

9 Wine Country Events That Celebrate the Bounty of Harvest

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Ehlers Vineyard

Throughout September and October, wine country is bustling with the activities of harvest. The days are sun-drenched, the colors of fall foliage beautiful, and the scent of just-crushed grapes is intoxicating. If you want in on the action, you're in luck, many wineries host some sort of event to coincide with the start or finish of harvest. Whether you want to stomp grapes with your bare feet or indulge in a six-course dinner, there is something for everyone. Here are the harvest events that have to be on your radar.

This weekend, on **Saturday, September 10**, from 1-5 p.m, head to Calistoga for the **Calistoga Wine Experience**. Consumers can discover the unique characteristics of Calistoga's best quality wines. **Chateau Montelena, Jericho Canyon Vineyard, and Voros Cellars** are some of the wineries that will be pouring at the event. **Calistoga Kitchen's** chef **Rick Warkel** will be serving Tuscan appetizers and gypsy-jazz group **Hot Club of San Francisco** will provide the musical accompaniment.



Stomping grapes at Grgich Hills

On **Friday, September 16th**, **Ehlers Estate** is hosting a **Harvest Experience and Brunch** that allows vino enthusiasts to actually work on the harvest. You'll join winemaker **Kevin Morrisey** and his crew at 5 a.m. on the organic farmed vineyard. It's a rare opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into harvest and the first crush. Afterward, everyone will sit down to a Mexican-inspired brunch in the grove—naturally, Ehlers's wines will be poured.

Every day from now until **October 31**, wine lovers are invited to **Grgich Hills Grape Stomp**. Head up to the winery and get ready to take your shoes off. At the winery, you'll jump into a barrel of freshly-picked grapes and stomp on them like famed winemaker **Miljenko "Mike" Grgich** did as a child in Croatia. Take aways from the experience include a t-shirt that you can leave your wine-stained footprints on and a monogrammed GoVino wine glass.



Alpha Omega's harvest dinner tablescape

Can't make it Napa in the next couple of weeks? No worries! Celebrate harvest in downtown San Francisco at Press Club. On **Sunday, September 25**, from 2-5 p.m. they are hosting their **5th Annual Harvest Celebration**. Representatives from wineries from all over the state will be on hand pouring tastes of a wide range of rare and select bottles. Participating wineries include **Bedrock Wine Co., Paradigm Winery, Arietta Wines**, and **Bravium**.

On **Saturday, October 1**, **Alpha Omega** is hosting a festive, family-style harvest dinner in their gorgeous vineyard terrace. **Napa Valley Heritage Catering** (previously known as Piper Johnson Catering) is in charge of the meal and Alpha Omega's current releases—including the Beckstoffer To Kalon 2014—will be poured. Entertainment will be provided by guitar/vocalist **David Ronconi**, a local favorite and wine country rising star whose repertoire includes current songs from Jason Mraz, John Mayer, Jack Johnson, etc.

Douglas Keane's beloved restaurant **Cyrus** is making a revival for one night, **Saturday October 1**, at Durrell Vineyard with **Gary Farrell Winery**. As the sun sets over the Sonoma mountains, guests will enjoy a



The Carneros Inn's culinary garden

sensational view and a four-course meal that features a symphony of local ingredients. Gary Farrell's limited production single-vineyard wines will be paired with each course. Live music will ensure that the ambiance is fun and elegant.

The Carneros Inn is getting in on the harvest fun with their first ever **Carneros Supper Club** dinner party on **Friday, October 14**. The dinner will begin with a reception on the Hilltop patio that overlooks the beautiful vineyards and mountains of the region. This will be followed by the main event, which takes place in the Hilltop Dining Room. Executive chef **Aaron Meneghelli** is pairing a decadent six-course meal with local winemaker's newest releases. Each dish will feature a fall ingredient grown in the Carneros Inn's garden.

Interested in celebrating more than just the harvest of grapes? How about the harvest of olives, too? On **Saturday, October 15**, **McEvoy Ranch** is hosting a special ranch tour from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Guests will explore the ranch's vineyards, olive groves, and frantoio, the olive mill where McEvoy make their prized golden elixir. After the tour, you'll be able to taste current wine releases.

Hamel Family Wines is one of our top five favorite wineries in Sonoma, so we won't miss their Badger Grab 2016: **Hamel Family Circus**. **Ken Fulk** is designing the event, which takes place on **Saturday, October 22**, from 3-7 p.m. The party will have an old-world circus theme complete with aerialists, jugglers, and clowns from Sonoma's local circus group, **Cirque de Boheme**. Executive chef **Clinton Huntsman** is crafting a menu of elevated circus fare and **Rosamunde's Sausage Grill** will be on hand serving up their cheddar brats and



McEvoy Ranch

grass-fed knockwursts.

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