

## Weekender: Four Reasons to Go to Carmel Right Now

It's like Napa, without all the nonsense.

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Let the masses sit in Napa traffic. For a weekend getaway that has all the wine country perks, minus the annoying stuff, Carmel Valley has seemingly endless roads strewn with high-end wines, quirky restaurants, and experiential hotels.

### Eat

Dine among the valley's vintners and cowboys at [Will's Fargo Steakhouse and Bar](#), a Wild West-style roadhouse gussied up with white linen tablecloths and glossy antiques. But you won't find tired burger-and-fries menu here—a classically trained French chef is at the helm, with bistro staples like extra-garlicky escargot and gooey French onion soup as well as a range of steaks, from porterhouse to filet mignon.

### Drink

[Talbot Vineyard's](#) new in-town tasting room draws people as much for their estate pinots and chardonnays as for their quirky collection of vintage pedal cars and motorcycles. Located in the Carmel Valley Village, two manicured bocce courts are also on-hand to entertain tipsy wine tasters, while outdoor picnic tables offer a place to BYO picnic in peace.



### **Stay**

The lodging gem of Carmel Valley isn't a stuffy luxury resort, but a playground for anyone with a sense of adventure. [Carmel Valley Ranch](#) is undergoing some major upgrades: Archery classes, a sommelier series, a butterfly garden, and a zero-edge pool circled by cabanas. Thirty new indoor-outdoor suites provide views of the valley from outdoor living rooms, while the restaurant, Valley Kitchen, has expanded with a sprawling canopy-level terrace.

### **Do**

For those looking to get off the grid for a few hours, the valley's primary public park, [Garland Ranch](#), has epic hiking trails along the Carmel River and through the cottonwood groves. Those who brave the steep Snivley's Ridge Trail are rewarded with views of the Ventana Wilderness that stretches all the way to the Pacific Ocean.