

Northern California weekend

Inside The Sierra Foothills' best little art town » A coastal hike for you and your pooch » Las Vegas like you've never seen it »



Day trip Nevada City

Why go now: A slew of galleries, bookstores, and locavore bistros shows off this town's wild imagination. **Back in 1850:** It was the center of the California Gold Rush and the third-largest town in the state. **And now?** Most of the action takes place along Broad Street, downtown's 4-block main drag, dotted with specialty stores, stamp mills, and an old mining-equipment foundry turned artist studio. **The vibe:** Laid-back times 10, with a spritz of patchouli. **Catch a show:** Built in 1865, the Nevada Theatre is the state's first big-time theater, and has staged shows by everyone from Mark Twain to Mötley Crüe. **Power couple:** Don't be surprised if you bump into singer-songwriter and Nevada City native Joanna Newsom with her longtime boyfriend, *Saturday Night Live* star Andy Samberg. **Don't miss winter:** Tahoe is 90 or so minutes away, but you can find more creative thrills at the annual environmental Wild & Scenic Film Festival (Jan 13–15; from \$27; wildandscenicfilmfestival.org) and psychedelic Mardi Gras celebration (Feb 18–19; nevadacitychamber.com). >24

BY ALISON BING | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID FENTON

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1. Where to find the good stuff

Four tasting rooms in town aim to please with generous pours of Sierra Foothills' finest, but none more so than **Indian Springs Vineyards**, whose mineral-rich Sauvignon Blancs are good enough for you to rearrange your trunk. \$5 tasting; 303 Broad St.; indianspringswines.com



Getting there

Nevada City is 60 miles northeast of Sacramento. Take I-80 east to State 49 north.

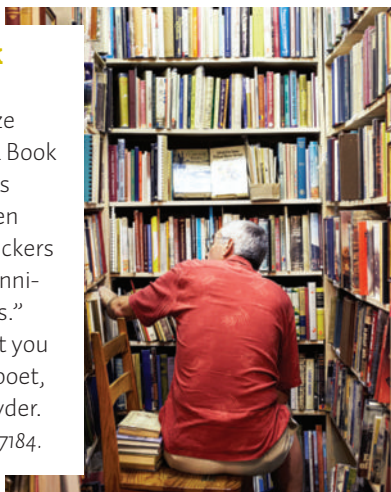


2. Start your art collection

Neat rows of track lighting illuminate the dizzying display of contemporary art at **Mowen Solinsky Gallery**. The downtown institution represents about 45 local artists (not bad for a town of 3,000). Look for Neal Devore's hand-carved myrtlewood plates. 225 Broad; mowensolinskygallery.com

3. Devour a book

The **Original Cannibal Bookshop**, a closet-size cache inside Toad Hall Book Shop, features dubious anthropology, shrunken heads, and bumper stickers claiming "4 out of 5 cannibals prefer vegetarians." Owners can also direct you to prize finds by Beat poet, and resident, Gary Snyder. 108 N. Pine St.; 530/264-7184.



4. Feed your cultural cravings

In 1855, the **Miners Foundry** was where ironworkers equipped the flood of gold rushers in the area. Now, the landmark building/cultural center hosts plays, art openings, concerts, and, later this month, a first-rate art fair that draws from local talent. Nov 25-27; \$5; 325 Spring St.; minersfoundry.org



Make it a weekend

National Hotel impresses with claw-foot couches, wrought-iron balconies, and carved-wood beds in some rooms. There's plenty of bustle in the watering hole downstairs. Even if you don't stay, hit the bar for \$5 cocktails amid 1870s Most Wanted posters and Prohibition-era cocktail shakers. From \$81; 211 Broad; 530/265-4551.


3 food stops not to miss

BREAKFAST
At **Cafe Mekka**, high-octane espresso, the egg bagel sandwich, and a white chocolate mousse (left) made by a Holland-born pastry maestro are the irresistible draws. \$; 237 Commercial St.; 530/478-1517.

LUNCH
Matteo's Public makes a mean yet sustainable fish taco with line-caught wild Pacific cod and velvety guacamole, ideally washed down with an IPA. \$\$; 300 Commercial; 530/265-0782.

DINNER
New Moon Cafe favors bistro fare like local Five Dot Ranch beef with Dijon-tarragon butter and fried prosciutto, and organic quinoa salad with toasted almonds and chèvre. \$\$\$; 203 York St.; 530/265-6399.



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