



16 MAY 2019

## Travel Review - Paso Robles Wine Country



I'd been craving a wine country getaway since my first whiff of autumn in the air, but it took us until well into spring to make it happen. Wherever you are in the US, wine country isn't far away since all 50 states have vineyards now. But it had been nearly two years since our last California wine adventure, and we really wanted to head back to the Paso Robles American Viticultural Area (AVA).

Even if you're not into wine, it's a beautiful area to visit. Paso Robles (or Paso, as the locals call it) is midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, about a 3 1/2- to 4-hour drive, depending on your chosen route, from both SFO (San Francisco International Airport) and LAX (Los Angeles

International Airport). And you can fly into the nearby (40 minutes) San Luis Obispo airport from Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco, Seattle and Denver. Don't like to fly? Amtrak stops in Paso Robles.



There are good accommodations at every price point and of every type. Some vineyards even have a few guest rooms, I learned! We were fortunate enough to stay at the full-service resort we stayed at on our first trip, [Allegretto Vineyard Resort](#), and enjoyed every minute. We needed what I like to call a "personalized self-guided wellness retreat" or "one-stop ultimate relaxation and rejuvenation." Or as Mr Delightful put it: We needed a vacation like nobody's business!



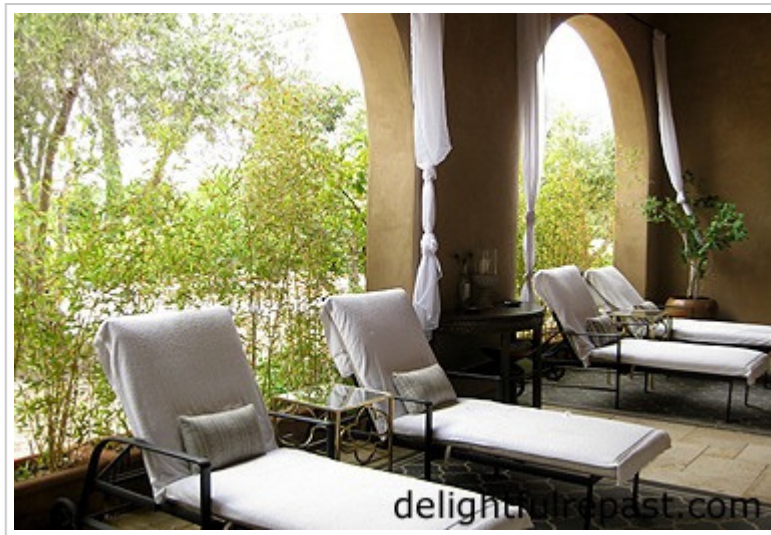
Of course, we went out and about, tasting wine, eating wonderful meals, seeing beautiful scenery, visiting charming downtowns; but if we had never left the property we could have been happy. The restaurant, Cello, is not your usual hotel restaurant. It is a serious--but unstuffy--restaurant where you'll run into as many locals as guests. Headed up by executive chef Justin Picard, it is about fresh, local ingredients and artisan cookery.



Though I could have tea in my room any time (someone had thoughtfully replaced all the Keurig coffee with assorted teas; and I had brought along, as always, [my tea travel kit](#)), I was thrilled to be able to get a proper cup of tea in the restaurant, even at the bar. If you are a tea aficionado in the US, you know what a rarity that is!

Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to experience the Spa at Allegretto, but it looked lovely. Here's a peek at their outdoor relaxing area.





This property is a labor of love for its owner-creator whose personal collection of art and artifacts spanning multiple centuries and cultures is seen throughout the resort, inside and out. One of my favorites is this one, and I bet you can guess why!



There's plenty to see and do, even if you have no interest in wine. We would have enjoyed the Pioneer Museum, but it's only open Thursday through Sunday. And there's horseback riding, zip line tours, a water park, craft breweries and distilleries (we prefer wine), all sorts of things we didn't manage to drag ourselves out for. The charming downtown is walkable and so fun!

There are lots of great places to eat in Paso Robles and the surrounding area, including Fish Gaucho, Thomas Hill Organics and Novo. [Novo Restaurant & Lounge](#), in downtown San Luis Obispo, features locally sourced, globally inspired cuisine in a serene creekside setting.



I wanted to walk over this gorgeous little footbridge, but it didn't happen. Next time.

In inclement weather, it would have been a pleasure to dine in the historic building, but we never miss an opportunity to dine

outdoors. The comfortably heated patio perched over the creek was idyllic. Mr Delightful was so dazzled by the setting I was afraid he'd not pay enough attention to the food! But the food stood up to the view. And the service was outstanding.

We enjoyed visiting the tasting room at Allegretto, sampling the excellent wines and watching Stephanie work the room. I have no idea how she kept track of what everyone was tasting. She was knowledgeable about the wines, and we also appreciated her restaurant recommendations.

Our visit to [Eberle Winery](#), which cultivates 64 acres of vines over five vineyards with different soil-climate combinations to suit particular grapes, was the highlight of our stay. The time we spent getting acquainted with the Eberles was priceless. Both raconteurs, they kept us entertained! We even got to meet the winemaker, Chris Eberle (not related).

Following a tour of the 16,000 square feet of underground wine caves (photo below), we sat on the deck overlooking the vineyard and tasted lots of wine. Like any self-respecting blogger, I should have taken a picture of the view from the deck, I should have taken lots of pictures; but I was in the moment.



Photo courtesy of Eberle Winery

As we sipped wine and nibbled cheeses, savories and dried fruits and drank in the view, we learned the history of this pioneer of Central Coast winemaking and a lot about the region and wine in general.

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Tasting each wine, I pictured what foods I would pair it with; for example, a pork roast and fruit sauce with the Syrah, a traditional [roast beef](#) dinner with the Cabernet. Can't wait to break open a bottle!

**Disclosure:** Though parts of this trip were comped or discounted, I assure you that does not alter my opinions or influence my review. I always tell my readers exactly what I think.

Jean