



The Valleys of Sonoma County

Healdsburg, Dry Creek & Alexander Valleys

An Exclusive Bay Gourmet Get Away
June 3-5, 2011



Dear Club Member,

I invite you to join **Cathy Curtis**, Bay Gourmet Member-Led Forum Chair, for a food and wine adventure in Sonoma County designed to show you places that even locals haven't explored.

This *Bay Gourmet Get Away* gives you three full days of touring, two coveted nights in charming Healdsburg during their Jazz Festival, and round-trip transportation from San Francisco or Marin. This is an easy way to get out of town, and explore places that people travel from all over the world to see!

Our *Bay Gourmet* events are popular, and we expect this to fill up quickly, so call soon to reserve your space!

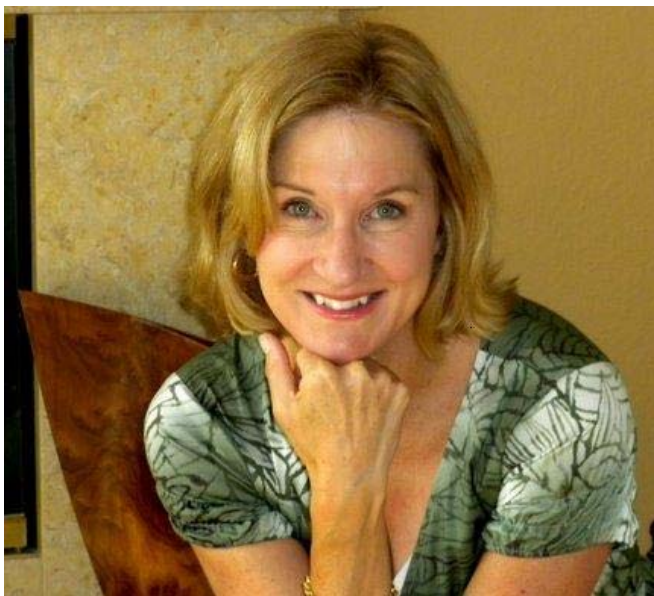
Best regards,



Kristina Nemeth
Director of Club Travel
(415) 597-6720
knemeth@commonwealthclub.org

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sip the **wines of Sonoma Valley, Dry Creek Valley and Alexander Valley** and learn about their unique characteristics from guest speakers
- **Be hosted by family members during private tours and tastings at select wineries.** This is no ordinary wine country trip!
- Learn about local history with visits to **Jack London State Park** and the **Healdsburg Historical Museum**
- Visit a **local organic farm** and sample produce and preserves
- Savor a **gourmet dinner in charming Healdsburg at Barndiva**, a "must visit destination" according to restaurant critic Michael Bauer
- **Experience wine country with no worries** about driving, traffic or where to go next. Just relax and enjoy this insiders' itinerary. We guarantee that you'll learn something new and have a great time!



