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How to spend a winter weekend in Napa

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Winter might not seem like the obvious—or even ideal—time to visit wine country. Cooler temperatures and damper weather might spring to mind first.

But that isn't always the case, and it certainly isn't in Northern California's Napa Valley right now. While last winter (from 2018 into 2019) saw a record rainfall, the region is currently tracking well under its rainfall targets for the season. For the time being, visitors can expect daytime highs around 60 degrees Fahrenheit, meaning you can easily blend in with the winemakers (and tech company offsite crowds) with a puffy vest and a light jacket.



Oxbow Public Market is a 40,000-square-foot indoor marketplace featuring restaurants and vendors of local and regional artisan food and wine.

COURTESY OF OXBOW PUBLIC MARKET

Where to eat

Oxbow Public Market: The beating heart of Napa—at least downtown Napa—is located in the Oxbow District. Originally a 1930s tire store and garage, the facility underwent a massive remodeling—akin to the San Francisco Ferry Building just an hour south—opening in December 2007 as an open-span public market along the Napa River. And given its popularity with locals and visitors alike, the Public Market surely contributed to the wave of high-end food halls across the country.

Open seven days a week (closed only on Thanksgiving and Christmas), the space is a feast for both the eyes and the stomach. With a focus on supporting local artisans and sustainable produce, the market hosts two butcher shops, a fish market, a local organic produce store, an artisan cheese and wine shop, a spice market, a chocolate shop, an olive oil purveyor, multiple bakeries, a coffee shop, a distillery, a diverse cross section of restaurants, and an oyster bar. (Choices you won't regret: [The Model Bakery](#) for English muffins and [Ritual Coffee Roasters](#) for a much-needed hit of espresso.) The place can get packed easily on summer weekends, but you're much more likely to get a word (or full conversation) in with local purveyors as well as a better chance at grabbing a prime spot on the scenic outdoor deck.