

TRAVEL+ LEISURE



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How to Have the Perfect Vacation in Sonoma

by Ted Loos

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No longer in the shadow of Napa, the gorgeously laid-back California county is booming with new restaurants, inns, and tasting rooms that are giving travelers a fresh reason to visit.

Best Wineries

If Sonoma had a Facebook status, it would probably be: "It's (slightly) complicated." The county is more than twice the size of Napa and home to 17 distinct appellations, or AVAs (American Viticultural Areas). A geography lesson on the main regions will help you budget your time and pick where to stay.

Russian River Valley

Low-lying and forested, this AVA, which also incorporates Green Valley, has roads lined with redwoods and emerging food towns like Guerneville and Sebastopol. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay thrive here.

Illustration by Paul Rogers



Must-visit winery:

Emeritus Vineyards makes fruity, fresh Pinots.



The strong cooling influence of the Pacific Ocean is felt everywhere in these two appellations, where Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are the main attractions.



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