

## Travel

Plan your next wine country trip knowing what we know! Tips, Insider News, Reviews and much more BEFORE planning your next visit.

 [ShareThis](#)

### I Do: Wine Country Wedding Guide: Napa Valley

By WineCountry Staff on February 2, 2010 5:16 AM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBacks \(0\)](#)



By [Courtney Cochran](#)

A wedding in wine country promises everything you've always wanted: Romantic photo ops among the vines, world-class food and wine, and access to some of the best hospitality perks you'll find anywhere (reception in a wine cave, anyone?).

But as every time-pressed bride-to-be also knows, sorting through the thousands of potential wine country wedding locations, packages and service providers is a task that's likely to dampen even the most sturdy bridal spirits.

Fortunately, we appealed to one of Northern California's foremost experts on wedding planning, Jan Brenner of [Here Comes The Guide](#) to share her insights on some of the best-kept secrets in wine country weddings. So read on for the inside scoop on the topic -

because we wouldn't have anything dampen your anticipation of such a singularly special day!

#### Most Romantic Wine Country Wedding Spot

Hans Fahden Vineyards, Calistoga

Nestled into the mountains above Calistoga you'll find little-known Hans Fahden Vineyards, a meticulously tended estate with gardens that rival Monet's (the main garden was designed after Monet's famous Giverny garden - of *Water Lilies* fame). But the *pièce de resistance* at this popular wedding venue is easily the spot's spectacular underground caves, which owners Antone and Lyall Fahden elegantly accentuate with floral arrangements, twinkling candlelight and, of course, you.

#### Best Situated Wine Country Wedding Spot

The Pavilion at the Vintage Estate Napa Valley, Yountville

In the heart of Napa Valley, the town of Yountville makes for an accessible wedding locale that's not only long on charm - it's got plenty of on-site lodging, too. Invite your guests to stay at one of Vintage Estate's two adjacent hotels, from which they can walk to your stunning reception at the outdoor pavilion. The space - framed by Tuscan-style terraces and gurgling fountains - invokes Old World charm, while the spacious, graciously designed barrel room welcomes your group for a stylish reception.



#### Most Unusual Wine Country Wedding Spot

Napa Valley Wine Train, Napa

Far be it from us to advise you to do things the old-fashioned way; though, if vintage is your thing, you might consider getting hitched on the Napa Valley Wine Train. Offering award-winning dining, vintage amenities aplenty (think velveteen armchairs, mahogany wood, brass and cut glass partitions) and the allure of being a totally unique "I do" destination, the Wine Train can even supply murder mystery "characters" to mingle with your guests - a touch that will no doubt secure your spot as most innovative wine country bride.

#### Best Chapel: Wine Country Wedding Spot

Christian Brothers Retreat and Mont La Salle Chapel, Napa

The chapel at the 1930s-era Christian Brothers Retreat in the hills northwest of Napa offers an exquisite spot for your vows in its Mont La Salle Chapel, a striking structure marrying Spanish, Romanesque, and Mission influences in its architecture. This is a spot that's sure to appeal to traditional brides, though you don't have to be a traditionalist to appreciate the overwhelming beauty of the estate, which sits tucked into the hills as though placed there by heaven itself.

#### Best View Spot for a Ceremony

Auberge du Soleil, Rutherford

Another mountainous retreat *par excellence*, Auberge du Soleil, positively enchants with its panoramic vistas of Napa Valley. The luxe resort offers couples an ideal ceremony spot in its patio that's naturally cloistered by trees - a happy locale that Here Comes The Guide's Denise Auerbach notes "has a lot of plants and flowers, too, so you don't really need any extra décor." Oh, and did we mention the view?



#### Best All-Inclusive Wedding Deal

Aaron's Vineyards, Napa

For couples considering a quickie wedding, Aaron's Vineyards "Elopement Package" is easy on planning time and your wallet. Though the package doesn't include photography, it does include a cake and a champagne toast along with other package perks, like a 7-night stay at nearby Silverado Resort. Says Brenner, "It's perfect for someone looking to plan a small event with an intimate group of family and friends."

#### Best Catering Deal

Melissa Teaff Catering, Napa

Catering for nearly 30 years, Melissa Teaff and her family-run business are known for their

heartfelt hands-on approach to making your day truly special - not to mention delicious. Besides arranging the food for your affair, Teaff and her staff are able to coordinate myriad other details, from organizing beverages to managing other vendors to furnishing an on-site coordinator for the day. Ideal for the busy bride, this is a one-stop catering-and-so-many-other-details solution - so *you* can focus on your day, not on details.

#### Best Wine Country Cake Maker

Patisserie Angelica, Sebastopol

Headquartered in Sonoma County, Patisserie Angelia services the Napa area with its innovative options in wedding cakes, including traditional, elegant, thematic or whimsical styles. Deftly marrying exquisite detailing with the finest in design accents - from jewelry to fruit to fauna - it seems the spot's Paris-trained patissière, Condra Easley, can do just about anything. We're quite sure her background making sweets at the famed Fauchon doesn't hurt, either.

#### Best "Country" Wine Country Wedding Spot

The Apple Orchard at the Carneros Inn, Napa

Here Comes The Guide's Auerbach - the company's vendor specialist - reports that the apple orchard at this *avant*-country resort in Napa's southerly Carneros district "feels like Tuscany." And with accommodations and amenities at the Inn running to the decidedly updated (think luxe spa treatments, high-end bungalows and an award-winning restaurant), this is definitely the spot to hold a *high-end* country wedding - moderne flair included.

#### Best Site for Privacy: Wine Country Wedding

Calistoga Ranch, Calistoga

Calistoga Ranch's mountain location and exquisite hospitality set the stage for a truly private wedding affair. Dubbed "rustic and serene, but sophisticated" by Here Comes The Guide, the five-star mountain-luxe property offers myriad intimate options for your ceremony and reception, including an elegant underground wine cave and patio overlooking a spring-fed lake. With its effortless blend of indoor and outdoor spaces, Calistoga Ranch is an ideal spot for the bride who cherishes natural splendor and the good life alike.

[CLICK HERE](#) for additional Napa Valley Wedding Planning resources!

---

Categories: [Courtney Cochran](#), [Lifestyle](#), [Napa Valley](#), [Napa Valley](#), [Top 10 Lists](#), [Weddings](#), [Writers](#)

Tags: [wedding planning](#)