

CALIFORNIA

# The Wine Country

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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## Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



## Overview

Walking among golden-green grapevines as morning sunlight chases away the mist, you'll encounter what makes Napa Valley and Sonoma so special. Here, the gentle sophistication of Northern California blends perfectly with the natural beauty of the American West. Like a fine glass of cabernet sauvignon, it's yours to savor at your leisure. Arming yourself with a picnic basket of local specialties (we'll even provide you one), you'll experience the full glory of Wine Country: towering groves of redwoods, historic remnants of frontier towns, renowned vineyards, modern tasting rooms, and the brick and clapboard charm of gallery-packed towns. Walk the Overlook Trail, with its scenic views of Sonoma County and the distant sapphire of San Pablo Bay. Wander the gardens of Buena Vista Winery—the oldest in the region. Stay in cozy, boutique hotels and choose from among some of the world's top restaurants for dinner. Along the way, don't forget the wine: each full day of walking includes a wine tasting at one of the finest wineries in the region.



# Daily Itinerary

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## DAY 1

Arrival at St. Helena

Your tour starts in the Napa Valley and the historical town of St. Helena. The heart of this wine-making county, St. Helena has a small-town feel, with a sophisticated side befitting its place in American wine-making history. Your hotel is within walking distance of the town's many enticing shops and galleries, wine-tasting rooms, coffee shops, and bakeries. Just over a mile from your hotel is Greystone, the castle-like former Christian Brothers Monastery that now houses one of the Culinary Institute of America's campuses. In addition to restaurants and a café, it has a fully stocked culinary marketplace shop with a flavor bar for food and olive oil tastings. After getting acquainted with the town, you may choose to relax in your hotel's pool and spa before enjoying one of the many nearby fine restaurants.

### **Southbridge Napa Valley, St. Helena**

Ideally located in the heart of historical St. Helena, this welcoming hotel boasts spacious rooms with vaulted ceilings and fireplaces, small "Juliet" balconies overlooking the courtyard, spa, or hillsides, and classic décor and furnishings. A full-service spa and fitness center is on site. Within walking distance of the town

with its many shops, restaurants, and cafés, the hotel also offers complimentary car service to its sister property, The Restaurant at Meadowood (reservations required)—recipient of three Michelin stars (one of only two restaurants with this rating west of Chicago!).



## DAY 2

Bothe State Park to Schramsberg Vineyards; 3.6 miles, easy to moderate, 600-ft. elevation gain and 800-ft. elevation loss

Today's walk takes you on trails through state parks and on to the famous Schramsberg Vineyards. Your first priority, of course, is to pick up your packed lunch from a local purveyor. A transfer takes you to beautiful Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park and the Bothe State Park, a large natural area encompassing stands of coastal redwood trees along its valley floors, as well as Douglas fir and madrone. The trail starts at the Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park, which is the site of a protected grist mill, dating from the mid-19th century and used for grinding wheat and corn into flour into the early 1900s (milling demonstrations on Saturdays and Sundays). The path then winds into Bothe State Park. Making your way through oak and redwood chaparral, you find a perfect picnic spot along the banks of a creek. The trail finally leads you to the back gate of Schramsberg Vineyards, in time for a tour of their cellars and tasting of their excellent sparkling wines. Transportation is provided from the vineyard back to your hotel in St. Helena.

### Southbridge Napa Valley, St. Helena

## DAY 3

Sonoma overlook to Sebastiani Winery; 4.6 miles, easy to moderate, 500-ft. elevation gain and loss

This morning, you leave the Napa Valley and travel by private transfer about 45 minutes to the heart of the Sonoma Valley—the historical Sonoma Plaza in the center of the town, where you can purchase delicacies for your picnic lunch. The site of the northernmost of California's 21 missions, and the last to be constructed in 1823, in the 19th century this town (or *pueblo*) was a fascinating



interface of native tribes, Mexican rule, Russian settlement, and American immigrants. A National Historic Landmark, the vast eight-acre plaza was designed as the focal point of the original Mexican “Pueblo de Sonoma.” Your walk begins and ends here, as you start out on the Overlook Trail—which, as its name describes, overlooks the entire Sonoma Valley all the way to San

Pablo Bay, the northernmost tidal estuary of San Francisco Bay. You can find a perfect spot to enjoy your packed lunch on the Overlook before you descend into the valley and walk to the historical Sebastiani Winery for a pairing of wine and local artisan cheese. From here, you can comfortably walk back to your perfectly situated inn just a block from Sonoma Plaza.

