



Sunset

Travel Guide

Napa Valley:
Wineries, Hotels, Dining, and More 2010



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Napa's Best Sips, Sleeps, Spas, and More

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COVER: SOLAGE CALISTOGA RESORT. CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ANNABELLE BREAKEY, BERINGER VINEYARDS, THOMAS J. STORY



The charming Auberge du Soleil **BELOW** Poetry Inn's pool

Where to stay

Napa Valley accommodations for all budgets



Auberge du Soleil. The luxe resort has large rooms, stunning views, and a notable restaurant (\$\$\$\$). *From \$550. In Rutherford; 800/348-5406 or www.aubergedusoleil.com.*

Avia Hotel. Welcome the fashionable and fairly priced Avia Hotel, which opened in July 2009 on a downtown corner. Colorful throne-like velvet chairs dominate the lobby, and in some rooms, soaking tubs dress up the space. The rooftop deck has swinging benches and a firepit. Ask for something on the fifth floor if you want valley views. *From*

\$200. In Napa; 707/224-3900 or aviahotels.com
Blackbird Inn. The newly renovated California Arts and Crafts home has a front porch, huge stone fireplace, and lots of fine woodwork. The eight guest rooms are contemporary, with down comforters, four-poster beds, and gas fireplaces. *From \$185, breakfast included. In Napa; 888/567-9811 or www.blackbirdinnnapa.com.*

Calistoga Ranch. A sibling to Auberge du Soleil, the resort rests in a 157-acre canyon in the mountains east of Calistoga. Secluded and luxurious, it has its own spa along with 4 miles of hiking trails. *From \$735. In Calistoga; 800/942-4220 or www.calistogaranch.com.*

The Carneros Inn. The board-and-batten cottages hark back to Napa's agrarian past but offer contemporary luxury. *From \$395. In*



Pedal straight from your doorstep at Solage Calistoga Resort **RIGHT** Chic comfort at the Cottages of Napa Valley



Napa; 888/400-9000 or www.thecarnerosinn.com.

The Cottages of Napa Valley. Two rows of cheery Provençal-style cottages facing a shaded lawn and garden dotted with fountains outdo Napa’s famed luxury hotels on hospitality, throwing in complimentary wine, snacks, and a breakfast basket of Bouchon Bakery pastries delivered to your porch. They’re also affordable, as far as Napa prices go, providing the sort of privacy and personal touches you can’t find at larger resorts. *From \$350. In Napa; 707/252-7810 or www.napacottages.com.*

Dr. Wilkinson’s Hot Springs Resort. Go for “The Works,” a traditional mud bath with facial mask, aromatic mineral whirlpool bath, steam room, massage, and blanket wrap at the Calistoga classic. *Motel units from \$149,*

plus cottages and bungalows. In Calistoga; 707/942-4102 or www.drwilkinson.com.

El Bonita Motel. For years St. Helena’s motel with the neon sign and the retro road-trip vibe was a cherished Napa Valley secret. Now the word is out, which means you’ll need to book in advance. *From \$149. In St. Helena; 707/963-3216 or www.elbonita.com.*

Indian Springs Resort & Spa. The cabins are nice for an over-nighter, and the sprawling complex offers an unfussy approach to the spa experience, with mud baths, a thermal pool, and a Buddhist garden. *Cottages from \$225, lodge rooms from \$185. In Calistoga; 707/942-4913 or www.indianspringscalistoga.com.*

Milliken Creek Inn and Spa. Overlooking the Napa River, the 10 rooms hint at the exotic, with fresh flowers, burlwood-type flooring,

and sea grass lounges along with fireplaces and spa tubs, and beds mounded with Italian linen sheets and white comforters. You can stroll the tranquil gardens. *From \$550, breakfast included. In Napa; 888/622-5775, 707/255-1197, or www.millikencreekinn.com.*

Mount View Hotel & Spa. Small but nice rooms. *From \$189. In Calistoga; 800/816-6877 or www.mountviewhotel.com.*

Napa River Inn. The 1884 Hatt Building has been tastefully remodeled with 66 rooms and suites, each offering a fireplace or a view of the river. *From \$239. In Napa; 877/251-8500, 707/251-8500, or www.napariverinn.com.*