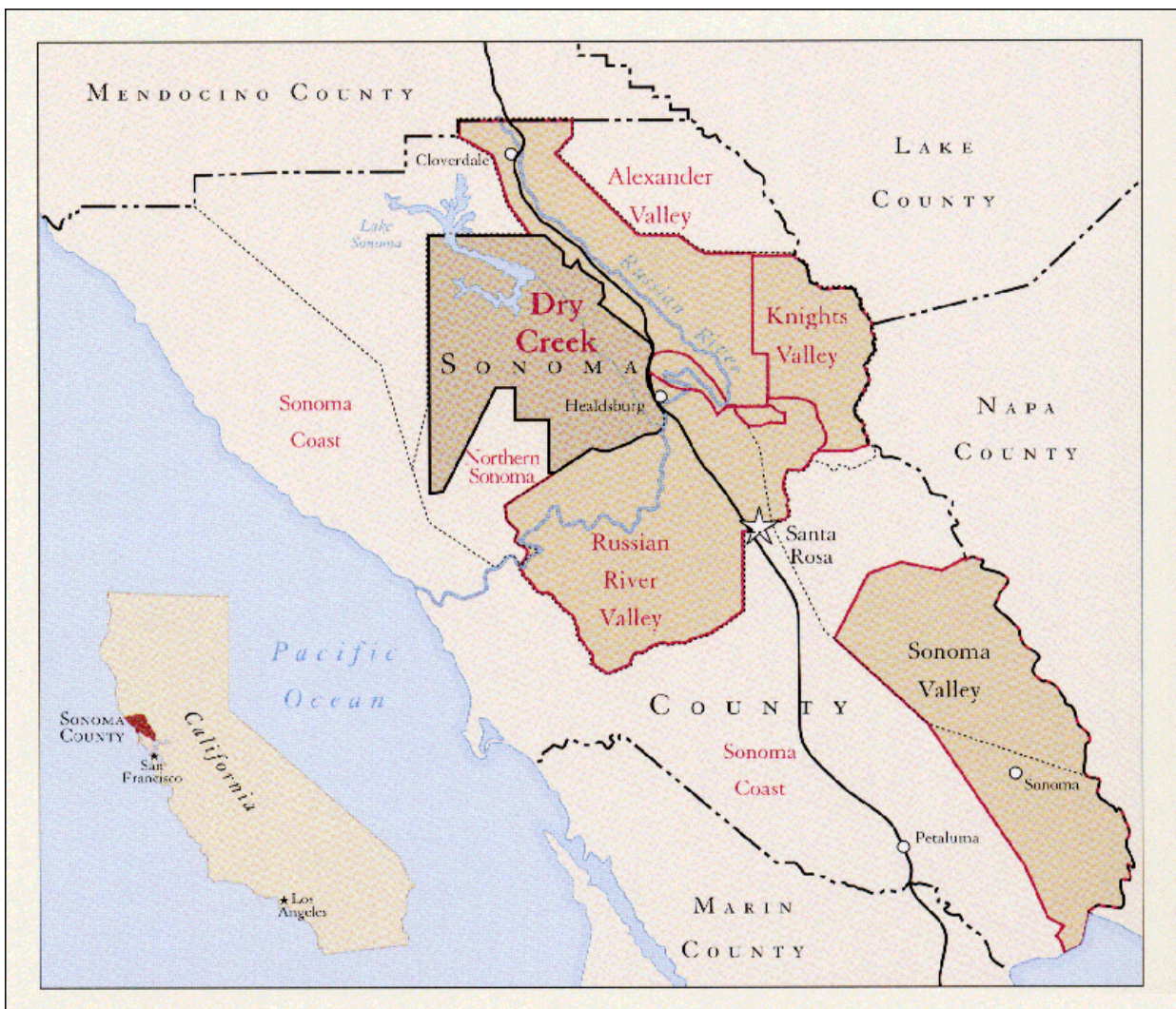
Cathy Curtis has been a member of the Commonwealth Club for more than 15 years and has been an active volunteer since 2000, most recently as the Chair of the Bay Gourmet Member-Led Forum. Prior to her current career as a Certified Financial Planner and owner of Curtis Financial Planning, Cathy spent 20 years in sales and marketing in the food industry. She is a passionate advocate for healthy eating, sustainable food systems and supporting local farms and food businesses. Cathy is on the advisory board for Meals For Change, a social enterprise kitchen that uses 100% of revenue to support non-profit nutritional and job training programs and for the Community Alliance of Family Farmers (CAFF). She is a native San Franciscan, and lives in the Oakland Hills with her husband Rob.

ITINERARY

Friday, June 3 - SONOMA and the "VALLEY OF THE MOON"

Meet this morning at the San Francisco Club office or in Marin at our designated coach pick-up point. We begin our journey to Sonoma, the birthplace of the California wine industry. En route we take a docent-led tour at **CornerStone Gardens**. The gardens showcase new and innovative designs from the world's finest landscape architects and designers. When commissioned, these artists were given the freedom to create anything from traditional gardens to modern, conceptual installations.

Cradled between the Mayacamas and the Sonoma Mountain ranges, Sonoma Valley encompasses a rolling patchwork of vineyards, quaint farms and 13,000 acres of scenic parkland. In the center of town, the eight-acre **Sonoma Plaza** is a National Historic Landmark, strewn with sprawling shade trees and bordered by carefully preserved adobe buildings. Up the road in Glen Ellen, author and bohemian adventurer Jack London lived and wrote at his pristine Beauty Ranch, now an 800-acre state historic park.



Learn a bit of local history in town, and enjoy some time at the square before lunch at the **El Dorado Kitchen**. After lunch we drive along the scenic and historic "**Valley of the Moon**" as we make our way to **Jack London State Park** in Glen Ellen. We visit the museum and grounds of this California literary icon's famous Beauty Ranch. (For those who would like a brisker hike, there are trails.)

