

## Where to taste

All Napa wineries have tasting fees, most starting at \$10 or \$15 for a basic lineup. Some wineries offer reserve tastings for an additional fee, plus tours and/or food-and-wine pairings for a premium; Napa being Napa, fees are on the high side. Consider concentrating on just a few wineries in a day.

**1 Chateau Montelena Winery** One of the most serene spots in the valley. Wander around spring-fed Jade Lake and taste lauded Chardonnays in the ivy-draped 1880s stone castle. 1429 Tubbs Lane, Calistoga; [www.montelena.com](http://www.montelena.com) or 707/942-5105.

**2 Clos Pegase** The striking “temple to wine and art,” designed by architect Michael Graves, houses an art collection but is itself the real work of art worth stopping for. The Mitsuko’s Vineyard wines are special. 1060 Dunawale Lane, Calistoga; [www.clospegase.com](http://www.clospegase.com) or 707/942-4981.

**3 Schramsberg Vineyards** Jack and Jamie Davies pioneered sparkling-winemaking in the valley. The tour here gives you a look at a mind-boggling 2 million bottles of bubbles in 2 miles of underground caves that were dug out in 1862. 1400 Schramsberg Rd., Calistoga; [www.schramsberg.com](http://www.schramsberg.com) or 707/942-2414 (call for appointment).

**4 Beringer Vineyards** The oldest continually operating winery in the valley, and a St. Helena landmark, Beringer offers a whole menu of tours; its Rhine House and wine caves are synonymous with Napa history. 2000 Main St., St. Helena; [www.beringer.com](http://www.beringer.com) or 707/963-7115.

**5 Louis M. Martini Winery** Though the terra-cotta-tiled monolith is owned by the Gallo family now, the legacy launched by Louis Martini in 1933 lives on in the remodeled tasting room. 254 S. St. Helena Hwy., St. Helena; [www.louismartini.com](http://www.louismartini.com) or 707/968-3361.

**6 Corison Winery** Cathy Corison makes elegantly lean, almost Old World-style Cabs in her graceful barn of a winery. 987 St. Helena Hwy., St. Helena; [www.corison.com](http://www.corison.com) or 707/963-0826 (call for appointment).

**7 Franciscan** One of the all-around-good tasting rooms on State 29—sleek and warm, with knowledgeable comments offered by the staff. Mount Veeder Winery (which has the same parent company) pours here too; it’s worth the extra fee to taste the reserves. 1178 Galleron Rd., St. Helena; [www.franciscan.com](http://www.franciscan.com) or 800/529-9463.

**8 Quintessa** There’s only one wine here, and it’s expensive—but worth an appointment for a sit-down wine-and-cheese tasting and a tour of the stone-and-concrete gravity-flow winery. 1601 Silverado Trail, Rutherford; [www.quintessa.com](http://www.quintessa.com) or 707/967-1601 (call for appointment).

**9 Frog’s Leap** The new hospitality center at the earth-friendly winery was built with highly renewable, low-impact materials; it hasn’t lost its rustic farm feel. Closed Sun; 8815 Conn Creek Rd., Rutherford; [www.frogisleap.com](http://www.frogisleap.com) or 800/959-4704 (call for appointment).

**10 Beaulieu Vineyard** The hospitable hexagonal tasting room is modest, though the history of Napa wine masters who’ve worked in the historic stone building next door—including the legendary Russian-born André Tchelistcheff—is not. 1960 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford; [www.bvwines.com](http://www.bvwines.com) or 800/373-5896.

**11 Grgich Hills Estate** No wine-gadget folderol in the redwood tasting room—just wine and a young crowd talking about it. Mike Grgich made the Chardonnay that beat out the white Burgundies in the landmark 1976 Paris tasting. 1829 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford; [www.grgich.com](http://www.grgich.com) or 800/532-3057.

**12 Rubicon Estate** A must-visit if you’re looking for Napa’s roots. The château, built by sea captain turned wine pioneer Gustave Niebaum, has watched over the valley since 1880. Movie director Francis Ford Coppola bought the estate in 1975 and reunited all the original vineyards. The \$25 entrance fee is steep, but the tour, tasting, and mini museum of winemaking are rich. 1991 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford; [www.rubiconestate.com](http://www.rubiconestate.com) or 800/782-4266.

**13 St. Supéry Vineyards & Winery** The large, airy visitor center offers as wide a range of experiences as any in the valley, from self-guided tours across the winery’s catwalks to cheese pairings and grape stomps. The Sauvignon Blanc is one of our perennial favorites, but also try the red (“Élu”) and white (“Virtú”) meritage blends. 8440 St. Helena Hwy., Rutherford; [www.stsupery.com](http://www.stsupery.com) or 800/942-0809.

