



Sacramento & Central Valley

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Best Places to Eat

- Noriega's (p510)
- Kitchen Restaurant (p490)
- Peeve's Public House & Local Market (p506)
- Diane's Village Bakery & Cafe (p334)

Best Places to Stay

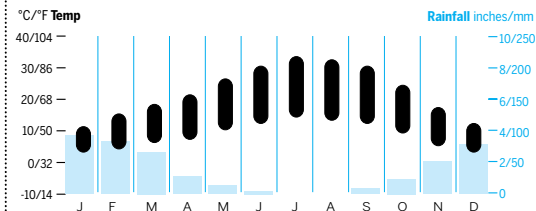
- Padre Hotel (p509)
- Citizen Hotel (p489)
- Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (p496)

Why Go?

The Central Valley is a vast swath of golden fields, rolling hills and scenic waterways that span 400 miles from Chico to Bakersfield. Its rich soil feeds the nation. Half the produce in the US — and nearly every carrot, almond and asparagus spear — was grown here.

In spring, the rivers swell and the orchards bloom. In summer, vast vineyards thrive under the relentless sunshine, and produce comes to market still warm from the fields. By fall and winter, the skies mellow and migratory ducks and geese fly in for a visit. The birds stay longer than most travelers, who tend to zip through on their way to more popular parts, but the shady streets and stately mansions of the region's Victorian-era towns and the uniquely scenic communities dotting the Sacramento Delta and Hwy 99, warrant more than a glimpse through the window.

When to Go Sacramento



Feb–Mar Stop for pie and hot cider in the valley's technicolor Blossom Trail orchards.

Nov–Feb Catch the spectacular return of millions of migratory waterfowl in Sacramento.

May–Sep The peak of harvest time brings farmers markets and food festivals aplenty.

Sacramento & Central Valley Highlights

- 1 Tubing the cool rivers of **Chico** (p496).
- 2 Uncorking the emerging wine scene in **Lodi** (p501).
- 3 Tasting the Valley's produce in Sacramento's **farmers markets** (p488).
- 4 Discovering the legacy of people who built the Chinese Temple and lake at **Oroville** (p494).
- 5 Grooving in a **Bakersfield** (p508) honkytonk to the sounds of musical icons.
- 6 Bumping down world-class rapids on **Kern River** (p511).
- 7 Circling the maypole during Kingsburg's **Swedish festival** (p334).
- 8 Exploring the levees and farms of the **Sacramento River Delta** (p491).

