

# AFAR

## This Little Region Is the Easiest Wine Country Weekend Getaway

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A mere hour from San Francisco, Carneros straddles Napa and Sonoma and is home to some of wine country's best tasting rooms, restaurants, and stays.

Heading north from [San Francisco](#) to wine country, some of the earliest signs of vines come from one of California's most charming wine-growing regions: Carneros. An appellation traversing the southern portions of [Napa](#) and [Sonoma](#), Carneros rests just above the San Pablo Bay, whose cooling influence provides a haven for pinot noir, chardonnay, and sparkling wine production. Despite the pedigree of so many of these vineyards and the proximity to the grand tasting rooms of Highway 29, the ethos in Carneros is quainter, more agrarian, and less overdone than what you might experience elsewhere in Napa or Sonoma. If traffic is good, Carneros is a mere hour drive from San Francisco—the easiest wine country getaway for visitors and locals alike. Here's where to eat, drink, sleep, and explore with 36 hours in Carneros.

### DAY TWO

Taste: [Donum Estate](#)

3 p.m.

The di Rosa isn't Carneros's only exceptional art collection. The Donum Estate is home to a remarkable collection of international sculpture works, which are interspersed throughout the property, including pieces by Fernando Botero, Keith Haring, Ai Weiwei, Yayoi Kusama, and several others. Make sure to navigate your way through Gao Weigang's "Maze," as well as climb the hill and see Richard Hudson's "Love Me," a massive heart that reflects and distorts the image of the vineyards below. Keep an eye open for wildlife—the property sits within a migratory path and makes for excellent bird-watching. As if Donum weren't wondrous enough, the wines are also fantastic. The Donum home was opened this past September as a new hospitality space, open by appointment. A tasting here is a lesson in three of California's best terroirs for pinot noir: Carneros, Sonoma's Russian River Valley, and Mendocino's Anderson Valley. The house style is rather fleshy and round, but for those seeking a leaner pinot can try the Ten Oaks, picked earlier than its primary Russian River bottling. Before you reluctantly return to San Francisco, look carefully at the parking lot for a palm tree that's not like the others (hint: it's Douglas White's inconspicuous sculpture "Black Palm").