**14 Opus One** The busloads across the road at Robert Mondavi Winery might be getting a good wine education, but at this winery founded by Robert Mondavi and the Baroness Philippine de Rothschild, you can taste Napa’s version of a grand cru. 7900 St. Helena Hwy., Oakville; [www.opusonewinery.com](http://www.opusonewinery.com) or 707/944-9442 (call for appointment).

**15 PlumpJack Winery** Billionaire Gordon Getty and San Francisco mayor Gavin Newsom are behind the Jack Falstaff fun here (the winery is named for Shakespeare’s stout funny man). The signature Cab was the first high-end red to go to market under screw caps. 620 Oakville Cross Rd., Oakville; [www.plumpjackwinery.com](http://www.plumpjackwinery.com) or 707/945-1220.

**16 Rudd Vineyards & Winery** Leslie Rudd is a relative newcomer among Oakville Cross Road’s royalty, but he’s

already producing first-class wines. Tasting here is an event for those who want a serious look: Take a full tour, which ends with food-and-wine pairings in the cave, or arrange to taste just the wines. Closed Sun–Mon; 500 Oakville Cross Rd., Oakville; [www.ruddwines.com](http://www.ruddwines.com) or 707/944-8577 (call for appointment).

**17 Miner Family Vineyards** Panoramic views from the terraces, as well as extensive caves, which you can make an appointment to tour. A wide range of top-notch wines is crafted here, from Viognier to a lovely dry rosé; the classic Oakville Cabernet is a standout. 7850 Silverado Trail, Oakville; [www.minerwines.com](http://www.minerwines.com) or 800/366-9463.

**18 Robert Sinskey Vineyards** A tall redwood nave rising from low stone walls creates an earthly cathedral of sorts. Within, nibbles in hand, taste beautifully crafted biodynamic Pinot Noirs. 6320 Silverado Trail, Napa; [www.robertsinskey.com](http://www.robertsinskey.com) or 800/869-2030.

**19 Cliff Lede Vineyards** The deceptively simple Craftsman tasting room gives way to a beautiful little art gallery and a courtyard that keeps its serenity in the busiest Napa seasons. 1473 Yountville Cross Rd., Yountville; [www.cliffledevineyards.com](http://www.cliffledevineyards.com) or 800/428-2259.

**20 Quixote Winery** Napa’s newest, Quixote is the 20-year project of Carl Doumani. Designed by Viennese iconoclast Friedensreich Hundertwasser; wild splashes of tile, gold-leafed domes, and no straight lines or square angles. Closed Sun; 6126 Silverado Trail, Napa; [www.quixotewinery.com](http://www.quixotewinery.com) or 707/944-2659 (call for appointment).

**21 Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars** No bells and whistles but serious pedigree. In the tasting room, which hugs the fermenting tanks, you can usually try

“Cask 23” and “S.L.V.” sourced from the vineyard that produced the Cab that bested Bordeaux in the 1976 Judgment of Paris tasting. 5766 Silverado Trail, Napa; [www.cask23.com](http://www.cask23.com) or 866/422-7523.

**22 Domaine Chandon** A beautiful introduction to the valley and to sparkling-winemaking. Take a look at riddling and blending techniques before you order appetizers in the salon. 1 California Dr., Yountville; [www.chandon.com](http://www.chandon.com) or 707/944-2280.

**23 Signorello Vineyards** Maybe the only winery perch in the valley that looks out over an infinity pool, Signorello has become a stop for food mavens. And with no new oak in it, the Chardonnay here is food-friendly too. 4500 Silverado Trail, Napa; [www.signorellovineyards.com](http://www.signorellovineyards.com) or 800/982-4229 (call for appointment).

**24 Darioush** “Stunning” is usually an exaggeration; not here. You can spend quite a bit for cheese-and-wine “experiences” and tours, or share the hefty fee for a standard tasting and feel like royalty for an hour. 4240 Silverado Trail, Napa; [www.darioush.com](http://www.darioush.com) or 707/257-2345.

**25 Hess Collection Winery** “Collection” refers to the dramatic art pieces in the multilevel gallery that holds the winery. The wines here have been getting better and better—the best being from the Mt. Veeder vineyards just outside. 4411 Redwood Rd., Napa; [www.hesscollection.com](http://www.hesscollection.com) or 707/255-1144.

**26 Domaine Carneros by Taittinger** A replica of the French Taittinger family’s 17th-century stone château in Champagne, Domaine Carneros has a grand terrace for sipping the good bubbly it makes. Splurge on a bottle of “Le Réve.” 1240 Duhig Rd., Napa; [www.domaine.com](http://www.domaine.com) or 707/257-0101.