











On the west coast, California is known for its extraordinary wines that truly rival any in the world. The Golden State's wine country spans from the beautiful regions of Northern California including Napa Valley, Sonoma and Monterey County to the Santa Ynez Valley and Santa Barbara regions winding back toward the ocean where Malibu vineyards are starting to make their mark. Further south and just inland from San Diego about an hour's drive, the lovely Temecula Valley is also rich with a number of outstanding wineries.

Angelenos love to visit Santa Barbara wine country. Conveniently located just a few hours north of the Los Angeles and 45 minutes from the city of Santa Barbara, there are five distinct wine appellations centered around the town of Los Olivos. And from Santa Ynez Valley to Solvang there are a number of extraordinary places to stay while exploring this breathtaking region. For instance, The Ballard Inn & Restaurant is owned by Chef Budi Kazali and is known for its award winning cuisine. Perhaps best known as one of America's Top Ten Most Romantic Inns, this idyllic property is located in the charming township of Ballard surrounded by vineyards and orchards. A boutique 4-diamond luxury bed and breakfast, it is designed as the perfect getaway for weekend travelers and maintains 15 themed quest rooms with antique furniture and a warm, inviting atmosphere. Many of the rooms feature wood burning fireplaces and private balconies. Wine tasting is made easy and fun with local companies like the Stagecoach Co. Wine Tours. They focus on keeping the roads safe and providing memorable experiences.

Santa Barbara County is home to over 100 wineries located within a region of microclimates, gorgeous terrains, small villages, and

rolling rural hills, with just a few blocks from the ocean and beaches. The modern era of grape and wine production started in California in the 1960s and has grown dramatically since, now featuring resort style wineries. With thousands of acres of grapes under vine in this region, many are owned and managed by some of the largest producers in the state. The weather in this area is generally beyond pleasant and on average ten degrees warmer than the Santa Maria Valley to the north, and ten degrees cooler than Santa Ynez to the southeast. Small vineyards reside alongside large tracts of grapes growing Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Grenache, Mourvedre, Petite Sirah, Riesling, Viognier

Wine tasting in this area is a favorite pastime for southern Californians and wine connoisseurs come from all over the globe to enjoy the amazing fruit of the vine from this part of the world. Accommodations are easy to find and range from small and charming hotels to luxurious boutique inns. If planning a trip to this region, for more information visit: californiawineryadvisor.com

and Pinot Grigio among others.

1 Napa Valley's gorgeous horizon at dusk 2 In Santa Ynez Valley's Happy Canyon, Grassini Winery's main building was constructed with recycled lumber from an abandoned Colorado gold mine, *Photo courtesy Grassini* 3 Chef Budi Kazali of Ballard Inn & Restaurant 4-5 Wine and dine by the fireside at Ballard Inn & Restaurant











On the east coast, culinary adventures are a way of life. New Yorkers are known to celebrate food, wine and brew while embracing their diverse melting pot of cultures. One of the grandest ways they do this is when every October, the Big Apple hosts New York City's largest food and wine festival: The Food Network & Cooking Channel New York City Wine & Food Festival (NYCWFF) is a national, star-studded, four-day event showcasing the talents of the world's most renowned wine and spirits producers, chefs, culinary personalities and America's most beloved television chefs while supporting charity and efforts to end hunger. NYCWFF is widely recognized for its tastings in celebration of America's favorite foods including intimate dinners with world-renowned chefs, late night parties, hands-on classes, educational seminars, coveted wine tastings and more. With over 55,000 passionate gourmands and aficionados, you'll sip, swirl and savor the world-class cuisine, wine and spirits served up by more than 500 of the industry's finest.

Where to stay: New York offers some of the most beautiful hotels in the world, including many boutique hotels that have you feeling like a guest in someone's magnificent home.





For instance, the innovative and much acclaimed Library Hotel Collection now has seven properties worldwide including four Manhattan properties, one of which is the stately Hotel Elysée. Built in the 1920s, the hotel is named for one of the finest French restaurants of that era. Once the playground for the rich and famous, Hotel Elysée has been home to movie stars, artists, writers and intellectuals. A small oasis of luxury, elegance and calm, this gem is located in bustling Midtown Manhattan, on East 54th Street between Park and Madison Avenues. The intimate hotel is walking distance to the city's couture shopping boutiques on the famed Madison and Fifth Avenues, to countless restaurants and sites as well as to the beautiful Central Park.

On the ground floor is the famous Monkey Bar Restaurant which has been featured on "Sex in the City" as well as "Mad Men." Originally founded in 1936, The Monkey Bar is now under the ownership of partners Graydon Carter—the editor of Vanity Fair and an owner of the Waverly Inn-and hoteliers Jeff Klein and Jeremy King of The Wolseley in London. The menu boasts American classics alongside seasonal dishes with one of the top chefs in the city serving up the mouth-watering selections. Playwright George Bernard Shaw was right when he said there is no sincerer love than the love of food, and we have it coast to coast for those who thrive on epicurean travel and culinary adventures.

Bon appétit!

