Hike Your Way Through Wine Country

BY JULIA KEALEY

Over the river and through the woods: What could be better than a stroll to a vineyard? From relaxed meanders to energetic jaunts, there are a bounty of hikes across the country that encourage you to have an adventure in nature while on the trail to your next wine tasting.

Oregon | Rogue River
Four-day "Wining" Lodge-to-Lodge Trips

Organized by: **Morrison's Rogue Wilderness Adventures & Lodge**

Difficulty: Intermediate. The trail was blazed by miners and pack mules in days of yore. It includes 1,000-foot elevation gains and drops.

Distance: Forty miles over four days.

This energetic, four-day outing includes more than 40 miles of hiking along the wild and scenic Rogue River Trail. A motorized adventure shuttle boat where we will be evening at a different rib-eye grill-stop. The guides bring rafts along, so if you get tired, you can paddle for a bit.

Extra: Each trip includes different wines, but recent "wines" have featured selections from Del Rio Vineyard Estate (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Malbec, Claret, Syrah, Rouge Joke, Chardonnay, Pino Gris, Viognier, Grenache Rose, Rose Jokes), Cliffside Cellars (Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Claret, Sangiovese, Super Tuscan), Troon Vineyard (Certified Organic and Biodynamic Vermentino, Grenache, Zinfandel, Riesling, Orange, Tannat, Malbec, and more) and Valley View Winery (Viognier, Tempranillo, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Rogue Red).

Extra: Care to explore a little more? Morrisons Rogue Wilderness Adventures offers an exciting range of multi-day hiking, river rafting and steelhead and salmon fishing trips to discover.

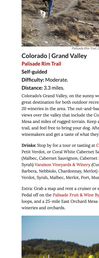

Photo courtesy of Del Rio Vineyard Estate

Colorado | Grand Valley
Palisade Rim Trail

Self-guided

Difficulty: Moderate.

Distance: 3.3 miles.

Colorado's Grand Valley, on the sunny western slope of the Continental Divide, is a great destination for both outdoor recreation and wine exploration, with more than 20 wineries in the area. The out-and-back Palisade Rim Trail offers spectacular views of the Colorado River, the Grand Mesa, and dozens of vineyards, the Grand Mesa and miles of rugged terrain. Keep an eye out for 12-lb. petroglyphs along the trail, and feel free to bring your dog. Afterward, meander down to the area's many tasting rooms and get a taste of what they've created.

Extra: Stop by for a tour or tasting at Colterris and try its prize-winning Merlot, Petit Verdot, or Coral White Cabernet Sauvignon. There's also BookCliff Vineyards (Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Riesling, Chardonnay, Viognier, Syrah) Varaison Vineyards & Winery (Corde Blanc, Viognier, Rosé, Primitivo, Norbec, Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon) and Carlson's Vineyards in Belle Vie Winery (Pinot Verdot, Syrah, Malbec, Merlot, Port, Muscat or Vin de Miche).

Extra: Grab a map and get a cruise or e-bike from Palisade's Rapid Creek Cycles. Pedal off on the Palisade Fruit & Wine Byway that offers paved five- and seven-mile loops, and a 35-mile East Orchard Mesa Loop along the river that travels past wineries and orchards.

Photo courtesy of Colterris

Michigan | Leelanau Peninsula
Vineyard Trail

Organized by: 45 North Vineyard & Winery

Difficulty: Easy to moderate, with a gradual incline.

Distance: Three miles.

Located on the 45th parallel, 45 North Vineyard offers a self-guided, scenic hiking trail that allows guests to explore the grounds of the winery's 100-acre property. Watch for birds and other wildlife as you explore pine and birch forests, as well as a stream, pond, meadow, orchards and vineyards. In spring, enjoy the sweet scents of apple and cherry blossoms.

The trail is groomed year-round for hiking. Set ten hiking and cross-country skiing. There's also a separate winter trail to snowshoe during colder months. Once you make it to the top of the hill, the winery provides picnic tables for impromptu lunches.

Drink: There are 31 different wines and ciders on their tasting menu, so you can find something for everyone. You might try 45 North's Chardonnay, Riesling, Pinot Gris, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, La Cresserie, Frontenac Gris or Marquette wines. Or take a chance on its Sparkling Peach, Sparkling Strawberry or Sparkling Cider! Growler refills are available. Don't forget to grab a small pastry menu to help you refuel.

Extra: 45 North hosts a series of hiking and running races throughout the year to benefit local non-profits. They also offer free cross-country ski and fat-tire bike clinics for first timers.

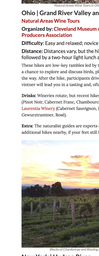

Photo courtesy of 45 North Vineyard & Winery

Ohio | Grand River Valley and Lake Erie
Natural Areas Wine Tours

Organized by: Cleveland Museum of Natural History and Ohio Wine Producers Association

Difficulty: Easy and relaxed; novice hikers welcome.

Distance: Distances vary, but the hike usually lasts about two hours, followed by a two-hour light lunch and tasting at the winery.

These hikes are low-key rambles led by two of the museum's naturalists. You'll have a chance to explore and discuss birds, plants, insects and other wild creatures along the way. After the hike, participants drive to the day's chosen vineyard, where the vintner will lead you in a tasting and, often, a tour of the winery.

Drink: Wineries rotate, but recent visits have featured stops at Laurent Vineyards (Pinot Noir, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Chardonnay, Riesling, Vignoles) and Laurentia Winery (Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer).

Extra: The naturalist guides are experts on local parks and trails. They can suggest additional hikes nearby, if your feet still feel like wandering.

