

Marin

An artistic painting of a landscape. The top half features a teal, textured sky. Below it, a large, rounded tree with yellow and orange foliage stands on the right. The foreground is dominated by a field of rows, possibly a vineyard, with alternating bands of orange and green, suggesting shadows and highlights. The overall style is expressive and painterly.

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Destinations

THE LATEST LOCAL TRAVEL DEALS AND GETAWAYS PLUS JOURNEYS AROUND THE GLOBE

WINE COUNTRY

POST-HARVEST, PRE-HOLIDAY

*Fall is an ideal time to visit
the wine country* ▶

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La Plage, Auberge du Sofell's
Inviting pool sanctuary.

TRINETTE REED



ASCRUSH SEASON wanes and the colorful leaves start to fall, it's a great time to head to the wine country. Autumn events include the Napa Valley Film Festival, November 9–13, and Flavor! — a four-day farm-to-table feast benefiting the scholarship program at Culinary Institute of America at Greystone (CIA), November 17–20. But you don't really need a reason to visit beyond maybe wanting a quick respite before the holidays. Where to stay? Here's a close look at five wine country properties we think you'll enjoy.

➔ Auberge du Soleil

THE ROOMS Overlooking the Napa Valley, Auberge du Soleil was first developed as a restaurant in 1981 by legendary French restaurateur Claude Rouas; in 1985 he opened the inn with business partner Robert Harmon. A top-tier French-inspired wine-country destination for three decades, the resort in 2010 underwent a renovation led by award-winning designer Suzanne Tucker, who spruced up the rooms and revitalized the outdoor pool, now renamed La Plage. Each room has comfortable oversize furnishings, handmade tile floors and French doors leading to a private terrace, often with views of the valley below, as well as down bedding, Italian linens, Wi-Fi connections, plasma TVs, complimentary snacks, beverages and fresh fruit daily.

THE MEALS With arguably the best view of the valley, the on-site Michelin-starred restaurant has been led by executive chef Robert Curry for more than eight years. Signature dishes include seared ono with wakame, bacon-wrapped veal with foie gras ravioli and Liberty Farm duck with figs. Previously, Curry was executive



chef just down the road at the Wine Spectator Greystone at CIA.

THE SPA The 7,000-square-foot Auberge Spa is for hotel guests only, enhancing the tranquility of the space. There are three outdoor pools: cold, hot, and warm —the warm one being an infinity pool with views of the valley. Eight treatment rooms each feature a private patio with outdoor shower or tub.

THE LOCATION Located in the heart of Napa Valley on Rutherford Hill Road off the Silverado Trail, Auberge is a short drive to downtown St. Helena to the north and Yountville to the south. Wineries abound within a two-mile radius, including Rutherford Hill, Niebaum-Coppola, Frog's Leap and Sawyer Cellars, to name a few.

NOT TO MISS Indulge in that last sweet bit of decadence with the resort's unique Madeira pairings. Head sommelier Kris Margerum has curated three hard-to-find vintages to accompany house-made confections by executive pastry chef Paul Lemieux, including chocolate hazelnut truffles, pistachio caramels sprinkled with fleur de sel and amandes au chocolat. After all, when in Rome ...

BOOK IT Rooms start at \$675 per night, aubergedusoleil.com. n.w.

➔ Carneros Inn

THE ROOMS Situated on sprawling acreage in the Carneros region of Napa County, the property includes 86 individual cottages and a lushly landscaped private courtyard with teak



Clockwise from top left: Complimentary bicycles at Solage Calistoga; a luxurious bath at Bardessono; a typical cottage at Carneros Inn; open-air "hallways" of Bardessono; couples massage at Spa Solage; a room at Auberge du Soleil; the hilltop pool at Carneros Inn.

furniture great for entertaining. Some units have soaking tubs; all have outdoor showers. Wood-burning fireplaces, flat-screen TVs and wireless connections are standard with every room. Bathrooms are spacious, with both tub and shower, limestone countertops and heated slate floors. Walking to and from the spa, pool area and restaurant on the native-landscaped paths is a central aspect of the ambience here and confirms you are truly in wine country.

