



www.landofwineandfood.com

CULINARY ITINERARY: GOLD COUNTRY

California's Gold Country conjures up tales of the old Wild West – images of cowboys, saloon ladies, outlaws and dreamers hoping to hit the Mother Lode while panning for gold. Today's Gold Country is defined by rolling foothills, rustic towns and a hunt for liquid gold – the wines of the Lodi and Sacramento valleys. The gate to the Gold Country is State Capital Sacramento, where you'll find a window to the past in Old Sacramento, and a glimpse into the future with skyscrapers, hip eateries and savvy wine bars.

Day One: Sacramento

The Sacramento region is flush with easy access to agricultural experiences for the individual or group. A great way to get up close and personal with the food you'll be eating is to visit one of the many year-round Certified Farmers' Markets in the area. Check out www.california-grown.com for locations and schedules. There's wine-tasting at **Bogle Winery** (www.boglewinery.com), the **Old Sugar Mill** (www.oldsugarmill.com) and **Husick Country Store** (www.husicks.com) in the scenic Sacramento Delta just 20 minutes south of downtown.

To carry the experience from farm to fork, try the **Ella Dining Room and Bar** (www.elladiningroomandbar.com) for lunch in downtown Sacramento, featuring organic and locally fresh foods as well as unique, upscale, family-style dining. **Grange in the Citizen Hotel** (www.grangesacramento.com) and **Mulvaney's Building & Loan** (www.culinaryspecialists.com/index.htm) are leaders in the farm to table movement. Their menu changes, depending on the season. Or, try the **Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op** (www.sacfoodcoop.com), locally owned and featuring the region's largest selection of organically grown produce and a commitment to purchasing locally and in season from small family farms. Their full-service deli includes organic espresso and juice bars, seasonal hot buffet, salad bar, soups, deli salads and seasonal dishes, and made-to-order sandwiches – which you can enjoy in the dining area.

Another option for lunch or dinner is to take your taste buds around the world in Sacramento. A surprising fact about Sacramento is that it's one of the most culturally diverse cities in the nation. Its array of foods and restaurant options reflect this title, such as Ethiopian, Chinese, Hmong, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, Caribbean, British, Czech, French, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Spanish, Swiss, El Salvadoran, Mexican, Greek, Middle Eastern and Japanese. Speaking of Japanese, sake lovers will want to drive 30 minutes northeast to **Gekkeikan Sake** (www.gekkeikan-sake.com) in Folsom and take the "Sake of the Samurai" tour, complete with Japanese gardens and koi pond. For more information on these and other Sacramento activities, try www.discovergold.org.

Walk off your lunch by visiting galleries and museums, taking a river cruise, walking through history at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park, or browsing the shops in Old Sacramento. Or, spend some time checking

out the **El Dorado Wine Country** (www.eldoradowines.org), about 45 minutes east of Sacramento, where you can visit places like **Fitzpatrick Winery & Vineyard & Lodge** (www.fitzpatrickwinery.com), located in Fairplay.

For dinner, you can hang out in a laid-back gastropub, such as **Brew it Up! Brewery and Grill** (www.brewitup.com), featuring personal brewing and great food. Try the **Hoppy Brewing Company** (www.hoppy.com), **Pyramid Alehouse** (www.pyramidbrew.com), or **Sacramento Brewing Company** (tour and tasting available, www.sacbrew.com). Or, climb onboard the famous Delta King riverboat and dine at the **Delta King Pilot House** (www.deltaking.com), voted “Best Dining Spot on the River” and “Best Sunday Brunch” by readers of *Sacramento* magazine.

Celebrity chefs are working their magic in Sacramento as well, to the delight of food fans. A must-eat is **Biba’s** (www.biba-restaurant.com), where **Biba Caggiano**, the noted TV chef and award-winning cookbook author, offers classic Italian-style cuisine. Local legend **Lina Fat** of **Fat’s Family Restaurants** (www.fatsrestaurants.com) provides for a unique Asian dining experience in any of the family’s eight Sacramento area restaurants -- including legendary **Frank Fat’s**, serving fine Chinese cuisines since 1939. **Guy Fieri**, host of The Food Network’s “Guy’s Big Bite” and “Diners Drive-Ins and Dives,” has a **Tex Wasabi** (www.texwasabis.com) restaurant in Sacramento, where southern barbeque meets California-style sushi. A celebrity in its own right due to multiple awards, the landmark **Firehouse Restaurant** (www.firehouseoldsac.com)-- operating since 1960 – offers an extensive wine list with varietals from around the world. **Mai Pham** of **Lemon Grass Restaurant** (www.lemongrassrestaurant.com), featured in *Bon Appetit*, has a marvelous restaurant and has authored numerous cookbooks. At **The Kitchen** (www.thekitchenrestaurant.com) husband and wife team **Randall Selland and Nancy Zimmer** invite guests into their kitchen, quite literally, in this unique Sacramento dining establishment. A four-plus course meal is served for a maximum of 50 guests during The Kitchen’s signature demonstration dinners, or culinary events. Seating is limited, so reservations are highly recommended. Rub elbows with state officials and other capital city power brokers at **Randy Paragary’s Esquire Grill** (www.paragarys.com/go/prg/locations/esquire-grill) in downtown Sacramento, featuring American food in a classic and elegant atmosphere.

