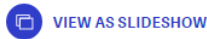


7 Under-the-Radar Wine Destinations

Sure, you know about Bordeaux and Napa, but what about these other spots?

TEXT BY [LAURA ITZKOWITZ](#) · Posted September 29, 2016



Picture this: You're sitting in a comfortable art-filled tasting room sipping a delicate cuvée while taking in the panorama of the rolling hills and vines beyond. No, this isn't Champagne in France—it's Franciacorta in Italy. It may not be as famous, but that's precisely what makes it so intriguing. Though one of the country's best-kept secrets, it should be on every wine lover's bucket list. Likewise, some of the world's best wine regions are blissfully under the radar, many just a few hours away from their more famous cousins. Some, like Oregon's Willamette Valley and Long Island's North Fork, have developed immensely in the past few decades thanks to pioneering winemakers. Others, like Sicily, have been producing wine for centuries but remain off the beaten path. For oenophiles looking for an adventure, these seven under-the-radar wine regions are great places to start.



Photo: Andrea Pistolesi/Getty Images



Franciacorta, Italy

When it comes to Italian wine, most people immediately think of Tuscany, but Italy has an amazing diversity of wine regions. One of the country's most incredible hidden gems is [Franciacorta](#), which lies just east of Milan, near Lake Como. Here, vineyards like [Ca' del Bosco](#) produce sparkling wines that rival French Champagne—all with the lakes and mountains of Lombardy as a stunning backdrop.



Photo: Clay McLachlan/Getty Images



Willamette Valley, Oregon

The secret's out about Oregon's [Willamette Valley](#), which boasts 500 wineries, yet it remains blissfully free of crowds. Winemakers like Sokol Blosser Winery and Stoller Family Estate are producing top-notch Pinot Noirs in state-of-the-art facilities nestled in the region's rolling hills. Visitors can day-trip from [Portland](#) or stay at the Allison Inn & Spa for a relaxing weekend.



Photo: Getty Images



Calchaquí Valley, Argentina

Sure, Mendoza produces Argentina's most famous wines, but the remote Calchaquí Valley in the north is home to some of the highest vineyards in the world. Travelers will find a breathtaking landscape characterized by red rock formations. [Grace Cafayate's](#) luxurious suites and villas make an excellent home base for exploring the region's estancias and sampling the Torrones and Malbecs that pair well with Andean cuisine.



Photo: jflareau/Getty Images



Long Island's North Fork, New York

Yes, you can get great wine in New York, and you'll find it on Long Island's North Fork. Just a couple hours from New York City, skyscrapers give way to vineyards and sand dunes. Standouts include the Provence-inspired [Croteaux Vineyards](#), the only winery in the U.S. that exclusively makes rosés, and [McCall Wines](#), where you can sip Pinot Noir in a former barn and horse stable.



Photo: Abel C./Getty Images



Douro Valley, Portugal

Long famed for Port, the Douro Valley has been coming onto the radar of oenophiles, who are touting the area's unfortified wines and unusual varieties like Touriga Nacional. The UNESCO-protected region is lush with stepped vineyards overlooking the Douro River and narrow winding roads. [Six Senses Douro Valley](#)—opened last year in a renovated manor house—is the place to stay for barefoot luxury and a wellness-focused retreat in Portugal's wine country.



Photo: ejs9/Getty Images



Amador County, California

Napa and Sonoma may be California's most well-known wine regions, but farther inland lies Amador County, an old gold-rush region flush with vineyards, like [Vino Noceto](#), which produces Sangiovese and other Italian varietals. You'll see more dusty pickups than BMWs here, but the area's scrappiness is part of its charm. Some towns like Sutter Creek look straight out of an old western, but new hotels like [Hanford House Inn](#) have been steadily revitalizing the area.



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Sicily, Italy

This rustic island is best known for fortified Marsala wine, but Sicily produces many excellent varieties, including Nero d'Avola, Grecanico, and Grillo. Visitors will find vineyards all over, from the area around Palermo in the west to Mount Etna in the east. Oenophiles looking to explore should book a luxury villa with [the Thinking Traveller](#), which can arrange winery tours and tastings, and even deliver bottles to your door.