

# 3 Anderson Valley, California

BY ANNIE GOWAN STONE



## THE MAGNIFICENT ANDERSON

**WHY GO:** Two and a half hours north of San Francisco, Anderson Valley is a **woody alternative to the more crowded Napa and Sonoma Valleys**. Encompassing the towns of Yorkville, Boonville, Philo, and Navarro, **this quirky rural area once known for its apples is now famous for wine**. At the 14th annual Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival, May 20 to 22, taste 40 local wineries' take on the valley's star product.

### A VINE TIME

Stop by the tasting room at Navarro Vineyards and sip floral, dry gewürztraminer and light *méthode à l'ancienne* pinot noir. Non-drinkers should try *verjus*, a tart juice made from young grapes. Schedule a vineyard tour and walk between rows of budding vines as sheep (Navarro's lawn mowers) munch on mustard flowers and wild calendulas. 5601 Hwy. 128, Philo, (707) 895-3686, [navarrowine.com](http://navarrowine.com)



### Cook, Eat, Sleep

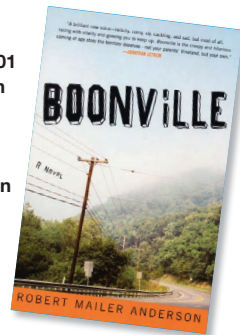
At the Apple Farm, sleep in wooden cottages surrounded by one of the valley's last major orchards. Sally and Don Schmitt, founders of the French Laundry, the legendary restaurant in Yountville, California, run the farm with their daughter and son-in-law. As part of a Farm Weekend stay, which includes four cooking classes, guests learn how to make braised rabbit with polenta in peanut-mole sauce, wine-glazed squid, cauliflower soufflé with brown butter, and other delectable dishes. From \$175 (Farm Weekends from \$1,800 per couple), 18501 Greenwood Road, Philo, (707) 895-2333, [philoapplefarm.com](http://philoapplefarm.com)



In the late 1800s, Anderson Valley residents developed a language called Boontling. Some say the lingo was invented by women who wanted to gossip in secret. Others contend that men created it so that they could speak crudely without scandalizing sensitive ears. Popular terms include *tidrik* (party, most likely from “tea drink”) and *bahl hornin'* (good drinking). Today, a few *codgy kimmies* (old men) still *harp Boont* (speak Boontling) in the area.

### Native Son

Robert Mailer Anderson's 2001 novel *Boonville* featured such memorable characters as a marijuana-growing grandma and a potter named Pensive Prairie Sunset. Here Anderson shares his favorite haunts.



“Enjoy dinner at the Boonville Hotel, and then wander the gardens outside with a glass of Golden Eye pinot. (If you looted their wine cellar with me in high school, I'm pretty sure the statute of limitations is up.)”

14050 Hwy. 128, Boonville, (707) 895-2210, [boonvillehotel.com](http://boonvillehotel.com)

“Sing-alongs to jukebox favorites occur spontaneously at the Boonville Saloon. Most weekends could be considered a family reunion, but with a few less fights.”

14161 Hwy. 128, Boonville, (707) 895-3725

“Cross the city limits south of Boonville and park by the towers of gravel (a poor man's Stonehenge). Then turn up your radio and look at our stars. They're better than yours.”

North side of Highway 128



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JACK FRENCH; WARD SCHUMAKER, JUSTIN FANTL, COURTESY OF NAVARRO VINEYARDS