When the sun goes down, Sacramento heats up with trendy and fabulous wine bars, such as **58 Degrees & Holding** (www.58degrees.com), offering – you guessed it – 58 wines by the glass. Other notables include: **L Wine Lounge and Urban Kitchen** (www.lwinelounge.com), with 75 vintages and light plate food pairings; and **Revolution Wines and Tasting Room** (www.revolution-wines.com), a working winery and tasting room in midtown Sacramento. Or go down under and enjoy the **Discover California! Wine Bar and Tasting Room** (www.discovercal.com), a 2,000 square-foot underground wine bar. **Crush 29** (www.crush29.com) beckons from about 20 minutes northeast in Roseville, specializing in food and wine pairings with more than 200 varietals.

Day Two: Amador/Calaveras Wine Countries

In the morning, go farm hopping an hour east of Sacramento. The **Apple Hill Growers Association** (www.applehill.com) features a group of more than 50 ranches, including tree wineries, you-pick farms and organic farms. Depending on the season visitors can take home everything from apples and pumpkins to Christmas trees and fudge.

Sacramento is not only becoming a “hot spot” for wine bars, but the areas surrounding it are now recognized as Northern California’s “Other” Wine Country. With an upsurge of wineries in the surrounding counties, more than 200 tasting facilities are now located within easy reach of Sacramento in **Amador**

(www.amadorwine.com), **Calaveras** (www.calaveraswines.org), **Lodi** (www.Lodiwine.com) and the aforementioned **El Dorado** counties. You can tour some of these wine regions with tour companies like **Sacramento Wine and Nightlife Tours** www.SacramentoWineTours.com.

If you prefer to roam on your own, focus on Amador Wine Country (www.amadorwine.com). Pack a picnic lunch and drive about 90 minutes southwest of South Lake Tahoe to Plymouth in the lush Shenandoah Valley. Here you can visit various wineries, such as **Shenandoah Vineyards & Sobon Estate**, (www.sobonwine.com). Founded in 1856, this Registered Historic Landmark is among the oldest wineries in California. The **Montevina Winery** (www.montevina.com) in Plymouth features blending seminars and year-round events. Or try **Deaver Vineyards** (www.deavervineyard.com), a family-owned enterprise that is rich in history, with over 300 acres, which include 120 year-old Zinfandel vines. The property includes picnic areas, and visitors can stay overnight at the vineyard at the Deaver's Amador Harvest Inn.

If you prefer your lunch on a table cloth rather than on a picnic blanket, try **Susan's Place Wine Bar & Eatery** (www.susansplace.com), the best-kept secret in Sutter Creek, just south of Plymouth. Enjoy award-winning Sierra Foothill Wines with freshly prepared Mediterranean/California cuisine. Or in Amador City you can try fine dining in the historic **Imperial Hotel** (www.imperialamador.com) or fresh pasties and sandwiches on handcrafted bread at **Andrae's Bakery** (www.andraesbakery.com). Although only open for dinner, **Taste** (www.restauranttaste.com) in Plymouth features menu items that are fresh, seasonal and changing with availability, while offering a variety of selections from steak to vegetarian, as well as local wines.

Spend the rest of the day exploring **Calaveras wine country** (www.calaveraswines.org) to the south. **Ironstone Vineyards** (www.ironstonevineyards.com) in Murphys offers daily tours of the wine production area, bottling line, wine-aging cavern, amphitheatre, gardens and Lakeside Park, as well as the Tasting Room, Culinary Exhibition Center, Alhambra Music Room and Theatre Pipe Organ, Heritage Museum, and Jewelry Shoppe. They have a tasting room and gourmet delicatessen, and there's always something for the family to do, such as cooking demonstrations, silent movies, holiday brunches, concerts, and gold panning for children of all ages. Other notables include family-owned **Story Winery** (www.zin.com), which specializes in big, bold and hearty Zinfandel and Mission wines, and **Dobra Z Winery** (www.dobraz.com). Dobra Zemlja (pronounced: dobra zem-ya) means "Good Earth" in Croatian. This small winery and tasting room – featuring Zinfandel, Syrah, Sangiovese, Barbera and Viognier wines -- are housed in a restored late-19th century facility, complete with wine cave.

