

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL



TAKE MONDAY OFF

Wine Country? Yes, the Chill One.

Valle de Guadalupe in Baja California is the unstuffy, freewheeling alternative to the old-guard wine regions—and an ideal long-weekend getaway for a new generation of discerning eaters and drinkers



By ERIN MOSBAUGH

FOR OVER a decade, Baja California's thriving wine region, Valle de Guadalupe, has been celebrated for its 120 (and counting) vineyards and creative chefs who source their meats, seafood and vegetables nearby. The valley is located in the northern Baja peninsula, a short two-hour drive from San Diego and a quick jaunt from the Pacific Ocean. Its eco-hotels, hiking and horseback riding, fresh seafood and an impossibly hip bar and food scene make it a worthy long-weekend destination for anyone who wants to avoid the predictable.

DAY 1 | FRIDAY

3 p.m. Arrive at the San Diego airport, pick up your rental car and drive 30 minutes to the San Ysidro border-crossing to enter into Mexico. Alternatively, hire a driver for the weekend, a smart move when you're sipping bevies all day. [TerraTripsEnsenada.com](#)

4 p.m. Famished? Head one hour south to the small coastal town of Puerto Nuevo for burritos featuring langosta (a kind of lobster) swaddled in flaky, buttery flour tortillas, served with fragrant rice and creamy pinto beans at Restaurant Puerto Nuevo II. Gaze at the ocean while consuming your late lunch (a meal known as comida in Mexico) before the one-hour trip to Valle de Guadalupe. [Avenida Renteria #2, Puerto Nuevo](#)

7 p.m. Check into La Villa del Valle, a six-bedroom villa with Tuscan vibes and

sweeping vistas of vineyards and olive groves. Three of the comfy guest rooms have balconies, and all come with Nespresso machines and organic lavender bath products made by the hotel—as is the granola, honey and olive oil. Time permitting, plan a tasting of their Vena Cava wines. From \$250 a night, [LaVillaDelValle.com](#)

8 p.m. After a long travel day, lay low for the night (having planned accordingly and preordered the five-course tasting menu from the villa's chef, César

Vázquez, and pastry chef Elsa Olmos). Enjoy dinner outside on the terrace, weather allowing. Afterward, head on over to the honor bar in the lounge. Pour yourself a Scotch and contemplate tomorrow's fun.



Clockwise from above: At Adobe Guadalupe Vineyards & Inn, an Azteca horse named Salomon with a rider; sample the region's varietal blends at Las Nubes Bodegas y Viñedos; stop at Erizo in Tijuana for Aguachile Rojo, spicy shrimp ceviche



Book a stand-alone villa or minimalist room at Bruma, an eco-resort and winery.

10 a.m. After a filling meal, it is time for some activity. By car, it is 20 minutes to Adobe Guadalupe Vineyards & Inn for a guided trail ride on sleek Azteca horses and pleasing views of mountains and wildflowers. [AdobeGuadalupe.com/en](#)

1 p.m. A good introduction to the region's wine is at Las Nubes Bodegas y Viñedos. Opened in 2008 by a Mexican oenologist, the picturesque winery produces exemplary whites, rosés and red wines. [VinosLasNubesbc.com](#)

7 p.m. After a post-wine-tasting nap—or a stint relaxing by the pool—head 25 minutes by car to Animalón, where you'll sit under a 200-year-old oak tree aglow with string lights. Pick a four-, six- or eight-course tasting menu with dishes such as poached black cod with cassoulet, plump local scallops with hazelnut and tamarind butter, or beef barbacoa care of chef Oscar Torres. [AnimalonBaja.com](#)

8:30 p.m. After dinner, it is time to dance at Bloodlust WineBar, a trippy hangout.

PEEKS & VALLEYS In addition to its cozy rooms, La Villa del Valle has views of the mountains nearby.

Opened in 2022 by Alfonso Muriedas, music director of Mexico City's Festival Nrmal, it is where DJs and live music coexist. [BloodLust.Sinonotacto.menu](#)

Take a guided trail ride on sleek Azteca horses and enjoy views of mountains and wildflowers.

DAY 3 | SUNDAY

5 a.m. The only thing that can justify waking up at 4:30 a.m. is a hot-air balloon flight over Valle's multilayered landscape. Have coffee and empanadas at the villa before heading to the "launch" site at Lago Valle Wine Glamping Resort 10 minutes away. From \$410 a couple, [LagoValle.com](#)

12 p.m. After packing up, wave adios to the villa crew and navigate 20 minutes to Conchas de Piedra restaurant, inside the Casa de Piedra winery. Order the specialty on chef Drew Deckman's menu: bubbly and bivalves, such as the simply prepared geoduck (a large saltwater clam) or a half dozen Kumiai oysters. [ConchasDePiedra.com](#)

2:30 p.m. Before traipsing to your next overnight stop, Bruma, an eco-friendly resort and winery (from \$548 a night, [Bruma.mx](#)), visit the indigenous Kumiai community at San Antonio Neocua. According to Jorge Mera, host of PBS Baja travel show "Crossing South," guides will highlight authentic artifacts and medicinal plants and brief you on the Kumiai culture. Find details on tours and museum hours on Facebook (search Siñaw Kuatay) or email [sinawkuatay2022@gmail.com](#).

5 p.m. After checking into Bruma, take a dip in its filtered natural pond or mountain bike on nearby trails. Dine at on-site Fauna, a restaurant run by chef David Castro Hussong, whose family owns Hussong's Cantina in Ensenada (worth a stop for an excellent margarita). Fill up on dishes such as grilled octopus with chilihuacale chile, pickled carrots, beans and chicharrón, or fried abalone tacos made with blue corn tortillas. [FaunaRestaurante.mx](#)

► For stops heading back on Monday, including lunch at Erizo and a ceramic pottery shop, see [wsj.com/travel](#).



ADOBES: JEFFREY MAYER; HORSE: JEFFREY MAYER; CEVICHE: JEFFREY MAYER; VINEYARD: JEFFREY MAYER