

# Great Explorations



## Trip Dates

### 2010

Oct 4-9, 2010\*\*

\*\*[Levi Leipheimer's Gran Fondo](#) takes place Oct 9 and would be a great event to finish your trip with.

### 2011

May 14-19

### 2012

May 12-17

Self-guided and custom trips also available and can start any day. Call or email for details.

## Trip Size

8-16 participants

## Total Days:

6 days/ 5 nights

## Arrive/Depart:

St Helena / Healdsburg

## Napa Valley, Biking California's Wine Country

Like the bouquet of a spicy Zinfandel, the wine country of California, north of San Francisco, opens up to reveal many delights and pleasures. Napa Valley and Sonoma County are synonymous with great wine and fine food and dining. By bike, discover shady back lanes, towering redwood groves, a surprising Russian history and delightful pedaling – past vineyards and wine chateaus of every conceivable design

## Itinerary



Helena is a short drive north.

### DAY 1:

*St. Helena* - Arrive in St. Helena, a trendy and pleasant town in the heart of Napa wine country. Stroll the main streets with its lovely shops, but also venture into the side streets for a feel for California gardens and gracious homes. If you have time, visit the store at the Culinary Institute of America and stroll the adjacent gardens or the Silverado Museum to see the 8000 items relating to author Robert Louis Stevenson's life. Meet your bike.



### Getting there :

St. Helena: 128 km/80 miles north of San Francisco airport.

It is possible to reach San Francisco by air. There is scheduled air service to this airport from all major Canadian and US cities. A transfer from the airport to St. Helena, and back again can be arranged. It is also possible to reach St. Helena by car. Interstate Highways #5 and #80 head to San Francisco, and St.

### DAY 2:

*St Helena 36 or 18 miles* - Spend a full day in the St. Helena area, with many choices. Ride up into the hills above the valley, past forests of California redwoods to high altitude vineyards, which are gradually encroaching on old ranch lands. Then sweep back down the Pope Valley into St. Helena. Or meander through the Napa Valley, visiting Bale's Grist Mill, which was a focal point for the valley's settlement during the first

half of the 19th century. Cross the Napa River, ride on the lower slope of Howell Mountain and into a rain forest. Whichever option you choose, you'll enjoy gorgeous

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## Activity Level:

Average daily distance is 50 km/30 miles

## Terrain:

Moderate cycling, encountering a few challenging hills most days

## Cost

### Land Cost (current year):

US \$2650  
Includes 5B/2L/4D

### Single Supplement:

US \$370

### Bike Rental:

US \$120

## DAY 3:

*Calistoga 11 miles, add on loop of 20 miles.* - Today's destination is Calistoga, known for its thermal spas and mud baths. You have many options to dial in the mileage of your choice. Take a shorter route in order to have more time to visit some of the historic vineyards in the region, including those that first put California on the oenological map. On the longer ride, you will have the opportunity to watch Old Faithful spout off, as well as to cycle to the historic Chateau Montelena winery, and simply enjoy more of the amazing diversity of this stunning California countryside.



## DAY 4:

*Healdsburg 39 miles, option to shorten it by 11 miles* - Continue north into the Alexander Valley and then over the Mayacamas Ridge to leave Napa Valley and enter the Sonoma Valley. Pedal through the pretty valley of the Maacama Creek and onto the flat lands of the Russian River Valley. Explore extensive vineyards along the edge of the Geysers, the world's largest geothermal field. Discovered in 1847, these amazing hot spots soon gave rise to the California Spa tradition. Is a massage that far off? Your day ends in the delightful town of Healdsburg

## DAY 5:

*Healdsburg 30 miles. Can add 5 miles or shorten it by 9 miles* - A full day in the Healdsburg area lets you explore the unique Russian history of this American enclave. Uncover the wineries of the Russian River Valley, and the unexpected hops industry as well. If you are feeling adventurous, take a side trip into the wild country along Porter Creek. Be sure to leave time to visit Healdsburg, a town with the best qualities of turn-of-the-century America, yet with the ambiance of a European countryside. Discover its Spanish-style plaza, numerous museums and excellent antique shops before settling down to a scrumptious final dinner.

**DAY 6:** Spend a few final moments enjoying your time in California's wine country before bidding it a fond farewell.



## What's Included in the Cost of Your Trip?

- services of one or more experienced Great Explorations guides and support vehicle
- 5 nights camping
- all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and all dinners but 1
- entrance fees for selected historical sites and museums
- detailed map and route instructions
- all baggage transportation
- all transportation from initial meeting point to final drop-off (see arrive/depart cities)

Please note: Final itinerary is subject to revision; any changes made are done so in an attempt to provide the best possible trip given route conditions and available services. Due to the nature of our business and exchange rates, prices are subject to change. All prices quoted are U.S. dollars but we gladly accept payment in Canadian dollars also. Due to cancellations and waiting lists, trip availability fluctuates daily. If you have any questions or would like to confirm space on this trip before making your reservation, please contact us at [info@great-explorations.com](mailto:info@great-explorations.com) or by telephone at **604.730.1247**

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## Accommodations



### **Vineyard County Inn, St. Helena**

Situated atop a scenic knoll, this charming bed and breakfast inn promises panoramic views of the Napa Valley. The tranquil French farmhouse-style property has twenty-one suites with wood-burning fireplaces overlooking either the pool area or the rolling hills of the northern Napa valley



### **Mount View Hotel and Spa, Calistoga**

Built in the Mission Revival style, the Mount View Hotel is among the premier historic hotels in the Napa Valley. Each of the 32 guest rooms is beautifully decorated with antiques and contemporary accents. The outdoor pool, Jacuzzi, garden patio and full-service spa make this gracious hotel a relaxing and peaceful getaway.



### **Grape Leaf Inn, Healdsburg**

This award-winning, luxuriously restored Queen Anne Victorian Bed and Breakfast combines the gracious hospitality of a country inn with meticulous service, fine cuisine, and 12 luxurious suites. With award-winning lush gardens and ancient evergreens, the Grape Leaf Inn is tucked away on a quite historic street in the hear of the California Wine Country.