



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Ian L

Honeymooning in Napa

Napa Valley, St. Helena, 4 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: If you're looking for a honeymoon that doesn't skimp on luxury, Napa Valley is the perfect destination. The Meadowood is known for its hospitality. Choose to stay in a cottage complete with a fireplace and tub, with the option of ordering in breakfast or dinner one night to eat in privacy. Aside from secluded lodging, the Meadowood also offers magnificent spa treatments, tennis courts, hiking trails and award winning food. Plus, the friendly staff can recommend other activities in the area. While you're there, start the relaxation and romance off with a massage at the Meadowood Spa or a treatment at the Bathhouse in Calistoga. Napa has numerous award winning restaurants from which to choose, most offering a romantic setting and extensive wine lists. I've included some of my favorites in here, but there are also more recommended restaurants in the unscheduled items list. During your stay you should most definitely take advantage of the magnificent chefs at the Meadowood and dine in the restaurant. Depending if you want your honeymoon to be more or less active, Napa has a variety of activities. You can choose to either stay within the Meadowood, enjoy your cottage, the tennis courts, swimming pool and hiking trails within the compound, or you can venture out to do some picnicking in nearby Bothe-Napa Valley State Park, see the valley in the morning light on a hot air balloon ride or visit some of the numerous wineries in the valley. Napa Valley has a lot to offer but no matter what you choose, you can be assured that your visit will be tranquil and romantic. Enjoy! Photo courtesy of star5112 / Creative Commons

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1

DAY NOTE: After arriving into town, get settled in your room then consider starting your honeymoon off right with either a treatment at the Meadowood Spa or at the nearby Bathhouse in Calistoga. With relaxation and luxury on the mind, head to étoile. Named one of the top 10 romantic restaurants in the USA, étoile will be the perfect setting for your first dinner with your love. While each entrée is delicious, the four or six course tasting menus with wine pairings will help you get the most out of your visit. After dinner, grab some after dinner drinks with your sweetie at the Martini House. If the weather is nice, ask for one of the outdoor tables on the patio and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere of wine country. Head back to the Meadowood to enjoy the comforts of your room- fireplace, tub and bed.

Day 2 - St. Helena

DAY NOTE: Wake up slowly, order breakfast in and enjoy being in bed. Stop by Model Bakery to pick up some some delicious bread and other sundries for a picnic Bothe-Napa Valley State park. The park offers tranquil meadow settings and hiking trails if you and your loved one want to spend some quality time together in the outdoors. Bring a blanket and enjoy basking in the sun for a lazy afternoon. Or, if hiking is not really what you had in mind, take advantage of the tennis courts and swimming available at Meadowood. They also have some hiking trails where you can see wild turkeys if you're lucky! For dinner, if you're really on top of your game, you've made a reservation a few months ago for French Laundry- the perfect special occasion restaurant for a culinary experience neither one of you will forget. Otherwise, head to Terra, a romantic restaurant with award winning French/ Italian/Californina and Asian cuisine.



