

## 5 Ways to Experience Wine Country From Home



(BPT) - From canceled plans and trips to work from home and beyond, you've likely had to sacrifice a lot in 2020. But while you're staying at home and doing your best to be safe during a pandemic, there's one thing you shouldn't have to compromise on - high-quality wine. And if you're a seasoned wine drinker, you know that Napa Valley is the place to be.

"Napa Valley's reputation is globally recognized, but its output is remarkably small," says Elizabeth Vianna, winemaker at Chimney Rock Winery. "We produce only 4% of California's total wine production, but that 4% represents the very best California has to offer."

So, if you can't have a travel adventure for the holidays this year, Napa Valley can come to you. Here's how to bring a little luxury to your life and experience wine country without ever leaving your home.

### 1. Set the mood with music

Turn up the music and get ready to relax. Choose your go-to wine tasting playlist or search for one that's already been created wherever you listen to music. It's all about what gets you in the wine-tasting mood.

### 2. Try a virtual tasting

Escape to wine country with a virtual visit to prestigious Napa Valley wineries. For example, Wine.com is hosting "A Toast to Napa Valley" - a free virtual wine tasting event featuring some of Napa's most acclaimed wine producers. You can even purchase wine to taste during the session that will be shipped directly to your home or can be sent to a loved one as a holiday gift. To sign up and get your wine for the tasting on Dec. 8, go to [wine.com](http://wine.com). And if that date doesn't work, the session will be on the Wine.com website for several months. This is a great way to share a common experience with friends and family tuning in at the same time, all from the safety of your own home.

### 3. Treat yourself to a cinematic getaway

Wine and film share a profound link: the ability of a single sip or scene to whisk your senses away to a wholly different time and place. After all: Wine, popcorn and a good movie makes for a great time, any night of the week. For inspiration, check out Wine Enthusiast Magazine's Top 10 Greatest Wine Movies of All Time by visiting [www.winemag.com](http://www.winemag.com).

### 4. Get cooking

If you were really exploring Napa Valley, you'd be feasting on fresh, local fare for every meal. For your Napa day at home, consider this sublime recipe for grilled New York Steak with Porcini Mushroom Butter from prominent wine country chef Colin Crowley. Whatever you choose to cook or order in from your favorite restaurant, don't forget to select wines that pair well with your food choices.

### 5. Treat yourself to a spa night

Before your dream day at home comes to a close, rest and recover with a little spa time. Light a candle, put on a different kind of face mask, pour yourself a glass of Chimney Rock Cabernet and hop into a steaming tub of bubbly water to soothe sore muscles and promote a restful night of sleep - and dream of a day where you can enjoy wine country in person. It's the perfect cap to your Napa-themed day.

Grilled New York Steak with Porcini Butter (Serves 6)

1 C. Cabernet Sauvignon  
2 sprigs fresh thyme  
1 shallot, minced  
1/2 C. dried porcini mushrooms  
3/4 C. warm water  
3/4 C. plus 2 T. unsalted butter, softened  
1/2 small onion, finely minced  
1 T. fresh thyme, minced  
Salt and freshly ground pepper  
6 NY Strip steaks, 7 ounces each

Put the wine, thyme sprigs and shallots in a small saucepan and reduce until approximately 1 tablespoon of wine is left. Strain and let cool. Rinse and soak the mushrooms 1 hour in the warm water. Drain the mushrooms; strain the liquid through a fine strainer or cheesecloth, reserving 1/4 cup. Heat 2 T. butter in a small sauté pan or skillet over low heat. Add the onion and cook until tender and translucent, about 10 minutes. Pulse the mushrooms in a food processor until chopped. Add the onion, reserved mushroom soaking liquid, wine reduction, minced thyme, and remaining 3/4 cup butter; process until blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Heat the grill or broiler. Lightly sprinkle the steaks with salt and pepper and grill or broil 3 minutes each side for medium-rare. Place a dollop of butter on each steak and serve.

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