

Livermore: The laid-back California wine country you didn't know about

Aug. 16, 2019 | **Anne Roderique-Jones**

Picture this: A warm California afternoon that's spent sipping wine among the rolling hills, dotted with rows of vineyards and rich farmland. It's not Napa, Sonoma or even Paso Robles. This humble hamlet, comprised of nearly 100,000 acres of grapes, is Livermore. Situated just 40 minutes from San Francisco, it's one of California's original and oldest wine regions... Unlike more popular wine destinations, the Livermore terroir benefits from the east-west orientation of the valley and a warm growing season that's cooled by nearby San Francisco's breezes. Grapes love hot days and cool nights that this area provides in spades. Here, the tastings are laid-back. You'll likely be served by a member of the winery's family, or certainly a friend of the family. Appointments are rarely necessary, and there's no such thing as valet parking or glossy pairings.



While on the touristy side for Livermore — if there is such a thing — **Wente Vineyards** is the country's oldest, continuously operated family-owned winery and best known for its Chardonnay (maybe you've seen it in your local grocery). It's a big operation with two tasting rooms and beautiful grounds.

