

HOMEMADE GINGER ALE | 7 GREAT SAISON ALES | ROSEWATER COCKTAILS

# imbibe

LIQUID CULTURE

SPECIAL  
ISSUE

Ultimate

# SUMMER DRINKS

Guide

20 Seasonal Recipes  
Perfect Iced Coffee  
Summer's Best Wines

DOC HOLLIDAY  
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# Whine-free Wine Tasting

## Heading to wine country? Plan ahead.

Summer wine-tasting trips can be memorable, but not always in a good way. Sometimes a spontaneous jaunt to wine country to take advantage of a warm-weather weekend can feel like an Ironman event. The crowds, the cheese samples, the dizzying bevy of wines to taste—it can be as disorienting as a day at Ikea. But with smart planning, a day spent in wine country can be all fun, no frenzy. Start with these five tips from wine writer and consultant Liza Zimmerman. For more of her wine wisdom, visit [lizathewinechick.com](http://lizathewinechick.com).

### 1. DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS AT WINERIES THAT AREN'T OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

You'll get to try cutting edge wines and are likely to spend time with the actual owners or winemakers. Most winemakers welcome it—just call ahead.

### 2. TRY TO EXPLORE NEW, LESS-TOURISTED WINE REGIONS THAT MAY BE FURTHER FROM A MAJOR CITY.

If you are in San Francisco go to Mendocino; in Santiago, Chile, hit Casablanca over Maipo.

### 3. ASK THE WINEMAKERS WHERE THEY EAT, AND HAVE LUNCH THERE.

I had an amazing meal in a strip mall in Santa Maria, Calif., at a place I never would've come across had I not been tipped off.

### 4. VISIT WINE COUNTRY DURING THE WEEK.

Tasting rooms will be relatively empty and you'll get more attention (and maybe even a chance to try some wines that aren't on the tasting list).

### 5. ASK ABOUT THE TASTING FEE.

Most wineries allow a tasting fee to be used toward the purchase of a bottle of wine—and the rest of them should.

# BEST of the FESTS

It's the season to celebrate wine and warm weather. These wine festivals offer a chance to taste some of the country's best.

## May

### INDIE WINE FESTIVAL

May 2–4 | Portland, Ore.  
[indiewinefestival.com](http://indiewinefestival.com)

### PASO ROBLES WINE FESTIVAL

May 17 | Paso Robles, Calif.  
[pasowine.com](http://pasowine.com)

### AUSTIN WINE FESTIVAL

May 24–26 | Austin, Texas  
[austinwinefestival.com](http://austinwinefestival.com)

### MEMORIAL DAY WINE WEEKEND

May 24–26 | Willamette Valley, Ore.  
[willamettewines.com](http://willamettewines.com)

## June

### VINTAGE WALLA WALLA

June 6–7 | Walla Walla, Wash.  
[wallawallawine.com](http://wallawallawine.com)

### TELLURIDE WINE FESTIVAL

June 26–29 | Telluride, Colo.  
[telluridewinefestival.com](http://telluridewinefestival.com)

### PINOT DAYS

June 27–29 | San Francisco  
[pinotdays.com](http://pinotdays.com)

## July

### TOAST OF TAOS

July 4–12 | Taos, N.M.  
[toastoftaos.com](http://toastoftaos.com)

### FINGER LAKES WINE FESTIVAL

July 18–20 | Watkins Glen, N.Y.  
[flwinefest.com](http://flwinefest.com)

### CASTLE ROCK WINE FEST

July 19 | Castle Rock, Colo.  
[castlerockwinefest.com](http://castlerockwinefest.com)