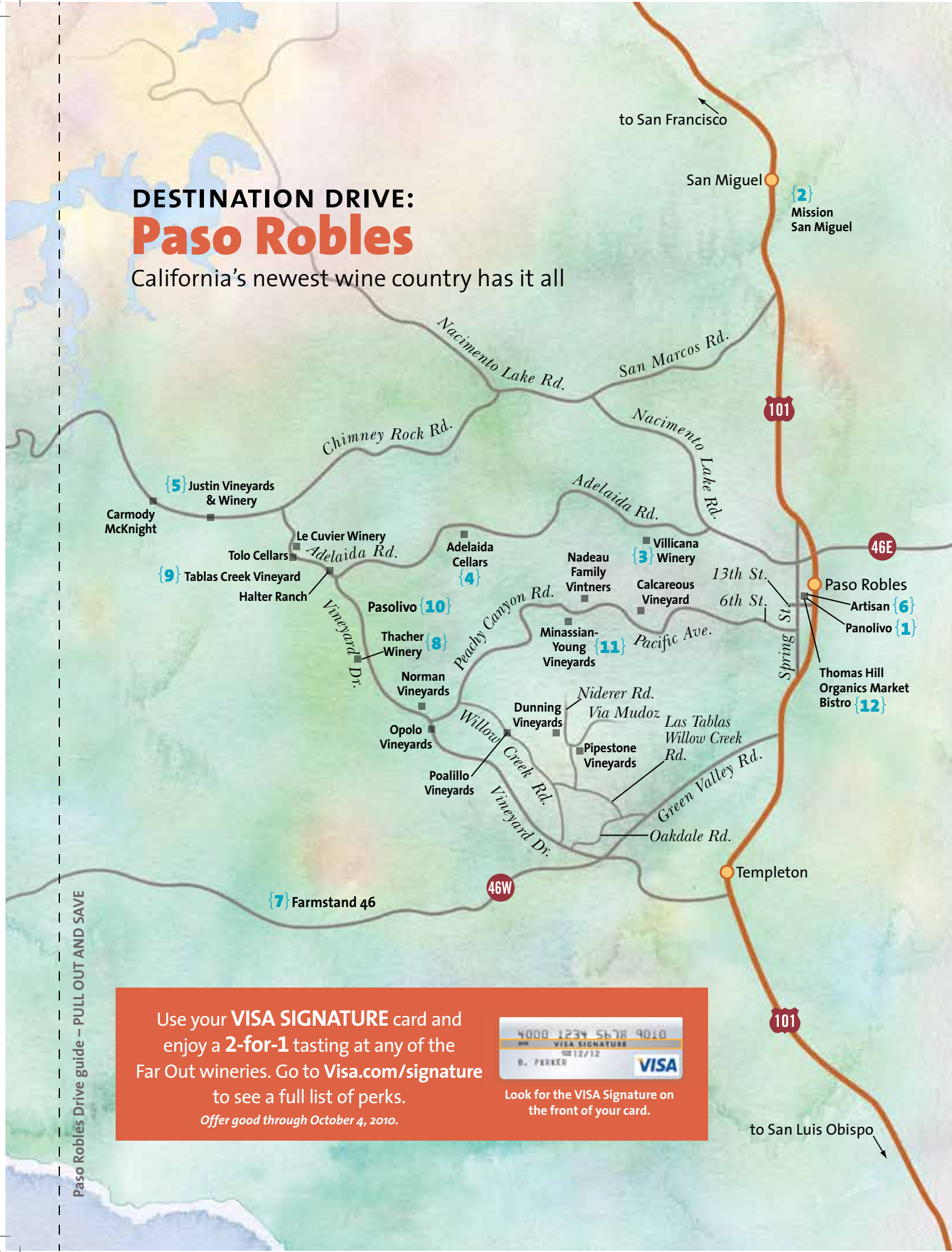


DESTINATION DRIVE: Paso Robles

California's newest wine country has it all



GETAWAY TO THE VINES Experience the best of Paso Robles' wine country



The Westside of Paso Robles, with its twisting country roads and oak-covered hills, is home to an amazing number of top-notch wineries, such as the Far Outs. If you're planning a trip, take along the following recommendations from the editors at Sunset. They're a road map to a weekend of new tastes and wonderful discoveries. To learn more about the Far Out winemakers, visit faroutwineries.com

All addresses are in Paso Robles, and area codes are 805 unless specified. Most tasting rooms open 11-5 Fri-Sun.

