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Delicious Destination: Paso Robles wine country

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The sun sets over the vineyards at Eberle, one of Paso Robles' first and most respected wineries. (Leslie Kelly)

By Leslie Kelly

Paso Robles is the best wine region you've probably never visited. But you absolutely should make plans to venture to the gorgeous area near San Luis Obispo, especially if you're a fan of the fermented grape.

We recently spent a few blissful days exploring the area, coming away from our visit mighty impressed by the beautiful landscape, the warm welcomes, outstanding food, and, of course, the wine. Here are a few of our faves, which barely scratch the surface of the 200+ wineries that call this region home. We'll definitely be going back for more!

Eberle Winery

Every trip should begin with a stop at one of the most venerable Paso producers. It's one of the few wineries still offering complementary tastings — cheers to that! — and history lessons that date back nearly 40 years. Check the events calendar and keep those fingers crossed that your visit might coincide with one of founder Gary Eberle's famous cookouts. **Insider tip:** Ask for a tour of the very cool caves, and don't miss the Rhone-style blends. Both the red and white shine bright.

Bodega de Edgar

Talkabout living the dream! This innovative operation started as a one-man shop, and has grown steadily since its impressive debut. We expect to see owner Edgar Torres on the cover of Wine Spectator one day. He does a brilliant job of telling stories with his wines, including a tribute to his parent's roots in Mexico. Best known for excellent versions of varietals such as Tempranillo and Albarino, Bodega de Edgar also offers library selections of aged Pinot noir and is gearing up to launch an exciting new project, details coming soon. **Insider tip:** The main tasting room on Adelaida Road is open Thursday through Sunday, but there's also a tasting room at the production warehouse, not far from downtown Paso Robles.

Allegretto Wines

A handsome space in the elegant Mediterranean-style destination resort, this spot is the perfect place to pre-funk before heading into a meal at **Cello Ristorante & Bar**. The tasting lineup varies daily, but if you find a favorite from before isn't offered, there's always the option to order a glass pour. We loved the **Insider tip**: Carve out some extra time to explore the resort's extensive and eclectic collection of art.

DAOU Vineyards & Winery

Glowing word of mouth about this hilltop winery's stunning valley views prompted us to turn our RV up the winding, narrow road. (Thanks for being the designated driver, John!) The payoff was even more impressive than expected, and the incredible public picnic places were filled with grinning folks sipping glasses of killer Cab, and eating local cheese. It felt like we'd arrived at the best kind of party. **Insider tip**: The \$40 tasting fee is waived when purchasing three bottles or more. Plan on spending at least an hour here.

Tablas Creek Vineyard

Another awesome wine pioneer project, this spectacular spot is beloved for kicking off the Rhone Ranger revolution in California. Credit its longstanding collaborative relationship with the legendary Perrin family and its Chateau de Beaucastel in Southern France for that welcome development to a state that used to be strictly about Bordeaux-based varietals. Tablas Creek wines are made with organically grown grapes from surrounding biodynamic vineyards, which visitors can tour at 10:30 and 2 p.m. daily. **Insider tip**: While the standard tasting experience is excellent, if you'd like to spend time comparing various vintages, make a reservation for the VIP Collector's Tasting.