

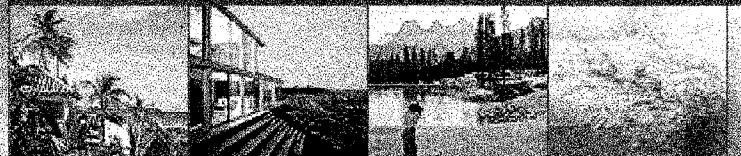
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**Discover The Dry Creek Valley**

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by Bob Souza



EMAIL ARTICLE

**Whether searching for a wine-country home, in need of some cellar restocking, or just desperate for a relaxing getaway, you owe it to yourself to experience a truly enchanting venue. You will not be disappointed.**

We discovered the charm of the Dry Creek Valley quite by accident, and it quickly became our favorite wine excursion destination. Captivated by the enthusiasm of a gentleman we met at a Bed and Breakfast, and impressed by his knowledge of the region, we set out early one morning for what was to be the start of a memorable journey.

Healdsburg, with a population of 11,000, is a quaint city located in the middle of the Northern California wine country, about a 75-minute drive from San Francisco. The popular Russian River winds through the town, making it an ideal living locale.

Driving a few miles west of Healdsburg and over a hill, we encountered the magic - the beautifully lush and postcard-perfect Dry Creek Valley. The first bouquet to broach my senses was the distinctive and instantly recognizable fragrance of grapes. Magnificent!

Meandering through the valley was a special joy, stopping at various wineries to sample their wares, and pausing to appreciate the splendor of the rolling hills, brimming with their manicured vineyards. The fantasy of owning a home in such a paradise kept racing through my mind. How could I one day live out that dream?

The Dry Creek Road is a marvelous wine trail - an ideal track for the purpose. The only dilemma we encountered was where to stop next. The great news about any we missed was that we could catch them on our return trip. Yay!

Zinfandel is quite the prominent wine in the area, and there are some terrific ones to be found. Wineries that specialize: Mazzocco, Rafanelli, Quivira, Dry Creek Vineyard, Alderbrook... the list just goes on. If you are partial to Zin, this is the place for you.

Our favorite Dry Creek wineries, some of which we are still happy club members:

- A. Rafanelli - a small, but outstanding producer of Zins. They used to have general tasting, cash sales only, but now you can only get in by appointment. Shoot.
- David Coffaro - every so often they produce one that is just out of this world.
- Ferrari-Carano - stunning visual impact from their fabulous gardens, and even better wines. This winery should not be missed - no excuse will do.
- Quivira - moderately priced, they always have consistent wines, particularly their Zins.

**The Dry Creek Valley has nowhere near the notoriety of the world famous Napa Valley, just a short drive away. Believe me - that is a good thing. Discover it for yourself.**

For a wonderful overview of the valley and all the wineries, see: [www.wdcv.com](http://www.wdcv.com).

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