


travel  
itinerary  
wine country

# TASTE THE GOOD LIFE IN CALIFORNIA WINE COUNTRY: CENTRAL COAST

A 12-day road trip exploring  
Central Coast wine country  
from **Ojai** to **Carmel-by-the-Sea**  
with stops in Santa Barbara, The  
Santa Ynez Valley, New Cuyama,  
San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles

visit  
**California**

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- Day 1: **LAX to Ojai**
  - Day 2: **Ojai**
  - Day 3: **Ojai to  
Santa Barbara**
  - Day 4: **Santa Barbara**
  - Day 5: **Santa Barbara to  
Santa Ynez Valley**
  - Day 6: **Santa Ynez Valley**
  - Day 7: **Santa Ynez Valley to  
New Cuyama**
  - Day 8: **New Cuyama to  
San Luis Obispo**
  - Day 9: **San Luis Obispo to  
Paso Robles**
  - Day 10: **Paso Robles Wine Country**
  - Day 11: **Paso Robles to  
Carmel-by-the-Sea**
  - Day 12: **Carmel-by-the-Sea**

# WINE COUNTRY

## Itinerary overview

Discover what makes California's Central Coast region one of the most exciting food and wine destinations in the country. Slow down and savor the good life as you explore small Spanish-style cities and Wild Western townships. Travel up the minimally developed coastline and drive scenic wide open country roads surrounded by ranches, organic farms and sustainable

vineyards. Treat yourself to memorable Michelin-endorsed meals and meet the winemakers and purveyors behind the region's deliciousness. Prepare to be charmed by welcoming hospitality, creative artistry and boutique inns that capture each community's unique sense of place. Picture-perfect bucolic landscapes and exquisite wines await at every turn.



## ● Day 1: LAX to Ojai

- Drive from LAX to **Ojai** (87 mi/140 km) via US-101 N. If a coffee or taco stop is needed, **Prospect Coffee** and **Spencer Makenzie's** are quick, easy and very authentic local spots just off the highway in **Ventura**.
- After settling in at your hotel, drop in The **Ojai Vineyard** tasting room to sample the well-established winery's vintages made with grapes sourced from leading Santa Barbara County vineyards.
- Mosey over to **The Dutchess** for flavorful Burmese-Californian fare.
- Overnight in Ojai. **Ojai Valley Inn** is the only full-service resort; **Shelter Social Club's** three boutique properties are stylish and affordable.

## ● Day 2: Ojai

- If you're feeling active, start the day with an easy scenic hike above Ojai on the **Shelf Road Trail**. Golfers can secure a morning tee time at **Ojai Valley Inn's** 18-hole course.
- Grab a bite to eat and pick up provisions at **Rory's [Other] Place** or **Pinyon**.
- Walk downtown Ojai's village to browse the boutiques, galleries and metaphysical shops. Don't miss **Bart's Books**, the world's largest outdoor bookstore.
- Have a casual dinner and nightcap at **Deer Lodge**, a cool, rustic spot on the outskirts of town.
- Overnight in Ojai.



### ● Day 3: Ojai to Santa Barbara

- Head up the coast to **Santa Barbara** (27 mi/43 km) via US-101 N.
- Stop in **Summerland** to browse the tiny town's shops and antique stores and sip at **Summerland Winery**.
- Drive **Montecito's** Coast Village Road—the Rodeo Drive of Santa Barbara—and stop at **Montecito Country Mart** for lunch at always-buzzy **Bettina**, known for its creative wood-fired pizzas. Save room for a scoop of locally founded **Rori's** ice cream.
- Rent **bikes** to cruise along Santa Barbara's palm-lined waterfront **Cabrillo Bike Path**.
- Visit a wine tasting room in the **Funk Zone** and browse the eclectic mix of surf shops, boutiques and art galleries.
- End your Funk Zone walkabout with dinner at standouts **The Lark** or **Loquita**.
- Overnight in **Santa Barbara**.

### ● Day 4: Santa Barbara

- Take a morning walk through the **Santa Barbara Botanic Garden**.
- Tour the well-preserved **Mission Santa Barbara**, the 10th of California's 21 missions.
- Stroll **Downtown State Street** and take in the sweeping American Riviera views from the top of the **Santa Barbara County Courthouse** clock tower.
- Sip around the collection of boutique winery tasting rooms in historic **Presidio** neighborhood.
- Take a sunset sail on the **Double Dolphin** or do dinner and a show in the **ARTS District**.
- Overnight in **Santa Barbara**.



## ● Day 5: Santa Barbara to Santa Ynez Valley

- Drive CA-154 W to the **Santa Ynez Valley** (31 mi/50 km).
- Stop in Western-style **Santa Ynez** to check out the upscale shops, pop into **Global Gardens** for an olive oil tasting and pick up wine tasting picnic provisions at **Panino** or **Lucky Hen Larder**.
- Take a scenic drive on Foxen Canyon Road to taste wines in a picturesque vineyard setting such as **Koehler** or **Demetria Estate**.
- Head to **Los Olivos** for a tasting at one of the village's 50+ tasting rooms followed by dinner at **Bar Le Côte** or **Nella Kitchen**.
- Overnight in the **Santa Ynez Valley**.