SATURDAY

Whether you stop by **{1} Panolivo** first thing for *pain perdu* or enjoy *quiche* and panini there later, don't leave the popular French cafe

without sampling the amazing pastries. 1344 Park St.; panolivo.com or 239-3366. For a quick lesson in California history, art, and architecture,

{2} Mission San Miguel

(775 Mission St., San Miguel; mission-sanmiguel.org or 467-3256) is worth a quick detour up highway 101. The beautiful National Historical Landmark was founded by the same Franciscan monks who brought wine to the region in the late eighteenth century. Back in Paso Robles, drive west toward

{3} Villicana Winery (2725 Adelaida Rd.; villicanawinery.com or 239-9456), your first tasting spot. This tiny 13-acre winery produces fewer than 1800 cases of wine per year, but more than makes up for the yield in quality Bordeaux and Rhone-style wines

and the kind of down-to-earth hospitality that keeps bringing visitors back. Soak in the sun-baked Westside scenery as you proceed along the winding, vine-studded foothills and up the driveway to **{4} Adelaida Cellars** (5805 Adelaida Rd.; adelaida.com or 800/676-1232). Adelaida's Viking Estate Syrah has recently won accolades, as have the critically rated HMR Estate Pinots, which are planted on the region's oldest Pinot Noir vines. Next stop:

{5} Justin Vineyards & Winery (11680 Chimney Rock Rd.; justinwine.com or 800/726-0049). It's true, this industry veteran seems to be located light years from town, but dedicated oenophiles who make it this far out are richly rewarded. Besides its famed Isosceles blend and other outstanding Bordeaux reds, look forward to deluxe picnic fixings, engaging tours, and stellar sunset views. When you're ready to trek back to town, set your

GPS for buzzworthy **{6} Artisan** restaurant (1401 Park St.; artisanpasorobles.com or 237-8084). It offers inventive, local-grown, American fine dining without pretensions. You'll appreciate the attentive service and the chance to try a few more Paso vintages from the Cali-centric wine list; save room for their outstanding desserts.

SUNDAY

Before setting out for the day's tastings, swing by funky **{7} Farmstand 46** (3750 Hwy 46W, Templeton; farmstand46.com or 239-3661), for picnic supplies. Locals swoon for their brick-oven pizzas, gourmet sandwiches, and other super-fresh farm-to-table offerings. Then head north on Vineyard Drive up to

{8} Thatcher Winery (8355 Vineyard Dr.; thacherwinery.com or 237-0087) to taste and feast. Pair your picnic with the 2007 Triumvirate Reserve Zin from the best of three Westside vineyards and stock up on 2010 *SF Chronicle* double-gold-medal-winner 2007 Controlled Chaos. With its fancy European pedigree, **{9} Tablas Creek** (9339 Adelaida Rd.; tablascreek.com or 237-1231), further up the road, won't disappoint lovers of unusual European

varietals; don't miss the unusual Vin de Paille Sacrerouge 2006, made with 100% mourvedre grapes. "Powerful, full, and fruity" may describe your favorite cab, but it's also a rave for another regional favorite: olive oil from **{10} Paso-livo** (Willow Creek Olive Ranch, 8530 Vineyard Dr.; pasolivo.com or 227-0186). Visit their tasting room to sample a variety of oils handpicked and pressed on site. Make

{11} Minassian-Young Vineyards (4045 Peachy Canyon Rd.; minassianyoung.com or 238-7571) your last winery of the afternoon and see for yourself the complex, yet delicious results of dry-farming (i.e., without irrigation) on this region's famed chalky soils. Their 2006 Estate Zinfandel recently won best of class in the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Wine Competition. Finish the weekend on a high note with dinner at **{12} Thomas Hill Organics Market Bistro**, 1305 Park St.; thomashillorganics.com or 226-5888. The petite bistro showcases the best of the Central Coast in a tightly edited "farm-forward" menu of creative dishes that vary with the seasons. Expect large portions, a superb wine list, and a memorable cheese platter.

Other sips along the trail

Calcareous Vineyard 3430 Peachy Canyon Rd.; calcareous.com or 239-0289

Carmody McKnight 11240 Chimney Rock Rd.; carmodymcknight.com or 800/282-0730

Dunning Vineyards 1953 Niderer Rd.; dunningvineyards.com or 238-4763

Halter Ranch 8910 Adelaida Rd.; halterranch.com or 888/367-9977

Le Cuvier, 9750 Adelaida Rd.; lcwine.com or 800/549-4764

Nadeau Family Vintners 3860 Peachy Canyon Rd.; nadeaufamilyvintners.com or 239-3574

Norman Vineyards 7450 Vineyard Dr.; normanvineyards.com or 237-0138

Opolo Vineyards 7110 Vineyard Dr.; opolo.com or 238-9593

Pipestone Vineyards 2040 Niderer Rd.; pipestonevineyards.com or 227-6385

Paso Robles Drive guide - PULL OUT AND SAVE

Use your **VISA SIGNATURE** card and enjoy a **2-for-1** tasting at any of the Far Out wineries. Go to Visa.com/signature to see a full list of perks. Offer good through October 4, 2010.

Look for the VISA Signature on the front of your card.

