



Photo Courtesy of Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance

Insider's Guide to Paso Robles

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Known as the land of “cowboys and wine,” Paso Robles ([/regions/san-luis-obispo-county/paso-robles/](#)) charms with its unpretentious attitude, stunning scenery, and wide range of wines suited for every taste and budget. In fact, Paso Robles grows over 40 different varieties and is home to some 200+ wineries (and counting), so it’s no wonder this sprawling Central Coast region is quickly

Wild Wild West



Paso Robles is located in the heart of the Central Coast, just over three hours south of San Francisco and roughly two hours north of Santa Barbara . Though close in proximity to other California wine regions, Paso Robles has its own sense of place and style, from the wine to the accommodations. In general, “Paso” is a laid-back region with a wild west spirit, and while winemaking is taken seriously, you won’t find any pretense here — Paso is known for its friendly, welcoming vibe.

Lay of the Land



Photo Courtesy of Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance

Paso Robles was once home to ranches raising cattle and farms producing almonds and grain, but today the main industry is wine, thanks to the region's diverse microclimates and soils, cutting edge winemaking, and hospitable tourism industry.

The Paso Robles wine region has 40,000+ acres of vineyards located within its 11 different sub-appellations, which span across 614,000 acres of varied topography and elevations. Here, vines see consistently hot, dry days with plenty of sunshine, while fog and coastal influences from the nearby Pacific

Where to Stay



Photo Courtesy of Allegretto Vineyard Resort

Though the Paso Robles AVA may be the largest in California, don't let that fool you; everything in and around the quaint town of Paso Robles is quite accessible — mostly within easy driving (or walking) distance. Choose to stay in town or out in the hills amongst the vines; either way you'll be in close proximity of things to do.

Offering a slice of luxury in the heart of downtown Paso Robles, the 16-room boutique Hotel Cheval wins for its personalized service and thoughtful details, including locally-sourced ingredients in its menu. Offering a slice of luxury in the heart of downtown Paso Robles, the 16-room boutique Hotel Cheval made cookies upon check-in, made - to -order s'mores by the fire, and a gourmet breakfast buffet each morning. A few blocks away, sister property The Stables Inn is a reimagined boutique motel that charms with its Western-chic decor and unpretentious vibe.



Photo Courtesy of The Piccolo

Also downtown is [The Piccolo](#), a stylish boutique hotel where 24 elegant rooms and suites are designed with comfort and convenience in mind (hello, keurig coffee makers and personal. As with the two aforementioned lodging options, a stay here means you'll be steps from downtown Paso's shopping, dining, and tasting rooms, but when you don't feel like venturing far, The Piccolo's chic rooftop bar is a convenient elevator ride away.

For those looking for resort-like amenities, head a few minutes out of town to the Tuscan-inspired Allegretto Vineyard Resort, which offers a spa and fitness center, pool and full-service cabanas, room service, tasting room, and an on-site restaurant. Take advantage of the resort's slow pace by sipping wine in the expansive courtyard, playing a leisurely game of Bocce, admiring the unique artwork throughout the property, or simply sitting beside one of the many fire pits after a day of wine tasting.

If staying in the middle of a vineyard is more your style, just four miles out of town is SummerWood Inn, a contemporary farmhouse-style inn at SummerWood Winery, where nine guest rooms overlook the surrounding vineyards. A stay here is sure to leave you feeling pampered, thanks to custom pillow top beds, luxurious bath products, in-room fireplaces, a farm-fresh breakfast in the morning, and wine and appetizers served each evening.

For an entirely different experience, don't miss "camping out" in a vintage trailer at [The Trailer Pond](#) at Alta Colina Winery. Stay in one of the cozy, retro trailers for a unique camping experience and enjoy the sights of the peaceful pond and vineyard. Trailers can be booked individually or as a group.

Where to Taste



Photo Courtesy of Alta Colina

Those looking for variety need not worry when it comes to tasting in Paso Robles, where you'll find cabernet sauvignon, Rhône varieties like syrah and mourvèdre, Spanish grapes like albariño and tempranillo, and even more obscure varieties like picpoul blanc and the Portuguese grape, touriga nacional.

When in downtown Paso Robles, stop into [Taste in the Alley](#), where you'll find over 400 local wines in stock, nearly every one available by the glass. While you could easily spend your time hopping around the 20+ tasting rooms downtown, like the boutique [Herman Story Wines](#), for a hip, urban tasting experience, head south to Tin City, an industrial cul-du-sac community of young, creative wineries and eateries. Check out [Desperada](#) for unique whites and edgy reds, [Levo Wine](#) for Rhône varietals highlighting fruit from Paso as well as Santa Barbara County, [ONX](#) for rich and complex red blends, and [Giornata](#), where compelling wines are made from Italian varietals. When you're in the mood for something other than wine, head to [Tin City Cider Co.](#) for thirst-quenching, dry-hopped ciders on tap, or [BarrelHouse Brewing Co.](#), which has a regular line-up of live music to accompany your cold brewski.



Photo Courtesy of Robert Hall Winery

For a wine tasting experience amongst the vines, drive to Paso's eastside (along the 46 East) to visit Robert Hall Winery, known for its regenerative viticulture practices, gourmet food and wine pairings, and cavern tours where you'll get the chance to taste wines straight from the barrel. Nearby is the long-standing, family-owned Eberle Winery, where pioneering winemaker Gary Eberle has made wine since 1979. It's home to the very first wine caves in Paso Robles, which you can tour prior to your tasting.