We continue to Kenwood for a private tour and tasting at **MacLeod Family Vineyard** where we enjoy a wonderful opportunity to hear about all things viticultural from **George MacLeod**, patron of the ranch, and experience the hospitality of the MacLeod family. Over 35 years ago, George and his wife, Greta, purchased fifty hillside acres of barren, rock-strewn land in the beautiful Sonoma Valley. They, along with their children and grandchildren--affectionately known as the Association--have patiently converted the property to an award-winning vineyard. Their excellent wines have been featured in the July 2010 issue of *Travel + Leisure* magazine, and the tour was noted as a "Must Visit" stop in the area.

We then make our way to Healdsburg for two nights at the Dry Creek Inn. After time to freshen up, we head out for a gourmet **dinner at Barndiva**, one the Healdsburg's best restaurants. Chef Ryan Farcher previously worked with Thomas Keller at the French Laundry and has a wonderful menu planned for us!

(Note this is the first weekend of the **Healdsburg Jazz Fest** so the town will be lively!)

HEALDSBURG DRY CREEK INN (L, D)

*I have been telling everyone about the wonderful trip & especially the gourmet meals.
The food was wonderful!
-Biruta Sereda, 2010 Bay Gourmet Get Away to Pasadena*

*"I would rather be ashes than
dust!
I would rather that my spark
should burn out in a brilliant
blaze
than it should be stifled by
dry rot.
I would rather be a superb
meteor,
every atom of me in
magnificent glow,
than a sleepy and permanent
planet.
The proper function of man is
to live, not to exist.
I shall not waste my days in
trying to prolong them.
I shall use my time"*

Jack London (1876 - 1916)

Saturday, June 4 – DRY CREEK VALLEY / HEALDSBURG

After a light breakfast at the Dry Creek Inn, enjoy some time visiting the **Healdsburg Farmers' Market** and exploring the town.

Dry Creek Valley is approximately 70 miles north of San Francisco Bay and about 20 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Well situated for winegrowing, Dry Creek Valley stretches east to west, framed by hillsides and bench lands. The confluence of Dry Creek and Warm Springs forms Lake Sonoma to the north. To the south, the Valley is bordered by the confluence of Dry Creek and the Russian River. It is of the smallest enclosed American Viticultural Areas -- 16 miles long and two miles wide!

The history of grape growing and winemaking in Dry Creek Valley is among the longest in California, with its roots beginning more than 130 years ago. Dry Creek Valley's beautiful and fertile landscape began attracting pioneers soon after the California gold rush of 1849. Early farming consisted primarily of wheat, hops and sheep. By 1855, ten American families were settled in the valley.

We visit **Michel-Schumberger Benchland Wine Estate** in the Dry Creek Valley for an **educational tour** of the vineyards and winery. We'll learn about the 100-acre estate's beekeeping operations, creek restoration and wild salmon project, beneficial insect garden, Monarch Waystation, bird and nature sanctuary and their organic farming efforts. During a private tasting savor their distinctly 100% Dry Creek Valley wines. We will also sample wines from their *Humanitas* brand which gives all profits to local charities that provide food, shelter, and education. After our tour, enjoy a casual and delicious lunch catered by **Relish Culinary Adventures**, and take in views of the vineyards.

We depart for **Dry Creek Peach and Produce Farm** to meet **owner, Gayle Sullivan**. They are the last remaining fruit farm in the valley and the only dedicated, certified organic peach farm in the county. The farm takes advantage of the mineral-rich soil fed by Dry Creek and the ideal growing climate of Northern California wine country.

Next we visit **Truett Hurst**, located on 26 very charming acres. Zinfandel and Petite Sirah vineyards, the Dry Creek, five acres of gardens and a vibrant tasting room made of eco-friendly materials are just some of the things that make them unique.

Return to our hotel where we enjoy a **pre-dinner presentation from a local guest speaker** who will talk about the history of Healdsburg. Dinner tonight is in a private space of **Charlie Palmer's Dry Creek Kitchen** in town.

HEALDSBURG DRY CREEK INN (B, L, D)

*I wanted to visit Mendocino again, and this 3-day trip worked perfectly with my schedule!
– Phyllis Piepho, 2010 Bay Gourmet Get Away to Mendocino and Anderson Valley*

Sunday, June 5 – HEALDSBURG / ALEXANDER VALLEY / RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

After a breakfast at the hotel we check-out and depart for a **historical walking tour of downtown Healdsburg**. Enjoy some **free time to explore the art galleries and shops** in town before heading out to explore the Alexander Valley.