Poetry Inn. Comfort, style, and world-class views (and wine cellar) in the Stags Leap District. *From \$590. In Napa; 707/944-0646 or www.poetryinn.com.*

Solage Calistoga Resort. The sister property to Auberge du Soleil, Solage is designed for a younger crowd with (slightly) shallower pockets. The to-die-for spa offers 120-minute Mudslide experience for two (\$215), a sophisticated take on the century-old tradition of the Calistoga mud bath that includes a bake in a spacious sauna with a specially blended cocktail of mud and essential oils, a soak in the area’s famous thermal waters, and a swaddled rest in a “sound chair,” which pulses to the New Age music on your headphones. *From \$375. In Calistoga; 866/942-7442 or www.solagecalistoga.com.*



Finger-licking good ribs served with wine, natch, at BarBersQ **RIGHT** Hop aboard the Napa Valley Wine Train



An oh-so-Napa dining experience

Ride the **Napa Valley Wine Train**. This is as much a three-hour rolling culinary adventure as a train trip. Eat in a beautifully restored Pullman dining lounge; ride past wineries and vineyards that roll to the edge of forested mountains. Enjoy a meal, or relax in the wine-tasting car and sample any of 40 local vintages. The customized kitchen car has observation windows so you can watch chefs while they work.

HIGHLIGHTS Gourmet fare such as roasted Angus tenderloin or spinach salad with candied walnuts, smoked goat cheese, and honey-cider vinaigrette. **OPTIONS** Murder mysteries; moonlight runs; early lunches; Sunday dinner-and-concert series; family fun nights. *Dinner from \$49.50. In Napa; 800/427-4124 or www.winetrain.com.*

Napa Valley eats

More of our favorite plates and pairings

All Seasons Bistro. Excellent French- and California-inspired dishes, and a good wine list. \$\$\$; closed Mon. 1400 Lincoln Ave., Calistoga; 707/942-9111.

Azzurro Pizzeria e Enoteca. Beloved pizzeria where the Bianco pie—thin, blistered, and topped with sweet onions, gorgonzola, and rosemary—is a must-try. \$\$ 1260 Main St., Napa; 707/255-5552.

BarBersQ. Stephen Barber's 'cue—brisket,

ribs, pulled-pork sandwiches—is exemplary, as are the sides of mac 'n' cheese, cornbread and collard greens. Less traditional are some of the condiments (like serrano chile-spiced vinegar) and the wide-ranging wine list. You gotta try the Memphis-style pulled-pork sandwich, accompanied by, oh, a Frog's Leap Zin. \$\$ 3900 Bel Aire Plaza, Napa; 707/224-6600.

Bistro Don Giovanni. Authentic Italian fare in a setting that spectacularly shows off the valley.

\$\$-\$\$\$ 4110 Howard Ln., Napa; 707/224-3300.

Bottega. Napa Valley history meets authentic Italian cooking in the old stone walls of Yountville's 1870 V Marketplace. Festive stripes and lights turn the place into a party every night, with über-chef Michael Chiarello hosting locals and tourists alike. Late night brings the valleys winemakers and chefs around the fireplaces on the wraparound veranda. \$\$\$; 6525 Washington St., Ag; 707/945-1050.

Calistoga Inn Restaurant & Brewery. Enjoy an American menu, microbrews, and live music at this down-home establishment. \$\$\$ 1250 Lincoln Ave., Calistoga; 707/942-4101.

Celadon. This sleek restaurant serves superb Mediterranean cuisine. \$\$\$ 500 Main St., Napa; 707/254-9690.

Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen. In a charming two-story house in downtown St. Helena,



Ordering charcuterie at Oxbow Public Market

prominent Napa Valley restaurateur Cindy Pawlcyn serves California comfort (meat loaf, tamales) with a Southern twist. \$-\$\$\$. 1327 Railroad Ave., St. Helena; 707/963-1200.

Cole's Chop House. Rib-eye, porterhouse, New York: At the upscale steakhouse, all the important decisions revolve around beef. The sides are traditional (creamed spinach, onion rings) and the setting—especially the patio—attractively casual. \$\$\$\$. 1122 Main St., Napa; 707/224-6328.

Dean & DeLuca. Don't tell New Yorkers, but the St. Helena branch of Manhattan's foodie market mainstay may be even more alluring to palates (and wallets) than the SoHo original. \$-\$\$\$. 607 S. St. Helena Hwy., St. Helena; 707/967-9980.