Terra

European Pan-Asian fusion with Napa flair

Day 3 - Napa Valley



Balloons Above the Valley

Napa Valley ballooning, local pilots, garden
Champagne brunch



Mumm Cuvee Napa

Sparkling Views



Darioush

Bordeaux style estate wines

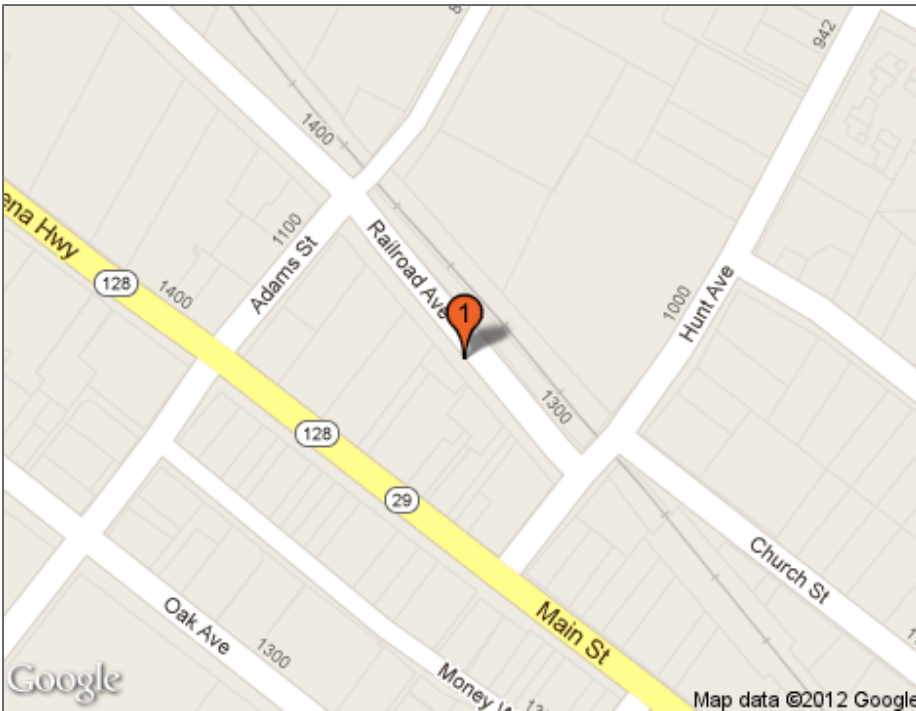
Day 4

DAY NOTE: Wake up peacefully and enjoy the morning. After checking out of the hotel, grab some lunch at Bistro Jeanty before heading out of town. Bistro Jeanty offers some authentic French bistro cuisine, a perfect end to your romantic adventure in the Napa valley before you head back to reality.

Day 1

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Day 2 - St. Helena



QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: 707- 963 8931

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

location:

1345 Railroad Avenue
St. Helena CA 94574

hours:

W-M 6p

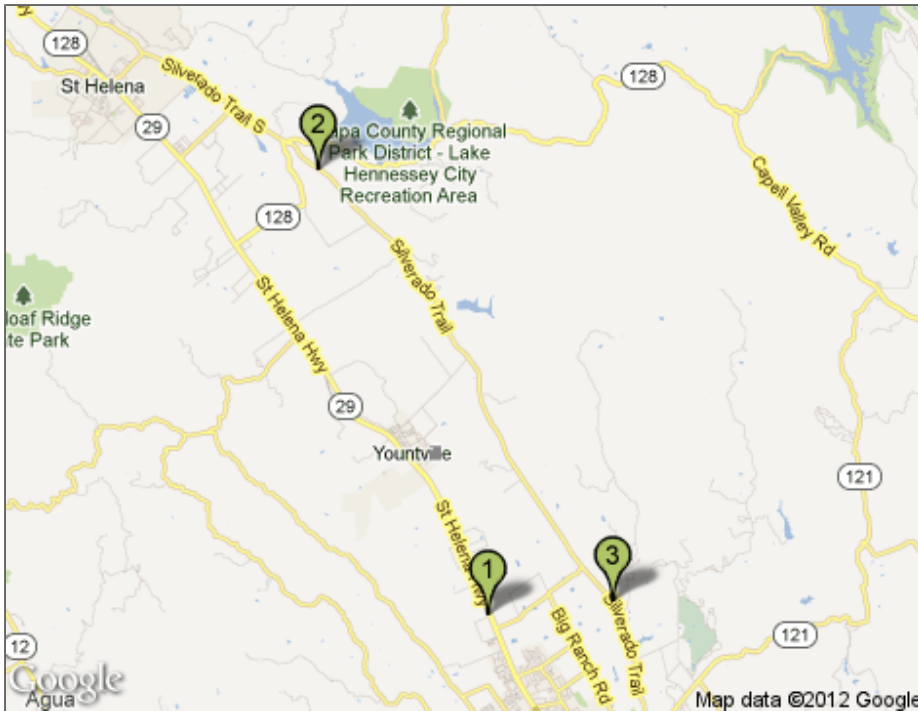
1 Terra

DESCRIPTION: Dine amidst stone walls in this elegant, romantic setting. The cuisine is a cross between French, Italian and Californian infused with Asian flavors. The restaurant was awarded a Mondavi Award of Culinary Excellence. The wine list is extraordinary, offering a huge variety of local wines and topping out at USD350 for the most expensive bottle. It is a great place for a splendid romantic dinner with impeccable service. In 2007, the inaugural year of the Michelin Guide San Francisco, Bay Area & Wine Country, Terra was awarded a Michelin Star. © wcities.com



wcities

Day 3 - Napa Valley



QUICK NOTE

contact:
tel: +1 707 253 2222
fax: +1 707 258 8889
<http://www.balloonrides.com>

location:
5091 Solano Avenue
Napa CA 94558

1 Balloons Above the Valley

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Check weather conditions before you book as balloons can't take off in high winds.

