

Yountville Boasts Some of the Best Wine, Food and Shelter

52 miles from Marin, this town is the place to good for foodies.

June 20, 2018 by **Mimi Towle** (<https://www.marinmagazine.com/bios/mimi-towle/>)

IF THERE WAS an official Foodie Town USA, Yountville would likely be it. The area was named for George Yount, who was born in North Carolina in 1794 and fought in the War of 1812 as a soldier for Daniel Boone's sons before making his way to what is now one of Northern California's famously fertile valleys. He soon planted the first grapevine in the area and the rest of the story, which includes a rather famous kitchen-master named Thomas Keller among other talented toques, is culinary history. And if you need further evidence that Yountville is a true food town, just look at the abundance of smiling tourists from around the world happily waddling to the next meal.



SIP

While Yountville is the eponymous center of an impressive American Viticultural Area, or AVA, on its own, its neighbor to the east, Stags Leap District, boasts some of the highest-profile vineyards worthy of your tasting dollar. Here the use of the apostrophe with "stags" (or not, in the case of the district) has already cost hundreds of thousands of dol-

lars in legal fees to protect individual brands. Note the moving punctuation mark in Stag's Leap Wine Cellars (famous for the Judgment of Paris event in 1976 where a 1973 cabernet sauvignon took top honors over the renowned wines of Bordeaux and put Napa Valley on the map) versus the much older historic Stags' Leap Winery (1893), equally renowned for delicious cabs. Our recommendation: try both. stagsleapdistrict.com



DINE

The aforementioned Keller is a man of many talents. In addition to dining at his restaurants the French Laundry and Ad Hoc, visitors can sample his inspired concoctions at shops around town: for instance, K+M, a bean-to-bar chocolate co-launched by Keller and olive oil producer Armando Manni, is made with organic extra-virgin olive oil in place of cocoa butter. The oil gives the chocolate a silky-smooth texture, adds antioxidant properties

and enhances the cocoa bean's complex flavors.

STAY

It's no surprise this hip town has a bevy of lodging options, with Hotel Yountville deservedly at the top of the list. Built around the oldest heritage oak tree in the valley, the 80-room luxury property earned a Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice award in 2017. To unwind from the rigors of wine tasting, guests can float in the pool or bliss out in the 4,000-square-foot spa.

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