines and fresh produce for generations. Wine is a way of life in "Slow-noma," birthplace of the California wine industry and home to over 250 wineries. Family-run wineries and intimate tasting rooms abound visitors eager to drink in Sonoma's offerings. Local produce fills the many restaurants, which showcase superb California cuisine in elegant-yet-casual settings. A resort destination for over 100 years, hot springs await, and luxury resorts and spas are prepared to pamper. Sonoma County captures the natural diversity of Northern California with its fertile farmlands, rolling vineyards, redwood reserves and ruggedly beautiful coastline, and features outdoor activities such as golfing, kayaking, hiking and cycling. But even as its tourism grows, Sonoma County retains its small-town approachability and historical charm. An ideal getaway destination, Sonoma gives the perfect taste of Northern California living.

### Sonoma

The city of Sonoma is the historical heart of Sonoma County and serves as a great base from which to explore Sonoma Valley. Sonoma welcomes visitors with its small-town charm and first-class amenities. Despite its recent growth and rediscovery as tourist center, Sonoma remains a laid-back and more affordable alternative to its neighbor Napa. At the city's center lays the leafy and tranquil Sonoma Plaza, a national historical landmark lined with hotels,

restaurants and quaint shops. Sonoma Plaza hosts several festivals every year, including the Valley of the Moon Festival, a Sonoma tradition for over 100 years. Wine tasting rooms and artisan food markets can be found throughout the city, while natural thermal waters can be enjoyed at nearby Boyes Hot Springs, original home to Sonoma's tourist industry.

### Healdsburg

In northern Sonoma County, Healdsburg is a quainter, more upscale version of Sonoma, with every shop, restaurant and service you could need to indulge your "weekend in the country" fantasy. Once the working heart of Sonoma's wine culture, today Healdsburg is packed with acclaimed and luxury bed-and-breakfasts.

Three wine appellations converge near Healdsburg, making the area rife with lauded wineries and that low-key wine-country lifestyle. Nearby Alexander Valley is Sonoma wine country's most densely planted area, famous for its Zinfandels and signature Cabernets. Whether you prefer the elegant Francophile dining experience of Cyrus, the hip, happening feeling of Cafe Zin, or the locavore artisanal indulgence of Barndiva, devoted foodies will find a critically acclaimed restaurant to their taste.

Lodging options include the warm hospitality of Honor Mansion, the romantic indulgence of Hotel Healdsburg, with its resort-like spa and pool, and-- the newest arrival-- the quaint farmstay atmosphere of Healdsburg Modern Cottages, brought to you by the artsy collective that runs Barndiva. For the outdoorsy, hiking and biking options are aplenty, while the nearby Russian River makes a picturesque setting for kayaking and inner-tubing.

### Guerneville

Nestled along the Russian River, Guerneville is a popular day-trip destination for Bay Area families. The town's small beach rents paddle boats, kayaks and inner tubes, and also makes for fun splashing around. Riverside redwood reserves keep the area cool and shaded during the hot summer months. Home to many ex-urbanites, Guerneville is also known for its environmental and gay activism.

### Petaluma

One of Sonoma County's larger cities, Petaluma boasts a picturesque historical downtown of restored 18th-century buildings filled with antique shops and restaurants. Although Petaluma is largely a quiet residential city, it does offer some of the area's best nightlife options. Both housed in historical buildings, McNear's Mystic Theater and the Phoenix Theater attract some of the biggest musical acts the North Bay sees. You can also play pool or karaoke at one of the many bars and pubs.

### Santa Rosa

Sonoma County's biggest city, Santa Rosa is a wealthy community full of bustle and traffic jams. Three shopping districts offer everything from brand-name apparel to local art, while historical residential neighborhoods offer a glimpse into Santa Rosa's small-town past. Reasonably priced rooms can be found in Santa Rosa, in name hotels such as Hilton, Holiday Inn and Best Western. Families enjoy Santa Rosa's many kid-(and adult) friendly activities, from an ice-skating rink to Safari West, a safari-style African wildlife reserve. Comic lovers will have to make a stop at the Charles M. Schulz Museum for all things Peanuts.

### Bodega Bay/Sonoma Coast

The Sonoma Coast showcases some of Northern California's most breathtaking views. Cliffs dramatically descend into the crashing Pacific surf along legendary Highway 1; take in the stunning views on a coastal hike or drive. The largest destination along the Sonoma Coast is Bodega Bay, a working-class fishing town that swells with tourists in the summer months. The town was the location for Alfred Hitchcock's horror film *The Birds*. But with luxury resorts like Bodega Bay Lodge & Spa, you have nothing to be afraid of.

Sonoma County's mild Mediterranean climate makes visiting enjoyable at any time of year. High season begins in April and runs through the summer, when many food, wine and cultural festivals take place. You'll encounter the greatest crowds during Harvest Season, or "Crush," as locals call it. The Sonoma wine country swells during this time, although the crowds are still less than in neighboring Napa County. If you are at all interested in wine and wine production, this is the best time of year to visit. Winter affords great deals

## Sonoma Snapshot continued

and less crowds, though outdoor activities are limited. Weekdays are generally less

busy all times of the year, as Sonoma is a popular weekend destination for San Francisco Bay Area residents.

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