## ● Day 6: Santa Ynez Valley

- Start the day soaring over the valley on a sunrise hot air balloon flight with **Sky's The Limit Ballooning**.
- Check out the cooler climate **Sta. Rita Hills AVA**, tasting at wineries such as **Peake Ranch**, **The Hilt** and **Melville**. (Book a **guided tour** if you prefer to let someone else do the driving.)
- Make your way to **Los Alamos** via Drum Canyon Road or US-101 N to end the day with dinner at Michelin-starred **Bell's Los Alamos**; reservations highly recommended.
- Overnight in the **Santa Ynez Valley**.



## ● Day 7: Santa Ynez Valley to New Cuyama

- Have breakfast at popular **Bob's Well Bread Bakery** and pick up picnic fixings.
- Explore leading **Santa Maria Valley** wineries on your way to **New Cuyama** (70 mi/112 km) via Tepusquet Road and CA-166 E, with stops at the legendary **Bien Nacido Vineyard estate** and **Cambria Winery**.
- Check into the perfectly updated 1950s-era **Cuyama Buckhorn** roadside “resort” motel and relish in the quiet and Western charms of the remote high desert town. Have dinner and drinks onsite in the **Buckhorn Restaurant** and saloon-style bar. After dark, take advantage of the absence of light pollution and walk Perkins Road go stargazing.
- Overnight in New Cuyama.

## ● Day 8: New Cuyama to San Luis Obispo

- Learn about the challenges of dry farming with a tour and tasting at sustainably-minded **Condor's Hope**; reservations required. **Sagebrush Annie's** is another winetasting option in nearby Ventucopa (18 mi/29 km).
- Leave New Cuyama, driving CA-166 W through the Los Padres National Forest to US-101 N as you head towards your next destination, **San Luis Obispo** (80 mi/129 km).
- Stop at **Talley Vineyards** in **Arroyo Grande** to learn about the terroir of **SLO Coast AVA** through tastings of single vineyard chardonnays and pinot noirs.
- Continue to **Biddle Ranch Vineyard** in the Edna Valley to try wines from other local AVAs.
- Check into your hotel and browse around **Downtown San Luis Obispo**.
- Have dinner at foodie favorites **Nate's On Marsh** or **Ox & Anchor**.
- Overnight in **San Luis Obispo**.



## ● Day 9: San Luis Obispo to Paso Robles

- Pick-up coffees at local roaster **Scout Coffee Co.** and walk over to **Proof & Gather** for freshly baked pastries.
- Hop on US-101 N to Santa Margarita (11 mi/18 km) for a guided horseback ride with **Central Coast Trail Rides** through the historic **Santa Margarita Ranch**, a working cattle ranch owned by three local winemaking families.
- Continue north on US-101 to **Tin City** (19 mi/30 km), where you can spend the afternoon into evening grazing and winetasting. The always-evolving industrial “campus” is home to an abundance of excellent wineries, breweries and eateries—including the Michelin-starred **Six Test Kitchen**.
- Overnight in **Paso Robles**.

## ● Day 10: Paso Robles Wine Country

- Get breakfast goods in the **Paso Market Walk** where you’ll find locals lining up for **JoeBella Coffee Roasters** and **Just Baked**.
- Spend the day exploring the stately wineries along beautiful **Adelaida Road**, stopping at **DAOU** for dramatic sweeping elevated views and **Tablas Creek**, where you can meet the farm animals. Famed cabernet sauvignon producer **JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery** is just down the way on Chimney Rock Road. Reservations are recommended for all.
- Back in **Downtown Paso Robles**, browse the shops along the town square and savor a divine dinner at **Les Petites Canailles**; reservations recommended.
- Overnight in **Paso Robles**.



## ● Day 11: Paso Robles to Carmel-by-the-Sea

- Hit the road for the last leg of your Central Coast wine immersion, taking US-101 N to CA-68 W to reach **Carmel-by-the-Sea** (118 mi/189 km) in **Monterey County**.
- As you near the coast, stop in **Carmel Valley Village** and **Folktale Winery & Vineyards** for lunch and wine tasting.
- Once in Carmel-by-the-Sea, check into your hotel and stretch your legs with a walk on **Carmel Beach**.
- Enjoy a delightful dinner at local favorite **La Bicyclette** or new rising star **Chez Noir**.
- Overnight in **Carmel-by-the-Sea**.

## ● Day 12: Carmel-by-the-Sea

- Take a morning walk along the **Carmel Scenic Road** from Carmel Beach to Carmel River State Beach and admire the waterfront residences.
- Treat yourselves to spa treatments at one of the **day spas**.
- Spend a leisurely afternoon strolling around Carmel's village, browsing the fine shops and art galleries and sampling wines among the **18 tasting rooms** concentrated in a one square mile zone.
- Toast to a successful trip over dinner at Michelin-starred **Aubergine**.
- Overnight in **Carmel-by-the-Sea**. Depart via Monterey Regional Airport, SJC (78 mi/125 km) or SFO (104 mi/167 km away).