



WEEKENDING

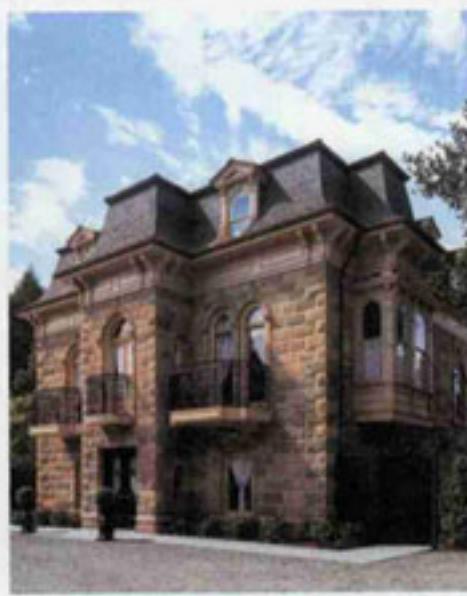
## There's No Off-Season in Wine Country

Locals know the best time to enjoy Napa and Sonoma: after all the tourists are gone.

Here, eight places to stay.

BY JEANNE COOPER

**AFTER THE CRUSH** of fall grapes and summer visitors, wine country winds down for locals—and becomes the perfect place for a winter break. Oenophiles can meet famed and often reclusive vintners, who regularly pop into the tasting rooms to chat. And foodies can find tables at high season's hard-to-book restaurants. Here's how to hit the vineyards this holiday season.



Clockwise from left: The great room at the Estate Yountville's 3,975-square-foot Villa at the Estate; a renovated Carrara marble bathroom at Hotel Villagio; the 1886 original exterior of Francis House in Calistoga belies the contemporary luxury within.



### NAPA VALLEY

Forget those bed-and-breakfast clichés of chintz and cookies. **Francis House** in Calistoga reflects a three-year labor of love by San Francisco interior designer Dina Dwyer and real estate developer Richard Dwyer to restore an 1886 landmark—and add a welcome gloss of contemporary luxury. The five guest rooms [from \$495] in the three-story, French Second Empire stone mansion feature Matouk linens and TCL Roku smart TVs, while the gardens host a pool, an infrared sauna, and a salt room. The elegant breakfast highlights local ingredients, with notable Napa vintages served during weekend wine tastings. 1403 Myrtle St., Calistoga, 707-341-3536

The 22-acre Estate Yountville has long been a springboard for exploring nearby Michelin-starred restaurants and viticulture, thanks to **Hotel Villagio**, recently transformed into a sleek urban inn, and **Vintage House**, updated in farmhouse-chic style [from \$355]. Now it offers the luxurious **Villa at the Estate**, a five-bedroom, 3,975-square-foot residence [from \$3,400] with 20-foot ceilings, a pool, a hot tub, and indoor and outdoor dining for 12. Two of the five bedrooms, each with a Carrara marble bathroom, sport a hand-stitched Hästens king bed. The chef's kitchen includes an Officine Gullo refrigerator and a La Cornue oven; the Villa's concierge can arrange an onsite chef. 6481 Washington St., Yountville, 800-351-1133

Across from Meritage Resort & Spa, its sister property on Napa's outskirts, **Vista Collina Resort** features not only 145 casual-elegant rooms [from \$179] with Frette linens and a wine-inspired palette, but also a microcosm of the CIA at Copia culinary compound downtown. The Village boasts nine tasting rooms for wineries and craft breweries and a locally sourced artisanal grocery, stocked with fresh bread from executive chef Vincent Lesage, formerly of Bacara; it will begin offering cooking classes in an exhibition kitchen next year. Guests in the 39 suites with kitchens can prepare Lesage's recipes using Hestan Cue's video guide for their Bluetooth-connected pans and induction burners. 850 Bordeaux Way, Napa, 888-965-7090