Farmstead Restaurant. It doesn't get much closer to farm-to-fork cooking than in the beautifully restored barn at Longmeadow Ranch. Taste the Halls' vibrant wines and olive oils in the Gothic Revival Logan-Ives House next door; come have a cheeseburger with California cheddar and arugula at Farmstead (the beef and even the flour for the potato bun are from the ranch, and the chef thinks it's the best dish on the menu—although his Southern-inspired comfort food is stellar across the board); then buy some seeds or seedlings for the tomato and arugula you've just had at the nursery out the back door. \$\$\$; 738 Main St., St. Helena; 707/963-4555.

Go Fish. Cindy Pawlcyn has filled the long-time Napa Valley need for a good seafood restaurant. \$\$\$; 641 Main St., St. Helena; 707/963-0700.

Gott's Roadside. Come all the way to Napa Valley for a burger and a shake? Yes, when it's the Wisconsin sourdough burger and black-and-white shake at the valley institution formerly known as Taylor's Automatic Refresher (same everything except for the new name). \$-\$. 933 Main St., St. Helena; 707/963-3486. In Oxbow Public Market, 644 First St., Napa; 707/224-6900.

Martini House. From chef Todd Humphries and designer Pat Kuleto comes the best sort of wine-country restaurant, favoring foraged and organic ingredients. \$\$\$; 1245 Spring St., St. Helena; 707/963-2233.

Neela's. This relatively new Indian restaurant has already amassed a substantial local fan base. The khatai rolls—chicken, mango, and pickled onion wrapped in mini-rotis—are addictive. \$\$; 975 Clinton St., Napa; 707/226-9988.

Norman Rose Tavern. The folks behind beloved Azzurro (of Bianco pizza fame) opened this new venture in December 2009 and it's fast becoming as popular as their pizza place. Find a spot in the open-air courtyard for enhanced American classics such as a hefty burger, made with meat from Five Dot Ranch, one of Oxbow's neighbors, and accompanied by housemade pickles and fries

doused in toppings like truffle parmesan or sea salt and black pepper. \$\$\$; 1401 First St., Napa; 707/258-1516.

Oxbow Public Market. Opened in 2008, Oxbow is such a foodie paradise, you almost expect harps to play and angels to flutter as you enter the building. More than 25 local purveyors of all things organic, artisanal, and delicious have gathered in a 40,000-square-foot cathedral of sustainable yumminess. Need to pick up organic, handcrafted charcuterie? Look no further. In the mood for a piping-hot Venezuelan arepa? It's here. Seasonal produce? Local wine? Freshly baked bread? Check, check, and check. \$-\$\$\$. 610 and 644 First St., Napa; 707/226-6529.

Press. The finest ingredients to be had are cooked simply at the warm, stylish steakhouse. New York strip and rib-eye are stand-outs, and potato cake is always in season. And then there's the bar menu's hot dog—a full foot long, blistered with grill marks, set on a housemade bun, and made of Wagyu beef (the coddled, marbled kind that made Kobe beef famous). Order a glass of Napa Cab to complete the dog's transformation into a first-class meal. \$\$\$; closed Mon, Tue; 587 St. Helena Hwy. S., St. Helena; 707/967-0550.

Solbar. For a fantastic open-air lunch, soak in the sun on the patio, set between the pool and bocce-ball courts at the Solage Calistoga resort. The menu features seasonal cooking using local ingredients. \$\$; 755 Silverado Trail, Napa; 707/226-0850.

Terra. In an old stone building a block off Main Street, Hiro Sone—one of the pioneers of Asian fusion—combines California cuisine with Japanese ingredients. \$\$\$; closed Tue; 1345 Railroad Ave., St. Helena; 707/963-8931.

Ubuntu. Fitness and fine dining—two great concepts that work even better together. At Ubuntu blissed-out yogis practice sun salutations in the upstairs studio while chefs turn out amazing vegetarian fare in the gallery-like restaurant. Trust us, there's nothing ascetic about it. \$\$\$; 1140 Main St.; Napa; 707/251-5656.

Zuzu. The tapas and wine bar has drawn raves for its tasty menu and lively ambience. \$\$\$; 829 Main St., Napa; 707/224-8555.