### **Cottage Inn & Spa, Sonoma**

In the heart of Sonoma’s walkable downtown, this luxurious bed and breakfast offers spacious individually decorated rooms and suites with tiled bathrooms and French doors. Capturing wine country’s elegant, California-casual feel, inviting patios and public spaces feature unique artwork and antiques, with a perfect atmosphere to relax and perhaps enjoying a bottle of wine from one of the eight wineries which are within walking distance. A range of body treatments are available at the on-site massage room and Zen garden. Complimentary bicycles are at your disposal with a town bike path a block away. A breakfast basket is delivered to your room daily.

### **DAY 4**

Bartholomew Park to Buena Vista Winery; 7.3 miles, easy to moderate, 500-ft. elevation gain and loss

You walk from your hotel this morning to lovely Bartholomew Park, with its network of trails through manicured grounds and vineyards, and past a reconstructed 19th-century villa. Originally founded by Hungarian immigrants—exiled heirs to the Habsburg throne—in 1861, the vineyard is a microcosm of the region’s boom, bust, and boom wine history: from its start, through the phylloxera blight of the late 1860s, to its 20th-century resurgence and success. You loop around to join the trails above the property, and return to walk past its gardens, ending at Buena Vista Winery—the oldest winery in Sonoma and Napa, founded in 1857 by an eccentric Hungarian count who sought the perfect *terroir*

in the New World. Recently refurbished to its original beauty, the winery's beautiful old stone walls provide a lovely setting for you to enjoy a wine-country picnic hamper and tasting. After lunch, you make your way back on foot to the Plaza, through the elegant East Side of Sonoma with its heritage homes. You have time this afternoon and evening to enjoy the shops and tasting rooms on the Plaza or to relax at your inn.



### **Cottage Inn & Spa, Sonoma**

#### **DAY 5**

Jack London State Park to Benziger Family Winery; 6 miles, easy to moderate, 900-ft. elevation gain and 850-ft. elevation loss

You depart Sonoma this morning by private transfer to the nearby village of Glen Ellen (just eight miles) where your walk takes you into historical Jack London State Park. Among the vast trail network and early-20th-century buildings, your route winds past oaks to the Ancient Redwood tree, an estimated 1,800–2,000-year-old redwood. En route are views of the “Valley of the Moon,” the writer’s name for the Sonoma Valley. After finding the perfect picnic spot, you can then visit Jack London’s cottage, where he wrote several of his famous novels, and also the location of the “House of Happy Walls”—a museum dedicated to Jack by his wife, Charmian. A short walk down London Ranch Road brings you to the Benziger Family Winery for a vineyard “Partner’s Tour” in a small tram—here you taste wines in the vineyard where the grapes are grown. The tour proceeds through the property, where you learn about biodynamic, organic, and sustainable farming methods, and to the barrel storage cave for further exploration. You then conclude the visit at the tasting room to sample the winery’s full range of wines. A short descent of about 1½ miles leads to your hotel, or you can also call for a ride. A welcome glass of wine awaits you, or perhaps a stroll through the tranquil lawn and gardens to the swimming pool or riverside hammocks.



## The Gaige House, Glen Ellen

With the feel of a sophisticated home, this inn invites relaxation in its fireside public rooms and tranquil grounds and gardens, with an outdoor swimming pool and hot tub. Guest rooms are contemporary with Asian-inspired accents and furnishings, muted colors and fabrics. Included are a bountiful breakfast in the dining room, an evening

wine and cheese reception in the sitting room, and fresh-baked cookies and refreshments throughout the day. Spa treatments are offered in-room, in the spa loft, or in a private outdoor cabana. In the heart of Sonoma wine country, Glen Ellen is at the intersection of vineyards, hiking trails, and state and historical parks and gardens.

### DAY 6

Departure from Glen Ellen

You are free to depart anytime this morning after a copious breakfast at your inn.



## **ITINERARY CHANGES**

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

## **DINNER RESERVATIONS**

While Napa and Sonoma are known for their exceptional restaurants, reserving a table at the best among them requires planning. Some accept reservation months ahead of time and fill up quite quickly. We'd recommend planning accordingly.

## **PURCHASING WINE**

If you enjoy the wines you taste during the tour, you may purchase a Wine Check, which is a sturdy, reusable bag with wheels designed to hold up to 12 bottles, and that can be checked as luggage. Wine Checks cost \$70 (plus sales tax) per unit and can be delivered to your hotel. If you would like to arrange this prior to your departure, please call Country Walkers. If you would like to arrange this while on tour, please contact our local partner.