DESCRIPTION: A hot air balloon ride over the Napa Valley is an unforgettable way to commemorate your visit...and the Facebook photos will certainly be memorable! A typical adventure includes an hour-long balloon ride followed by a garden Champagne brunch, but several packages are available. The pilots are well-informed locals who tell you all about the history and culture of the Napa Valley while you soar above it. Launches begin at sunrise. Enjoy incredible aerial views of Napa vineyards. Wind conditions are a factor; if it's too windy balloons can't take off, but that's fairly rare.
© NileGuide



contact:

tel: +1 707 967 7700
http://www.mummcuveenapa.com

location:

8445 Silverado Trail
Napa CA 94573

2 Mumm Cuvee Napa

DESCRIPTION: Established in 1979, Mumm Napa is a partnership between France's Mumm champagne family and American bourbon moguls Seagram & Sons. Visit the spacious tasting room, which features a glass wall overlooking acres of vineyards and an outdoor terrace. In addition to rotating exhibitions by some of America's most famous photographers, the place houses a permanent photo gallery. Visit the website for details on complementary tours and tastings. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Mumm Cuvee Napa

contact:

tel: (707) 257-2345
fax: +1 707 257 3132
http://www.darioush.com

location:

4240 Silverado Trail
Napa CA 94558

3 Darioush

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

A stunning new property and visitors center

DESCRIPTION: Darioush, a winery noted for its Bordeaux style estate wines, implements old world labor-intensive, micro-vineyard management and new world state-of-the-art technology to craft fine wines from its estates located in the appellations of Napa Valley, Mt. Veeder and Oak Knoll. Under the direction of Darioush Khaledi and winemaker Steve Devitt, precision and quality are of the utmost importance at the winery. © NileGuide



jimg944

Day 4

DAY NOTE: Wake up peacefully and enjoy the morning. After checking out of the hotel, grab some lunch at Bistro Jeanty before heading out of town. Bistro Jeanty offers some authentic French bistro cuisine, a perfect end to your romantic adventure in the Napa valley before you head back to reality.

contact:

tel: (707) 257-5157
fax: (707) 257-5151
<http://www.latoque.com>

location:

1140 Rutherford Road
Napa CA 94559

hours:

Daily 5:30p-9:30p

1 La Toque

DESCRIPTION: A proud recipient of one Michelin star, Ken Frank's La Toque draws raves for its contemporary seasonal cuisine and exceptional wine pairing program. The restaurant relocated in 2008, setting up house in the Westin Verasa Napa in the heart of downtown Napa. Diners choose from a nightly five-course Chef's Tasting Menu, or design their own three-course meal from the "Options" menu--think Maine lobster salad with Manila mango and lemongrass (paired with a 2007 S.A. Prüt Riesling Kabinett); ricotta and chick-pea ravioli with Parmesan and wild mushroom broth (2007 Archery Summit Pinot Noir), and lamb loin with cumin-scented carrot puree (2006 Lagier Meredith Syrah). The on-point picks wine pairing are the work of sommelier Yoon Ha and wine director Scott Tracy.
© NileGuide



Courtesy of La Toque

contact:

tel: 707- 224 3300
fax: 707- 224 3395
<http://www.bistrodongiovanni.com>

location:

4110 Howard Lane
Napa CA 94558

hours:

M-Th 11:30a-10p, F-Sa
11:30a-11p, Su 11:30a-9p

2 Bistro Don Giovanni

DESCRIPTION: This bright, bustling, cheery Italian restaurant is one of my favorites in Napa Valley. The menu features pastas, risottos, pizzas (baked in a wood-burning oven), and a half-dozen other main courses. Every time I grab a menu, I can't get past the pasta with duck Bolognese and beet and green bean salad (although the latter is woefully skimpy). On the rare occasion that I venture from my favorite dishes here, I am equally smitten. The thin-crust pizzas fresh from the wood-burning oven, the seared salmon filet on buttermilk mashed potatoes, and the steak frites are excellent. On warm sunny days, I highly recommend dining alfresco on the patio. And no matter what, order the trifle for dessert. Seriously. **Note:** Service ranges from inattentive to great.
© Frommer's



Courtesy of Bistro Don Giovanni.

contact:

tel: 707- 963 2233
<http://www.martinihouse.com>

location:

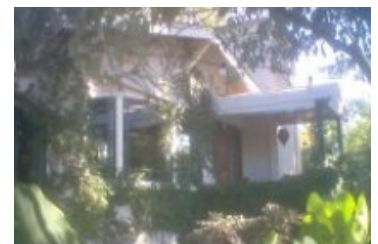
1245 Spring St
St Helena CA 94574

hours:

Open for Lunch Friday -
Sunday: 11:30 am - 3:00
pm Cellar Menu avail. Fri -
Sun: 3:00pm - 10pm Dinner
served daily: Sunday through
Thursday 5:30pm - 9:30pm;

3 Martini House

DESCRIPTION: Set in the beautiful wine country of St Helena, dine indoors or on the outdoor patio around the fountain. Inspired by Napa Valley's Native American and wine-making history, Martini House is a classic, comfortable and elegant place to taste local traditional cuisine and sip on rare and delicious wines. Enjoy lunch or dinner made from farm-raised meats and organic produce. Mushroom lovers can choose from a specialty mushroom tasting menu. Lunch selections include items like Sauteed Prawns with Saffron Gnocchi and the Grilled Kobe Beef Cheeseburger. Choose from dinner entrees such as the Sonoma Duck Breast and Butter Basted Local Halibut. The wine bar downstairs features a 600-bottle international wine list



wcities

Friday and Saturday 5:30pm - 10:00pm with selections from Napa Valley and areas around the world. © wcities.com

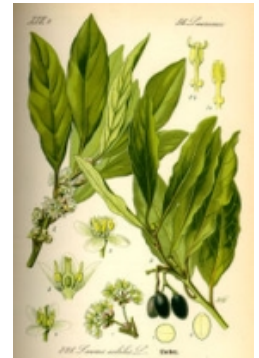
contact:
tel: 707- 257-9720
<http://www.bayleafnapa.com>

location:
2025 Monticello Rd.
Napa CA 94558

hours:
Wed-Sun 5pm-9pm.

4 Bayleaf

DESCRIPTION: Hospitality? You don't know what hospitality is until you've visited the Bayleaf Restaurant in Napa. The warmth and welcoming atmosphere of the restaurant and the sheer generosity of owner Mounir Fahmy must be experienced to be believed. Fahmy calls the Bayleaf his "gingerbread cottage." With its low, peaked roofline, multi-paned windows and surrounding English country garden, the Bayleaf does resemble a house straight out of a fairy tale. But the illusion of make-believe ends there: inside the restaurant, Mounir, his friendly staff, and their luscious California/Continental cuisine are all deliciously real. © OpenTable



Bayleaf

contact:
tel: 707- 255-0720

location:
1040 Main Street
Napa CA 94559

hours:
Tue - Fri: 11:30a - 3:00p; Sun
- Thu: 5:00p - 10:00p; Fri -
Sat: 5:00p - 11:00p

5 Belle Arti

DESCRIPTION: Italian food and Good ambience. What more does one need while dining out? This place is known for its friendly service, perfect pastas and divine Tiramisu. Go on there with family; or if you're with a date, seat yourself outside to the view of the Napa River. It's romantic and idealistic and the perfect way to spend an evening out. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: +1 707 224 1668
fax: +1 707 224 1672
<http://www.artesawinery.com/>

location:
1345 Henry Rd
Napa CA 94559

hours:
Daily 10am-5pm; tours daily
at 11am and 2pm

6 Artesa Winery

DESCRIPTION: Inside is a museum dedicated to educating visitors about winemaking history and technique--a great way to juice your wine knowledge. Open since 1991, Artesa specializes in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The courtyard, reminiscent of an Italian manor home, features a reflecting pool, sculpture, and fountains. © NileGuide



john w

Napa Valley Snapshot

Local Info

Napa Valley attracts some 5 million visitors each year, and for good reason. Located 50 miles north of San Francisco, Napa Valley is one of the world's premier wine-growing regions, home to picturesque small towns filled with foodie-fave restaurants, wellness spas, award-winning golf courses, artisan-oriented shops, and beautiful open spaces offering hiking adventures and ridgetop views...What's not to love?

Napa

The city of Napa is the largest of Napa Valley's communities, yet downtown Napa retains the feel of a quiet country town. While quite a few mansions and large estates rest back against the hill, Napa tends to be a friendly, down-to-earth town with a refreshingly unpretentious personality. In every season, the farms and wineries dotting the valley make a glorious setting for bike rides and country drives.

Napa's history as the center of the valley's Italian heritage is reflected in a variety of top-quality Italian restaurants. The valley's Hispanic population leaves its culinary mark as well; no drive down Soscol is complete without a quick bite to eat at one of the town's famous beloved taco trucks. The Carneros area on Napa's south side, prized by aficionados for its Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays, now features a slew of hip new inns and restaurants. And the revitalized riverfront area is a mecca for hopping bars and lively galleries.