For dinner, there are plenty of gourmet options in Murphys. The **Alchemy Market, Wine Bar & Café** (www.alchemymarket.com) features the "craveable" cuisine of Chef/Owner Jason Wright, an assortment of the best menu items from his celebrated career. Big, bold flavors from around the world dominate the menu with an emphasis on classy American favorites. "Vegivores" will love **Mineral** (www.mineralrestaurant.com), featuring progressive vegetarian dining in an elegant atmosphere. The mostly organic exhibition kitchen offers modern, refined dishes. Enjoy high-end sake or explore the unique California wine list at the intimate concrete bar. Voted "Best Overall Restaurant" by Calaveras County, **Murphys Historic Hotel and Restaurant** (www.murphyshotel.com) features award-winning prime rib and renowned rack of lamb, fried chicken, fresh fish and tasty sauces in an elegant atmosphere.

Day Three: Tuolumne County

In the morning, drive about 90 minutes southeast to Tuolumne **County's Covers Apple Ranch** (www.coversappleranch.com). The oldest ranch in Tuolumne County, they feature apple trees from the 1850s thriving in their orchards above Sonora near Tuolumne City. The ranch offers fun for the whole family with a bakery, restaurant and gift shop. You can sample a variety of mouth-watering desserts baked fresh

daily including the popular “mile high pie” made with 12 cups of apples! People come from miles around for their homemade sandwiches, quiche and their signature Chicken Pot Pie. Children can explore a petting farm, tumble through the hay maze or take a mini-steam train ride. Fresh fruit and homemade jams, jellies, syrups, and delicious apple butter - hand stirred for 12 hours-- are also available. Scheduled tours of the fruit processing process and behind-the-scenes of the bakery are available upon request.

If you didn't get enough of Calaveras wine country, head back to Murphys and walk off your hearty ranch lunch at any number of other wineries in the area, such as **Stevenot Winery** in Murphys (www.stevenotwinery.com), which offers gourmet food products, a picnic area and a summer concert series. Or stay in the area and take advantage of legendary outdoor recreation, such as Yosemite National Park.

If you managed some self-control and didn't eat all the baked apple souvenirs from the morning's ranch adventure, head to **Seven Sisters** (www.blackoakcasino.com) restaurant for a late dinner. The signature restaurant of the Black Oak Casino in Tuolumne City, this four-star restaurant serves the finest of local cuisine along with some unusual menu items such as venison, buffalo and their famous “Wild Game Sampler.” Their wine list is extensive and showcases award winning Sierra foothill wines. The torch lighting in the dining and patio areas with views of the Sierras offers ambience unrivaled in the Central Sierra Region of California.

The above itinerary was created based on feedback from various destination marketing organizations, so we apologize if there are any minor inaccuracies. Dates and hours may vary so we suggest you confirm dates and hours in advance of visit. Updated June 2009.

MORE INTERESTING OPTIONS

AGRITOURISM

Sacramento Area

El Dorado County Farm Trails Association

One of the premier farm trails in the state, featuring apples, grapes, olives, timber, etc. www.edc-farmtrails.org

Placer Grown

Featuring a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and other agricultural experiences, including a Mountain Mandarin Tour, and Farm and Barn Tour.

www.placergrown.com

Tuolumne County

Farms of Tuolumne County

Farms of Tuolumne County is a nonprofit, membership organization formed to assist local agricultural producers market their agricultural products. The goal is to bring farmers, ranchers and community members together to maintain and enhance the viability of agriculture in Tuolumne County and to promote agricultural tourism.

www.farmsoftuolumnecounty.org

MORE RESTAURANT RECOMMENDATIONS

Sacramento Area

Local Favorites

Jack's Urban Eats

Home-style comfort food served here.

www.jacksurbaneats.com

Vallejo's

Voted Best Mexican "Hole in the Wall" by local residents.

www.vallejosrestaurant.com

Zelda's Pizza

Consistently ranked as the "best pizza" in Sacramento

www.zeldaspizza.com

Zocalo's

Serving classic favorites and modern adaptations to authentic Mexican cuisine.

myspace.com/zocalosacramento

Distinctive Sacramento Dining Experiences

The Kitchen

Once of Sacramento's most entertaining and distinctive dining destinations. www.thekitchenrestaurant.com

Mikuni

Offers high-quality sushi with a creative approach.

www.mikunisushi.com

Paesanos Pronto Restaurant

www.paesanos.biz

The patio seating at Paesanos Pizzeria is a pleasant sun-dappled space in which to enjoy truly innovative interpretations of fusion cuisine. The pizzas are all baked in a brick oven.