## **RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL**

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

# Itinerary Overview

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## STARTING POINT

**Southbridge Napa Valley, St. Helena, California**

## NIGHTS 1 & 2

### Southbridge Napa Valley

1020 Main Street

St. Helena, CA

Tel 855.967.9400

southbridgenapavalley.com

Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

## NIGHTS 3 & 4

### Cottage Inn & Spa

310 First Street East

Sonoma, CA

Tel 707.996.0719

Email info@cottageinnandspa.com

cottageinnandspa.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service not available.

## NIGHT 5

### The Gaige House

13540 Arnold Drive

Glen Ellen, CA

Tel 800.935.0237

Email gaigehouse@foursisters.com

gaige.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service not available.

## ENDING POINT

**The Gaige House, Glen Ellen, California**

# Tour Facts at a Glance

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## TOUR LENGTH

6 days, 5 nights

## DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from March 1 through November 30, 2017.

## TOUR PRICE

2017 departures	Per person	Single +	Solo Surcharge
March 1–31	\$1,998	\$790	\$265
April 1–November 30	\$2,198	\$1,050	\$265

## STARTING POINT

Southbridge Napa Valley, St. Helena, California

## ENDING POINT

The Gage House, Glen Ellen, California

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 4 to 7 miles per day and limited options. The walks have elevation gains and losses from 500 to 900 feet. You often walk along paved walking paths, dirt roads, and quiet country lanes, or transition to gravel and earthen trails through vineyards and valleys and alongside creeks, and also access single-track hiking trails with some roots and stones in state parks. Classic Wine Country scenery includes rolling vineyard-covered hillsides, state parks with varied California forest of redwood, firs, eucalyptus, and chaparral. Towns visited have elegant 19th- and 20th-century architectural treasures, including Landmark Sonoma Plaza, heritage homes, and grandiose stone winery buildings. Winery visits to well-known vintners and tastings are included on each full day.

## **INCLUSIONS**

- » Breakfast daily and one lunch (day 4); beverages not included
- » Four winery tours and tastings (days 2, 3, 4, and 5)
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed Route Notes and maps (mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure)
- » Orientation phone call with a Country Walkers representative
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

## **LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN**

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » A Guest Information Form to complete and return at least 45 days prior to your tour
- » Luggage tags
- » Route Notes and maps
- » Your trip invoice

## **GRATUITIES**

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome. Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion.

# Traveling To and From Your Tour

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## STARTING POINT

### Southbridge Napa Valley, St. Helena, California

You may check into the hotel at any time on the first day of the tour. However, if you arrive prior to the hotel's check-in time of 4:00 p.m., and your room is not yet ready, you may store your luggage at reception and set out to explore the lovely neighborhood.

## MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

San Francisco International Airport (SFO), San Francisco

[flysfo.com](http://flysfo.com)

Oakland International Airport (OAK), Oakland, California

[flyoakland.com](http://flyoakland.com)

## GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

The most convenient way to travel from the airport to the starting-point hotel is by shuttle. Many door-to-door shuttle services are available, such as Marin Door To Door ([marindoortodoor.com](http://marindoortodoor.com)). Reservations can be made online, and the one-way fare for a shared ride is approximately \$115 (each additional person from the same location is \$12 extra) while the one-way fare for an exclusive ride is approximately \$145 for two people from the San Francisco airport or Oakland airport to the first hotel. Taxis are also available on the arrivals/baggage-claim level of all terminals. Approximate fare from the airport to the starting-point hotel is \$250 for the 1½-hour journey (travel time varies greatly depending upon traffic conditions).

It is also possible to rent or drive your own car should you prefer to do so. If choosing this option, please note this preference on your Guest Information Form. On-tour driving directions will be provided in your Route Notes.

## PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We recommend arriving in San Francisco at least one day before the tour starts to explore the fascinating city. There are many fine hotels to choose from, including a selection of our favorites below. Please contact the hotel directly for reservations.

### Union Square

(Shopping district)

#### Handlery Union Square Hotel

[sf.handlery.com](http://sf.handlery.com)

A budget-friendly family-run hotel.

#### The Westin St. Francis on Union Square

[westinstfrancis.com](http://westinstfrancis.com)

A celebrated destination for travelers since 1904, this iconic property is beautiful and grand—white marble columns, ornate balconies, and intricate woodwork transport guests back to the elegance of yesteryear. Moderate to expensive.