The commercial center, known as the "Old Town" district, bustles with retail stores and boutique wine shops like Bounty Hunter Rare Wine and Provisions. "Old Town" provides casual dining options like ZuZu, a popular tapas restaurant with tons of local color, literally: most of the artwork featured is from Napa Valley artists.

Yountville

Yountville is far closer to the popular Falcon Crest image of Napa Valley, retaining as it does the quaint charm a small, country town. Less populous and more gentrified than the city of Napa, there are also a lot of grapes growing here. You may see the vineyards first, strangely enough, as a bright, metallic twinkle: growers use reflective foil to scare away grape-eating birds. Yountville, however is perhaps

most famous for first-class dining: French Laundry, Bistro Jeanty, Bouchon, and Ad Hoc are clustered right here. Nationally famed, these establishments are happily embraced by San Franciscans as an integral part of the Bay Area restaurant culture, but clearly, they and Yountville stand on their own (and standing is indeed what you will do if you don't make a reservation weeks in advance). In 2007, the inaugural year of the Michelin Guide to San Francisco, Bay Area & Wine Country, several Yountville restaurants were awarded Michelin Stars.

Oakville

By this point, one has entered the heart of Napa Valley: Wine production. Robert Mondavi, one of the titans of California wine, is headquartered in Oakville. Other, smaller wineries can be seen on both sides of the valley, though the premium cellars seem to be on the west side. While tiny Oakville has a post office, it's really an unincorporated part of Napa County, best known for the Oakville Grocery, a legendary roadside delicatessen stocked with a mind-boggling array of gourmet delights from France, Italy, and their own kitchens. As with other spots throughout the valley, one is likely to be greeted in the early spring by a waving sea of yellow under sparse vineyards: growers often plant mustard underneath grapevines.

Rutherford

Microscopic Rutherford is home to Beaulieu Vineyards, Rutherford Grove, Rutherford Hill, and St. Supery Vineyards & Winery. Take in Napa's landscape with a chilled bottle of sparkling wine in Mumm's outdoor terrace. Francis Ford Coppola's Niebaum-Coppola Estate, generally mobbed with tourists, features memorabilia from his career in cinema. Rutherford is also a fine place to eat: Restaurant at Auberge du Soleil and La Toque are two exceptional Napa Valley restaurants.

St. Helena

With its rows of historic stone and beam storefronts and perfectly restored Victorians, downtown St. Helena looks much it did in the early 1900s. Off the main street, cottage gardens are tucked between elegant bed and breakfasts in historic mansions, while elegant boutique

hotels surround fountain-bedecked quiet courtyards. The Silverado Museum hosts an exhibit of Robert Louis Stevenson ephemera. Fans of ghost story writer and misanthrope Ambrose Bierce will want to stay at the Ambrose Bierce House, now a bed and breakfast. St. Helena is also home to the Beringer Vineyards, a popular tasting destination.

The Culinary Institute of America at Greystone is hidden in the vineyards of St. Helena. The CIA is a master's level training center for working, certified chefs. It's situated in the former home of the Christian Brothers winery, an awe-striking, three-story, 101-year-old building that housed generations of winemaking friars. Take a look at some of the history exhibits inside, and don't miss Brother Timothy's 1800-piece corkscrew collection. The CIA gives cooking demonstrations in their fully equipped teaching theater. Then enjoy the sights at the outdoor terrace of Wine Spectator Greystone Restaurant.

Calistoga

Calistoga is famous for the hot springs that bubble out of the geyser-studded northern end of the valley, and the mineral-infused mud that Europeans traditionally believed had healthful properties. Mud baths, along with mineral baths, saunas, hot steam treatments, whirlpools, and herbal body wraps, have all been an attraction of the area ever since San Francisco entrepreneur Sam Brannan first promoted the benefits of the area's hot springs in the mid-19th century. Dr. Wilkinson's Hot Springs Resort, Lavender Hill Spa, and Indian Springs Hotel & Spa are good spots to enjoy relaxing spa treatments.

To get a feeling for the thermal springs without getting in one, go two miles out of town on Tubbs Lane and catch Old Faithful Geyser of California. The geyser spouts boiling water 60 feet into the air every half-hour or so.

Calistoga is an engaging, health-conscious, bustling little town in every way. The Calistoga Inn Restaurant & Brewery or Wappo Bar & Bistro are all great places to replenish yourself after the ardors of a rub, steam, or scalding soak.

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