

TRAVEL

TODAY'S ESCAPE: WINE COUNTRY

CHEERS to the HOLIDAYS

A SPLURGE IN ST. HELENA

At Meadowood, an AAA four-diamond resort with a two-Michelin-star restaurant, the "Twelve Days of Christmas" is the resort's signature event celebrating wine, cuisine and the world's great holiday traditions (each night, dinner will be hosted by a renowned chef who will pair food with the help of an award-winning winemaker).

Although the event kicked off last week, there are several days left to celebrate food and wine in Napa Valley.

The experience — which benefits Share Our Strength — runs \$950 per couple per night; the price includes one night's lodging and dinner seating for two. Space is very limited.

Info: www.meadowood.com

SHOPPING — AND A NIGHT — NEAR OXBOW, NAPA OUTLETS



To celebrate the holidays, the Westin Verasa, Napa — a luxury resort located in walking distance to Napa's Oxbow Public Market — is offering a holiday lodging package starting at \$199 per night — with perks such as luxurious overnight accommodations in the all-suite resort, breakfast for each registered guest at the hotel's excellent Bank Cafe and a holiday shopping gift bag with a Napa Premium Outlet discount book.

Info: www.westinnapa.com

STOCKING STUFFERS AT ROUND POND

Known for its artisan olive oils, vinegars and cabernet sauvignons, Round Pond Estate — located in Rutherford in Napa Valley — recently introduced a trio of spicy, Mexican-inspired artisanal treats: tomatillo salsa, hot sauce and chili salt.

The fresh tomatillo salsa is made using homegrown,

Whether you're working on the actual holidays, hosting out-of-towners or just trying to make it through the next two weeks, taking a trip to wine country — Sonoma, Napa or the Santa Cruz Mountains — is a great way to chime in the new year. By Kathleen Jay · Special to The Examiner



SIGNATURE EVENT

The annual "Twelve Days of Christmas" benefit at Meadowood, a four-diamond resort in St. Helena, features renowned chefs and winemakers offering up all-star pairings.

biodynamic tomatillos; the hot sauce is crafted from garden chili peppers and Round Pond Estate's cabernet-and-merlot red wine vinegar; and the chili salt is made from the organically farmed chilies. Individual units run \$4 to \$6.

Info: www.roundpond.com

HOLIDAY FEASTS IN HEALDSBURG

Charlie Palmer's excellent Dry Creek Kitchen — which is located adjacent to the equally wonderful Hotel Healdsburg in Sonoma County — is offering two unique menus for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve celebrations. Christmas Eve dinner will be served 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.;

the cost for the three-course meal is \$65 per person (and an optional \$25 wine pairing).

On Dec. 31, caviar tarts will kick



off the New Year's Eve gala tasting menu; seatings will be between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.; the six-course gala tasting menu is \$125 per person (and an optional \$75 for wine paired with five savory courses).

Info: www.charliepalmer.com/Properties/DryCreekKitchen/

DAYDREAMING IN SONOMA

Located five minutes from Sonoma's downtown square, Buena Vista Carneros in Sonoma will be decked out for the holidays — as well as offering guests seated food-and-wine pairing at 10:30 a.m. daily.

The winery will pair four wines with salami, cheeses, lemon and

olives, and teach guests how each food plays up the various characteristics of the wines (Cost: \$20 per person).

Info: www.buenavistacarneros.com

NEAR SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAIN WINERIES, BUT ON THE BEACH

The ocean-facing Dream Inn in Santa Cruz is offering a "Cut a Christmas Tree Package" to celebrate the holidays; starting at \$199 per night, the package includes guests a \$30 voucher toward a tree from Crest Ranch Christmas Tree farm, the oldest choose-and-cut Christmas tree farm on the West Coast located in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The hotel will also offer complimentary hot chocolate for kids (and hot buttered rum for adults) and a Dream Inn logo ornament.

Info: www.dreaminnsantacruz.com



WINDING DOWN IN CARNEROS



For a great escape, the award-winning spa at the Carneros Inn in Napa is offering a Day Spa Package — with lots of great perks. Starting at \$400 (usually the cost of a facial and massage), the resort will also give you access to one of its guest rooms for the day — as well as all of the resort amenities, including access to the Hilltop Pool and hot tub, its family-and-fitness pool, complimentary fitness classes, as well as easy access to the resort's Boon Fly Cafe, Farm and The Hilltop Dining Room.

Info: www.thecarnerosinn.com

WRITE A LETTER TO SANTA AND HELP MAKE WISHES COME TRUE.

Bring your stamped letter to Macy's, addressed to Santa At The North Pole, and drop it into our special Santa letterbox. We will count them up, and for each letter received, we'll donate \$1 to the Make-A-Wish Foundation* up to \$1,000,000. We'll deliver them to the Post Office for mailing to Santa, and together, we'll collect a million reasons to believe.

Visit macy.com/believe.



Tune into the CBS Early Show at 7am for letter count updates to Santa throughout the Holidays