Located at the northern end of Sonoma County, the **Alexander Valley** is 22 miles long and varies in width from two to seven miles. There are 76,900 acres of land, of which 15,000 acres are planted to premium wine grapes. On the hillsides to the east and west, and adjacent to the beautiful Russian River winding along the valley floor, the valley is home to a diversity of microclimates that support the growth of many wine grape varieties. Their world-famous Cabernet Sauvignon grapes thrive from the valley floor all the way up the rolling hillsides and mountain ridges. The gravelly loam soils straddling the river encourage Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Merlot to flourish. Alexander Valley is also home to Zinfandel and Rhone varieties, including Syrah and Viognier.

Relax over a **fabulous picnic lunch at Sausal**, a family owned winery in Alexander Valley. The Demostene family history reads like a short course in the history of the Alexander Valley from the turn of the century. In 1901, Manuel Demostene, a native of Genoa Italy, began work on a ranch in the Valley. To hear more, you will have to join us! Sausal is known for their old vine Zinfandels and we will taste Zinfandels made from 50-90 and 130 year old vines.

This afternoon we experience our final outing -- a **private tasting at J Vineyards** hosted by their **winemaker, George Bursick**. (George is also Cathy's cousin, so consider yourself part of the family!)

Toast to a wonderful weekend getting an insiders' view of new places in California's wine country. We drive through the Russian River Valley, and return to Marin and San Francisco in the early evening. (We expect to return to Marin at approximately 5:30 and San Francisco at 6:00.) **(B, L)**

Cathy Curtis' events are always great!

– Merilyn Presten, 2010 Bay Gourmet Get Away to Mendocino and Anderson Valley

Please note that visits and activities in this itinerary are subject to change.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This program is limited to 22 travelers maximum and based on a minimum of 14 travelers. Should there be less than 14 travelers signed up for the program, the cost may need to be adjusted.

COST*

\$999 per person, based on double occupancy

\$1,225 per person, based on single occupancy

Our group rooms are standard Vintage Rooms at the Dry Creek Inn in Healdsburg. Upgrades to their Tuscan Rooms are available for an additional charge of \$90 per room, per night.

INCLUDED

- Coach transportation for three days from the San Francisco Club office or the Marin Airporter pickup in Larkspur. You don't have to drive, worry about where you are going or how to get there. Just sit back and enjoy!
- 2 nights at the Dry Creek Inn in Healdsburg
- 2 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 2 gourmet dinners (including wine)
- Tours, wine tastings, and events as specified in the itinerary
- Gratuities for hotel staff, restaurant staff, and bus driver and for all group activities
- Pre-departure information
- Bay Gourmet Trip Leader and Tour Manager to assist you throughout the program
- The camaraderie of the Club's Bay Gourmet travelers

NOT INCLUDED

- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included. (Limited wine is served at lunches and dinners. You may also want to buy wine or other beverages other than what is being served at group meals. Other than that, this is all-inclusive!)
- Optional excursions and other activities done independently
- Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
- Personal items such as e-mail, telephone, souvenirs, laundry and gratuities for non-group services

PAYMENT

To make a reservation, send your check payable to "Commonwealth Club of California," or charge instructions, with your completed reservation form to the address on the reservation form. You may also fax in your reservation form or call our office.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Payment is fully refundable, less a \$250-per-person cancellation fee, until 60 days prior to departure, or April 3, 2011. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case the \$250 cancellation fee will apply. We recommend trip-cancellation insurance; applications will be sent to you.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Commonwealth Club of California and our ground operators and suppliers act only as agents for the travelers with respect to transportation and arrangements, and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, *force majeure* or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The Commonwealth Club of California accepts no liability for any carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2096889-40

RESERVATION FORM

**The Valleys of Sonoma County
June 3-5, 2011**

MR. / MRS. / MS.
NAME(S) MISS / DR. / PROF. _____

MR. / MRS. / MS.
MISS / DR. / PROF. _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

SINGLE TRAVELERS ONLY:

If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate:

I plan to share accommodations with _____

OR I wish to have single accommodations.

OR I'd like to know about possible roommates. I am a smoker / nonsmoker. (circle one)

PAYMENT:

Here is my payment of \$____ (\$999 per person, double or \$1,225, single) for ___ place(s).

I wish to upgrade my/our room to a Tuscan Room for \$90 a night

 Enclosed is my check (make payable to *Commonwealth Club of California*).

OR Charge my deposit to my Visa MasterCard American Express.

CARD# _____ EXPIRES _____

AUTHORIZED CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Mail completed form to: Commonwealth Club Travel, 595 Market St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105, or fax to (415) 597-6729. For questions call (415) 597-6720.

I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for this program and agree to them.

Signature _____