THE MEALS Executive chef Steven Tevere oversees the resort's three restaurants, incorporating seasonal ingredients from the organic garden. A graduate of San Francisco's California Culinary Academy, he's led such respected kitchens as La Folie, Left Bank, Boulevard and The Lodge at Pebble Beach.

THE SPA Spa director Jeannie Jarnot has been with the inn since its inception and has made it her mission to provide guests with a memorable spa experience. The Spa at the Carneros Inn features nine indoor and three outdoor treatment rooms. Treatments include wine country-inspired wraps, massages and facials showcasing indigenous ingredients like chardonnay oil, Carneros-grown-and-pressed olive oil, goat milk and goat butter. The Carneros Healing Gem and Stone and the Flower Power Pulse Point massages are client favorites. A sauna and steam room are infused with herbs from the garden; the fitness center has state-of-the-art equipment and a motion studio.

THE LOCATION Only a 45-minute drive from southern Marin, the inn is on Carneros

Highway (121) between Napa and Sonoma. Wineries such as Viansa, Gloria Ferrer, Buena Vista and Domaine Carneros are a short drive away. The di Rosa art gallery and Cornerstone Gardens are unique nearby attractions.

NOT TO MISS Whether you're a serious swimmer or a weekend kickboard warrior, start your day with a dip in the heated main pool near Hilltop Dining Room, an optimal spot to catch the sunrise as it illuminates the entire valley.

BOOK IT Rooms start at \$395 per night, thecarnerosinn.com. n.w.

Solage Calistoga

THE ROOMS Solage Calistoga had to clear more wall space for awards this year. Solbar, the on-site restaurant, earned yet another

TRINETTE REED (BEDROOM, MASSAGE)



Left: Solbar at Solage Calistoga. Above: The guest-only spa at Auberge du Soleil.

Michelin star, and the entire resort secured a spot on *Travel + Leisure's* world's-best list. Situated on 22 acres, Solage features 89 cottages and suites, a 130-foot lap pool and a 2,000-square-foot spa and fitness area. The eco-friendly freestanding cottages, described by San Francisco design firm Dowling Kimm Studios as "Napa barn meets San Francisco loft," have gas fireplaces and 400-thread-count sheets, and many of the cottages come with private patios and fire pits. One other perk popular with all ages: the bicycles available for getting around the property or for jaunts to wineries or downtown.

THE MEALS A two-time Michelin star winner, the 125-seat indoor-outdoor Solbar is a valley-wide destination; make reservations if you plan to eat here. Executive chef Brandon Sharp learned his craft working alongside chefs such as Gary Danko and Thomas Keller. While a few signature dishes such as the

Lucky Pig or Mount Washington eggs are always offered, the menu changes daily.

THE SPA A prominent feature of the resort, the award-winning Spa Solage and fitness area has partnered with beauty industry celebs like Kate Somerville and locally based Marie Veronique Organics to provide unique treatments, including the Solage facial, which incorporates both product lines as well as Éminence Organic Skin Care from Hungary.

THE LOCATION Minutes from downtown Calistoga, Solage is on the northern end of the Silverado Trail. Complimentary bikes allow easy cruising to restaurants, shops or wineries.

NOT TO MISS Amid the wining and dining, make time for a fitness class and a soak in the spa's three geotherapeutic thermal pools — all resort guests have access, spa appointment or not.

BOOK IT Rooms start at \$425, solagecalistoga.com. M.T.

➔ Bardessono

THE ROOMS Since opening in 2009, the 62-room Bardessono Hotel in Yountville — one of only three LEED Platinum hotels in the world — has upped the standard for luxury wine country lodging. The name is a nod to the Bardessono winery and its family legacy of three generations of wine-growing in Yountville. To earn the sustainability salute, the hotel's sleek exterior was crafted from reclaimed wood, corrugated steel and nontoxic recycled materials, and energy is sourced from geothermal heating and solar power. Even the gray water here is put to good use, for irrigation in town. Inside the spacious suites, the custom-crafted furnishings and original artwork are complemented by organic cotton bed linens and robes from Coyuchi of Point Reyes. Other touches include Fiore bath products, motion-controlled exterior shutters, and filtered "house"