#### Sir Francis Drake Hotel

[sirfrancisdrake.com](http://sirfrancisdrake.com)

Equal parts regal, retro, and relaxed contemporary style, this boutique hotel balances Renaissance-influenced architectural splendor with welcoming warmth. A Kimpton property. Moderate.

#### Petite Auberge

[petiteaubergesf.com](http://petiteaubergesf.com)

This small “French” bed and breakfast just two blocks from Union Square offers cozy rooms, wine and cheese in the evenings, and full breakfast. Inexpensive to moderate.

### The Embarcadero Waterfront

(Beautiful views; pleasant walking to Fisherman’s Wharf, AT&T Park, and the famous Ferry Building Open Air Market.)

#### Hotel Vitale

[hotelvitale.com](http://hotelvitale.com)

A modern, green hotel boasting a great location and rooms. Moderate to expensive.

## Harbor Court Hotel

[harborcourthotel.com](http://harborcourthotel.com)

A Kimpton Hotel. Super friendly staff. Good views from some rooms. Moderate.

## Hyatt Regency

[sanfranciscoregency.hyatt.com](http://sanfranciscoregency.hyatt.com)

(Make sure you choose the Embarcadero Hyatt, rather than the Grand downtown). Situated across from the historic Ferry Building, this waterfront hotel offers fantastic views from upper floor rooms. Fun glass elevator. Moderate.

## Nob Hill

(Just above Union Square, this upper-class neighborhood is renowned for its city landmarks, including the gorgeous Grace Cathedral, as well as the famous hotels that border Huntington Park.)

## Fairmont San Francisco Hotel

[fairmont.com/san-francisco](http://fairmont.com/san-francisco)

This historic property sits atop Nob Hill, affording breathtaking views of the city and bay while offering easy access to the Financial District, Union Square, and Fisherman's Wharf. The Fairmont San Francisco is also located at the only spot in the city where each of the cable car lines meet. Beautiful and luxurious, the newer tower rooms offer fantastic views. Expensive.

## The Scarlet Huntington

[thescarlethotels.com](http://thescarlethotels.com)

This landmark boutique hotel with its timeless red façade and plush, chandelier-lit lobby is a Nob Hill favorite. Expensive.

## Fisherman's Wharf

(Very touristy area with Ghirardelli Chocolate Factory and Pier 39.)

## Argonaut Hotel

[argonauthotel.com](http://argonauthotel.com)

A deluxe boutique hotel ideally located between Fisherman's Wharf and Ghirardelli Square. The century-old renovated brick building blends authentic timber and brick with a theme reminiscent of the neighborhood's seafaring past. Rooms with views are fantastic. Moderate to expensive; rates vary quite a bit depending on the season and weekend.

## Pacific Heights

(Ritzy neighborhood perched on the hillside with panoramic views of Golden Gate Bridge. Great local shopping streets include Fillmore, Chestnut, and Union Streets.)

### Hotel Drisco

[www.hoteldrisco.com](http://www.hoteldrisco.com)

A very classy hotel in a very classy neighborhood. While quieter than other areas with good walking to local neighborhoods, it is far away from Embarcadero and Union Square. Moderate to Expensive.

### ENDING POINT AND TIME

#### The Gaige House, Glen Ellen, California

There are no walks or activities scheduled for the last day of the tour and you are free to depart at your leisure.

### MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

San Francisco International Airport (SFO), San Francisco, California

[flysfo.com](http://flysfo.com)

Oakland International Airport (OAK), Oakland, California

[flyoakland.com](http://flyoakland.com)

### LEAVING THE TOUR

The journey from the last hotel to the San Francisco or Oakland airport takes approximately 1½ hours, depending greatly on traffic conditions. Please check flight schedules carefully, and contact your airline directly for specific check-in requirements. For shuttle information, please see the Getting to the Starting Point section above.



# Information & Policies

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## **GUARANTEED DEPARTURES**

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour\*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, self-guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip today!

*\*except in cases of force majeure*

## **RESERVATIONS**

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. A \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

## **GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost\*. Please notify us in writing.

*\*One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

## **TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

Air or other travel arrangements to and from your tour are not included in the price of your trip. We encourage you to contact your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or [bettertravel@madriver.com](mailto:bettertravel@madriver.com)), for any additional air, hotel, rail, or transfer arrangements you may need.