

CLEAN BEAUTY, PERSONAL STYLE, WEST COAST LOVE

# CALYgirl STYLD

with jennie stehli

## The BEST winery in Sonoma County!

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Have you always wanted to visit the wine region of Northern California but didn't know where to start? Napa? Calistoga? Sonoma? Where do you start? There are a lot of regions, wineries and restaurants to visit and it can be VERY overwhelming not to mention a lot of miles to cover in what could be a short trip. Most of us go out for a long weekend with



friends to celebrate a birthday, enjoy harvest season or just want to drink some really good wine! A lot of the top/well known wineries are invite only and/or require advance notice and reservations. They are hard to find unless you know exactly what you are looking for. Some of the BEST wines in Sonoma County are barely on the map. This can be challenging as once you arrive to the winery you'll find you are in the middle of nowhere and now need to drive miles to find a good spot for lunch. I PROMISE if you start at Freeman Winery you'll be VERY pleased and will DEFINITELY be spreading the good word to ALL of your friends for a future visit!



Freeman Winery is located in the small town of Sebastopol, in Sonoma County. Six miles west of Santa Rosa, 52 miles north of San Fran and 20 minutes from the Pacific Ocean. It's owned and operated by a longtime friend of Jim's, Ken Freeman and his wife Akiko. They have been in the wine making industry for 19 years and Akiko is the winemaker. I had the opportunity to meet them both this past summer and they were so incredibly hospitable to our (very boisterous) family of six. We owe them big time next time they are on the east coast.



Freeman Winery is well known for their delicious cool-climate Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. This speaks to Jim and I's palettes very well as I love a crisp, refreshing dry chardonnay (nothing oaky or sweet for me) and Jim loves a good Pinot. There are a lot of great wines in Sonoma County that speak to these palettes. If you prefer a full body Cabernet or oaky Chardonnay head east to Napa Valley.

During the winter months Jim is really enjoying the 2016 Gloria Estate, Pinot Noir which was recently selected the #8 wine in the world out of 20,000 tasted by Wine Enthusiast!! Holy geez!! I'm a white wine gal so I am loving the 2017 Rayo-Fu Chardonnay.







Freeman Winery is the perfect place to visit, drink and relax. They offer private wine tours, large group dinners and small group tastings in their cave. We had lunch outside under the pergola with some friends from college and some of Ken's friends and it was a perfect setting!



A few years back they built a BEAUTIFUL three-bedroom guest cottage, pictured below. It's the perfect place to call home for a long weekend or a week with two other couples or a group of friends and use as your home base for visiting many other surrounding towns and wineries. The location is IDEAL!





Sebastopol is a cute little country town in close proximity to local farm to table restaurants with AMAZING local wine lists, outdoor style picnic tables, outdoor bistro lighting, Bocci and live music by local bands. If anyone tells you wine country isn't a place for kids they are wrong. Obviously if you are going out for an adult celebration you leave them at home, but if you are visiting California and want to head to the wine region, you can MOST definitely bring the kids. Lots for them to learn, see and enjoy! You can also find kid friendly wineries where they can play outside while you enjoy some delicious wine and nibbles.

Last summer, Jim and I took the kids to Sonoma County where we stayed at a BEAUTIFUL guest home situated on a hill in the quiet countryside. The kids LOVED it! We were 30 minutes from Bodega Bay, 35 minutes north of Nick's Cove (BEST place for a boozy lunch) and 45 minutes south from the cutest town in Northern California, Healdsburg. BEST restaurants and shopping boutiques. We were there over 4th of July and a local band was playing in the town square with families sprawled out on blankets drinking wine, dancing and hanging out. Town fairs, carnivals, farmer's markets and so much more! I CAN NOT wait to go back...hopefully this summer if not before! CHEERS.



The BEST winery to visit in Sonoma County!