Photo courtesy of Ohio Wine Producers Association

New York | Hudson River
Vineyard Walking Trail

Organized by: Millbrook Vineyards & Winery

Difficulty: Moderate to easy, with a few steep, rocky and hilly sections.

Distance: One mile.

Millbrook's scenic, self-guided trail takes visitors on a loop up and around to Castle Hill vineyard blocks where both Chardonnay and Riesling are planted. Views of the Shawangunk and Catskill Mountain ranges will greet you through the forest to a vantage point where guests are invited to "sit a spell" and savor the view of the Dutch hills and pastures. Stop at the tasting room after either hike to taste Peaceful Bend's wines or house-made draft beers.

Drink: White wines from Peaceful Blend Vineyard include Courson, Dry Creek (a Viognier-Vignoles blend) and semi-sweet Wittenberg. For red wines, there's Fowler Ranch, Meramec (a blend of Chambourcin and Norton grapes) and Norton, the state grape of Missouri.

Extra: Peaceful Bend will occasionally add a Wild Edible Walk to its calendar, so keep an eye on its website for event details. Its onsite Eatery offers a casual lunch and dinner menu also.

How to Camp Through Wine Country

Photo courtesy of Millbrook Vineyards / Photo courtesy Hadley White Hikes

California | Saddlerock, Malibu
Sonnet Estate Vineyards Wine Hikes

Organized by: Malibu Wine Hikes

Difficulty: Easy-to-moderate

Distance: Two hikes, 2-3 hours.

This fun hour hike up and around the oak groves and mountainous terrain of Saddlerock Ranch, home of Sonnet Estate Vineyards, allows guests to explore the vines and greet llamas, alpacas, donkeys, Scottish Highland cattle, yaks, zebras and bison. Ready for a post? Settle in for a flight of three of the winery's offerings halfway through the hike, followed by a few lawn games, perhaps.

Drink: Sample the Estate Sauvignon Blanc, Saddlerock Rosé of Grenache and Malibu Wine Safaris Kendrick Llama Cabernet Sauvignon.

Extra: Malibu Wine Hikes also offers a Safari Hike, which includes quality time with local-legend Sonnet the Giraffe, and a Musical Safari Hike & Concert in the summer and fall, which culminates with sunset tunes. If you're reluctant to leave, there's an option to end your hike at Saddlerock Gardens, where you can feast on a catered lunch or dinner.

Photo courtesy of Malibu Wine Hikes

California | Alexander Valley
Fall Vineyard Hikes

Organized by: Jordan Vineyard & Winery

Difficulty: Moderate.

Distance: Four miles, three-to-four hours, including an elegant picnic lunch.

As you wind through Jordan's idyllic 1,200-acre property, over three-quarters of which has been preserved in its natural state, it will ease your mind and engage your senses. Every step is a mindfulness moment. Look around at the winery's hiking chateaux before you roam through vineyards of Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot and Malbec grapes.

Along the way, you'll cross a creek or two, rest under the shade of ancient oaks, meander along a lake, through an olive grove, taste Jordan-produced olive oil and enjoy panoramic views of Mount St. Helena, Alexander Valley, the Russian River and Pitch Mountain. Trek over to the estate's apiary and farm, where you can tip your cap to the winery's hens, cows, donkeys, goats and chickens. Then climb the stairs beside the chef's garden and emerge onto a glorious terrace where a light lunch featuring charcuterie, salad and wines are served.

Drink: Jordan Chardonnay and Cabernet, along with the first Jordan Cuvée by Champagne 44 Lumières, available only at the estate.

Extra: Head over to Healdsburg Ridge Open Space Preserve or Lake Sonoma Recreation Area for other great hiking options.

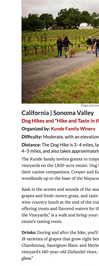

Photo courtesy of Jordan Vineyard & Winery

California | Sonoma Valley
Dog Hikes and "Hike and Taste in the Vineyards"

Organized by: Kunde Family Winery

Difficulty: Moderate, with an elevation gain of 800 feet or more.

Distance: The hike is 3–4 miles, lasting four hours. The "Hike and Taste" is 4–5 miles, and also takes approximately four hours.

The Kunde family invites guests to explore through its certified sustainably farmed vineyards on the 1,850-acre estate. Dog Hikes, led by Jeff and Roberta Kunde and their canine companions, Cooper and Katie, roam from the vineyards, valleys and woodlands up to the base of the Mayacamas Mountains.

Bask in the scents and sounds of the season, from wet dogs and wildflowers to grapes and fresh morning grass, and take in views as you go. You'll also be treated to a wine country lunch at the end of the trail, as well as "Happy Hour" at the first hike, and "Dessert" at the second. Featured wines for the dog hike, "Hike and Taste in the Vineyards," is a walk and pretty-by-your-picnic excursion that ends at the estate's tasting room.

Drink: During and after the hike, you'll be treated to wines made from some of the 18 varieties of grapes that grow right beside you, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Merlot. The Kundes are especially proud of the wines they craft from their estate vineyards, which produce wines that "sell" bottles in a glass."

Extra: Private group tours are available, and the winery also partners with the Sonoma County Humane Society and Dogwood Animal Rescue for special hikes with dogs and puppies available for adoption. A portion of the proceeds from all Kunde's dog hikes is donated to the animal rescue and rehabilitation organizations.

If you're hungry for more hiking, you'll find Sugarloaf State Park, Annadel State Park, Jack London State Park and Hood Mountain State Park within a four-mile radius of the winery.

Photo courtesy of Kunde / Photo courtesy Kunde Family Winery

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