



San Diego

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Westways

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Road-Trippin'

ADVENTURES ABROAD *Notes from 1914*

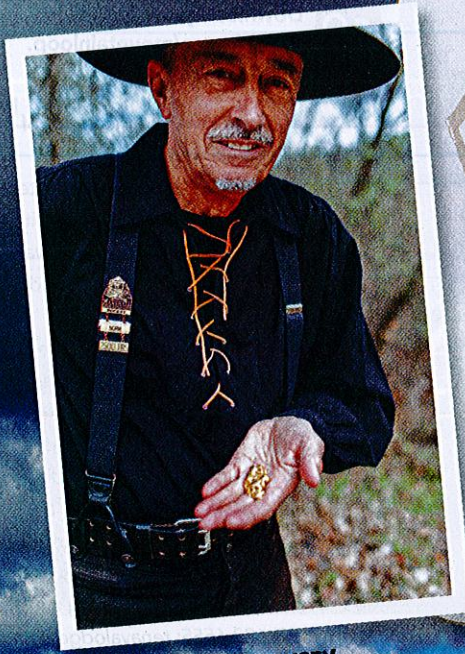
Gear to Go Fab Food Stops

Cool Convertibles Highway 1 Fun Stays

America's Loneliest Road Salute to Route 66

Classic California Drives





Marshall Gold Discovery
State Historic Park

Gold and Wine on Highway 49

BY RACHEL NG

In Mother Lode Country, gold and wine have a symbiotic relationship with roots tracing back to the mid-1800s Gold Rush. As the precious metal started to dwindle, many fortune-seeking prospectors, including John Sutter and James Marshall, turned to another lucrative venture—winemaking. The Sierra Nevada foothills' diverse *terroirs*, high elevations, and large day-night temperature swings made for quality red varieties. Some of these heritage zinfandel, Barbera, and petite sirah vineyards still exist along State Route 49 (so named for the '49ers, the wave of gold miners and merchants who arrived in 1849). From El Dorado County to Calaveras County, the two-lane highway—flanked by gothic-looking oak trees and bucolic pastures dotted with napping cows—traverses former boomtowns and winds past fruit stands and charming wineries. discovercaliforniawines.com.



Hot Tip
During California Wine Month in September, many wineries in the region host special events, tastings, and tours. discovercaliforniawines.com/californiawinmonth. Be sure to designate a driver if you plan to drink.

Vino Noceño winery
in Plymouth

Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park,

Coloma. Trace the beginnings of California's Gold Rush on a guided tour of this 576-acre state park, which features a Chinese general store and a replica of Sutter's Mill. Stop by the shabby-chic Argonaut Farm to Fork Café for house-made gelato, artfully poured cappuccinos, and live music. (530) 622-3470; www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=484.

Gold Bug Park & Mine, Placerville. Venture deep into a hard-rock gold mine, where costumed guides bring history and geology lessons to life with animated storytelling. Learn how gold is extracted from milky quartz at the stamp mill and watch a blacksmith forge iron and steel at his workshop. (530) 642-5207; goldbugpark.org.

Lava Cap Winery, Placerville. Three generations of winemakers use sustainable farming practices on volcanic soil to cultivate their award-winning petite sirah, Sangiovese, Barbera, and zinfandel. Lava Cap is also known for its buttery chardonnay, which goes well with the winery's artisanal cheese plate. (800) 475-0175; lavacap.com.

Amador Vintage Market, Plymouth. Chef-owner Beth Sogaard is the go-to caterer for Amador County's winegrowers, so it's no surprise that her fresh salads, sandwiches, house-made breads, and truffled potato chips pair well with wines. Pick up a preordered picnic lunch en route to visiting nearby wineries, including Vino Noceto. (209) 245-3663; amadorvintagemarket.com.

Hanford House Inn, Sutter Creek. This Gold Rush town B&B combines the sophistication of a boutique hotel with the thoughtful touches of a family-owned operation. Breakfast is prepared with ingredients handpicked from the on-site garden, when available, and complimentary Amador County wines and cheeses are offered during happy hour. (209) 267-0747; hanfordhouse.com.

Murphys. About two-dozen boutique wineries populate four blocks of this old gold-mining town. A good way to discover downtown Murphys' culinary treasures is on a 3.5-hour food, wine, and history walking tour (800-407-8918; local-food-tours.com), which includes stops at a gourmet cupcake shop, an olive oil tasting bar, and the local-favorite Val du Vino Winery. visitmurphys.com.

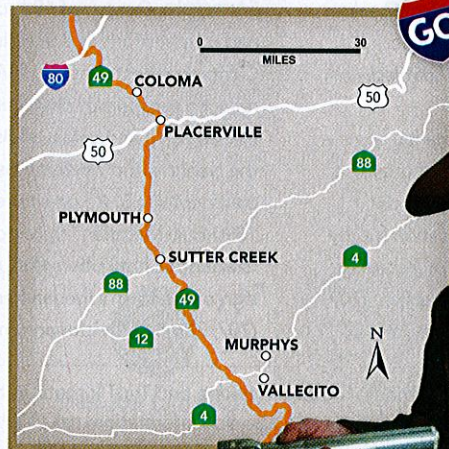
Moaning Cavern Adventure Park, Vallecito. Hanging by the rope takes on new meaning for adventure-seekers rappelling 165 feet into Moaning Cavern, said to be the largest cave chamber in California. Those who prefer a more down-to-earth approach can descend a 100-foot steel spiral staircase to explore towering stalagmites, ancient stalactites, dramatic draperies, and mammoth flowstones. (209) 736-2708; caverntours.com/MoCavRt.htm.



Moaning Cavern Adventure Park



Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park



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