

PREMIERE DESIGNERS

THE NEW DESTINATION FOR GREAT DESIGN & LIVING

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DESTINATION: NAPA VALLEY

*At least for
my senses*





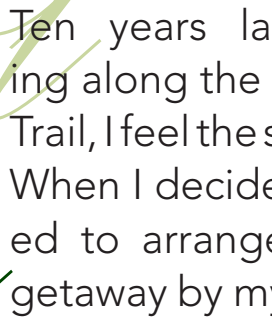
Napa Valley is one of the most beautiful places in the world, regardless of the season. From lush, verdant greenery in the Spring to the dense morning fog that blankets the vineyards in winter. Sometimes I wonder, which came first—the postcard or the scenery? Before I lived here I visited often and always thought it looked exactly like the photographs I collected during each trip.

DESTINATION:

Volage

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Ten years later, driving along the Silverado Trail, I feel the same way. When I decided I wanted to arrange a short getaway by myself for a few days and leave my business life at home it wasn't difficult to identify several places that, despite being less than 45 minutes apart, felt like I had traveled to the vine covered regions of Italy or France, minus the jet lag. In planning the trip, which I dubbed "A Feast for My Senses", I had a few criteria in mind. First, my destinations had to provide an interesting variety of architecture that distinguished them in some interesting way. Second, they had to deliver an exceptional experience

for their guests, where despite being a solo traveler, I would never feel like I was missing a companion. Third, hence the "feast" part, I would partake of the best Napa Valley had to offer in wine, food and lodgings.

I spent a few days thinking about it, asking around, looking online and finally decided on my itinerary:

- **Solage**, a Michelin Star resort in Calistoga for lodging and dining.
- **Castello di Amorosa**, Darryl Sattui's amazing castle to the North.
- **Swanson Vineyards** in Oakville.
- **Hall Rutherford**, the object of my affection since it was featured in the 2009 Neiman Marcus Christmas Wish Book.



To begin my mini vacation I drove up valley to Solage, located just outside the town of Calistoga off the Silverado Trail. This is more than just a resort – it is a complete experience. This beautiful solar-powered, green-friendly hideaway is part of the Auberge Resorts, and it exceeds the expected level of luxury and high-end style associated with the name.











Situated on a beautiful 22 acres just below Mount St. Helena, Napa Valley's dormant volcano, this modern California-chic establishment offers affordability relative to similar luxury properties and progressive opulence in the wine country, perfect for my three day excursion. With 89 studio-design guestrooms to choose from, and a restaurant dedicated to serving organic and locally-grown produce, I could indulge myself without feeling bad about leaving a carbon footprint.

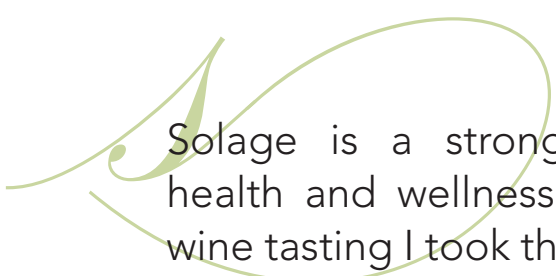


The resort offers complimentary bike cruisers for all guests and staff to transport themselves around the resort, but given chilly January weather, when I wasn't out and about I stayed close to the lounge and hovered, moth-like, around the outdoor fire pits. What I didn't realize (after boarding my Golden Retriever with his "Aunt Robin"), is that Solage is pet-friendly and would have welcomed my spoiled pooch with a water bowl, a plush dog bed, and organic doggie treats! He would have loved it, but maybe next time. Although everyone I met at Solage was gracious, helpful and accommodating, I was informed, politely, that the "furry kids" aren't allowed to swim in the gorgeous pool. I'd hate to disappoint him, so it's probably best I left the canine in the care of his vacation family.









Solage is a strong promoter of health and wellness, so instead of wine tasting I took the first day to indulge in their three part “The Mud”, “The Water” and “The Rest”. This is the divine trinity of spa treatments, complete with a customized mud cocktail and a soak in a geothermal mineral tub. I left relaxed, refreshed, and feeling like I could float. Next time, I think I’ll bring my significant other (not the Golden Retriever, though some may beg to differ) and try the “Solage Mudslide for Two,” their signature mud spa treatment, and indulge in couples massage afterwards. In this case, I was happy to be traveling alone or I might never have made it to the highlight of my trip— dinner!