Enotria

www.enotria.com/accolades-awards.htm

Enotria is known for having the best wine list in town, with excellent food.

Tuolumne County

Azzo's

Everything is handmade daily, with a wide variety of pizzas, pastas, and delectable sweets. Check out high historical ceilings and stamped tin walls, as well as a rock and roll bar decorated with vintages rock memorabilia. The dining room features the work of various talented local artists.

<http://www.azzosrestaurant.com>

Banny's Café and Wine Bar

Banny's is a great place to take friends and family. The quiet comfortable dining room allows you to sit back and get lost in the company around you. Guests are treated to great service, fabulous artwork displays, wonderful freshly made food with a complementing glass of wine.

www.bannyscafe.com/menu.htm

Bon Appetit

All bakery products are made from scratch daily without preservatives and are prepared in the traditional French manner – including pasties, specialty coffees and teas, a full breakfast with quiche or crepes or something lighter like hot oatmeal or a breakfast parfait.

www.frenchbakerybistro.com

Cellar Door at the Groveland Hotel

Savor incredible California-fresh cuisine, select from locally brewed beers and hundreds of wine labels and delight in a delectable dessert. Executive Chef Greg Lutes is offering his daily specials as well. Our menu choices include crisp salads, fresh fish, pasta, melt-in-your-mouth steaks and daily specials, all created with fresh seasonal ingredients.

<http://www.groveland.com/dining.htm>

Christopher's Restaurante Italiano

Features freshest ingredients, homemade pastas and more! Chef Christopher Segarini brings years of culinary experience in New Orleans and the Bay Area to his one-year old eatery offering gourmet-style Italian cuisine.

(209) 533-2600

Lake Don Pedro Golf and Country Club

The cuisine...a mouth-watering array of fresh California cuisine and local flavor.

Featuring fresh, local California cuisine in a rustic and elegant atmosphere with a backdrop of rolling hills beautiful Lake Don Pedro.

<http://www.lakedonpedrogolf.com>

1859 National Hotel and Restaurant

The restaurant emphasis here is on freshness and originality, served amidst an abundance of relaxing and historical ambiance. This gourmet eatery features outdoor dining on the patio as well as it's magnificent historic dining room and saloon.

<http://www.national-hotel.com>

Talulah's

Sumptuous housemade meals, made fresh to order using local & organic produce, when ever possible. Serving high-end comfort foods. Top sirloin steak, chicken, meatloaf, pasta and wonderful fresh salads.

(209) 532-7278

OTHER INTERESTING GOURMET ATTRACTIONS

Sacramento Area

Markets

Corti Brothers (meats)

www.cortibros.biz

Sellands (high quality, handcrafted food and wine)

www.thekitchenrestaurant.com

David Berkley (high quality foods and wines)

www.dberkley.com

Oto's Marketplace (Japan-fresh quality sushi)

www.otosmarketplace.com

Tuolumne County

Gianelli Vineyards

Tuolumne County's newest winery has hit the ground running winning awards at the California State Fair and the Mother Lode Fair in Tuolumne County. The tasting room in Jamestown allows visitors to sample their fine products without having to visit the winery making for a convenient and tasty experience.

www.gianellivineyards.com

La Bella Rosa Vineyards

Be transported to Italy's Tuscany Region when you visit this boutique winery with its fine wines, tasting room and incredible gift shop. Stroll through the beautiful gardens by the lake while listening to the voice of Pavarotti. Let yourself be transcended by the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of La Bella Rosa - "The Beautiful Rose". This winemaker's award winning wines include Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Port, Merlot, Chardonnay and Aglianico.

(209) 533-8668

Mt. Brow Winery

This family owned and operated winery is located in the foothills of Central Sierra Nevada Mountains. Their estate varietals, planted in 1993, are Sangiovese, Merlot, and Zinfandel.

www.mtbrowwinery.com

For more information on wine and food activities go to www.landofwineandfood.com.

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