For more wine experiences with picturesque views, venture out to the beautiful Adelaida District, located west of downtown Paso Robles. At [Tablas Creek Winery](#), recognized as one of the leaders in the California Rhône movement, seated flights showcase their much-loved, organically grown Rhône wines, and at nearby [Halter Ranch Vineyard](#), you can accompany your tasting with lunch, or on the weekends, opt for bottle service under the oak trees.

If stunning views is what you're after, don't miss making a reservation at DAOU Vineyards & Winery, a lavish, hill-top winery offering panoramic views to admire while sampling their Bordeaux-style blends. For a more intimate experience, book the Summit Vineyard Tasting at Alta Colina where you'll enjoy a private 90-minute tour and tasting overlooking the surrounding organic vines.

Further south at Epoch, an appointment will get you a tour of the historic winery, once home to York Mountain Winery, and five of their estate wines. Nearby, Booker serves sought-after Rhône wines from their new design-forward tasting room, where an impressive mid-century modern design highlights airy indoor-outdoor spaces, while neighboring L'Aventure lures visitors to enjoy their acclaimed cabernet and syrah blends from the contemporary chic tasting room. Last but not least, make an appointment at Clos Selène for a relaxed guided tasting highlighting their limited-production Rhône wines, exclusive to club members and in-person visitors.

Where to Eat



Photo Courtesy of The Hatch Rotisserie & Bar

Since wine and food go hand in hand, it's not surprising that Paso Robles is home to plenty of great restaurants, many of which take the term "farm-to-table" seriously.

Start your day with a strong mocha oaxaca and wrap from [AMSTRDM](#), a coffee house and piano lounge in downtown Paso. Also downtown, but only open for dinner, is local favorite, [The Hatch Rotisserie & Bar](#), known for its killer cocktails and delicious, southern-inspired offerings, including shrimp and grits and the ever-popular half rotisserie chicken with buttermilk dip and house fermented hot sauce. If you can get a table, French bistro [Les Petites Canailles](#) is not to be missed, where delectable, seasonally-driven French fare is served in a “fancy-casual” space. Nearby, [Il Cortile Ristorante](#), serves homemade pastas, quality meats, and fresh seafood alongside a large selection of both local and imported wines.

A few blocks away from the town square, in the Paso Market Walk, is [Finca](#), a new casual Mexican restaurant highlighting the flavors of Baja and Sonora, drawing food lovers for its wood-grilled seafood and meats. And back in Tin City, [Six Test Kitchen](#) is an intimate, 12-seat restaurant that was recently awarded a Michelin Star. Reservations are released like tickets, so if you get one of the coveted seats, you’ll be in for an evening of beautifully-plated, delicious courses sure to leave your taste buds happy — even better if you opt in for wine pairings..



Photo Courtesy of Six Test Kitchen

If you find yourself in Tin City during lunchtime, stop by McPhee's Canteen, a counter service restaurant dishing up wood-fired pizzas, burgers, and salads that change with the seasons. For a sweet pick-me-up, walk around the corner to Negranti Creamery, a family-owned and operated creamery specializing in fresh sheep's milk ice cream. At either their downtown Paso or Tin City scoop shop, choose from 16 fresh-churned, artisanal flavors, or take an ice cream pie to-go.

What to Do



Photo Courtesy of Vina Robles

It's only natural that a trip to Paso Robles would include a lot of wine tasting, but when you're all wined out, don't miss grabbing a beer at The Backyard on Thirteenth, where a kid- and dog-friendly patio draws friends and families for pints and casual fare. If a cocktail is what you're after, The Alchemist's Garden delivers with elaborate creations, plus an extensive spirits list and inventive shared plates. Or, you can head to 1122 (eleven twenty-two), a somewhat secret, 28-seat cocktail lounge and speakeasy in downtown Paso Robles.

For something that doesn't involve food or booze, explore the many shops that line the town square. Find locally-made provisions and gifts at General Store, which features everything from artisan jams and olive oils to picnic blankets and stationary. At AndBe Boutique, peruse the chic assortment of clothing, home décor, and accessories for both men and women, then find the perfect baby gift at Bijou on the Park, a curated collection of apparel and toys for kids, as well as women's clothing.

Outside of town, get a glimpse into the past at the Estrella Warbird Museum, home to a large collection of military aviation artifacts and memorabilia, including planes, tanks, and war equipment, as well as classic cars. Or, to experience a bit of a thrill in Wine Country, head to the historic Santa Margarita Ranch to zipline over pinot noir vines with Margarita Adventures.



Photo Courtesy of Sensorio

During your Paso getaway, you'll also want to check out the stunning outdoor exhibition of lights that is Sensorio, by artist Bruce Munro. Here, a field of lights fills the landscape with a unique display of color, while the newest installation, called Light Towers, features 17,000 wine bottles that illuminate with morphing colors that coincide to music.

If visiting Paso Robles during the warmer months, don't miss watching a show at the popular Vina Robles Amphitheatre, an outdoor concert venue that welcomes big name acts seasonally.