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## Daytrips & Getaways

By Fran Endicott



Forestville is now known for good wines and food. Photos provided

and her brother Joe grew up in Forestville, and together they have created a sumptuous six-acre gem that is alone worth a trip to the area.

Featuring 25 varying sized farm-chic rooms with above-and-beyond amenities, the Farmhouse Inn is the epitome of casual elegance. Guests are greeted with the offer of a glass of wine, and a choice of organic bath amenities to take to the room, or take home - handmade soap, bath powders, and artisanal seasonal scrubs. Rooms are lavishly appointed with large jetted tubs, European linens, radiant heated floors, indoor-outdoor fireplaces, private patios, complimentary snacks, and fresh-baked cookies at turndown. The makings for gourmet s'mores (to be heated over one of the many fire pits) are ever-ready in the lobby, and a beautiful three-course breakfast is included.

While the Farmhouse Inn's beautiful pool, hot-tub, and spa (featuring a "farm-to-spa table" menu of treatments including ingredients like forest honey, heirloom cider apples, and garden grown herbs) are more than enough to keep you occupied during your stay, you'll want to explore the area a bit.

A great place to start is Forestville's main drag - Front Street. Head to the Joseph Jewell Wines tasting room and let friendly manager Dawn Marie guide you through their portfolio of small-batch, handcrafted pinots, zins and chardonnays. Afterward, move up the road a bit to Russian River Vineyards and Farm to enjoy lunch at the only winery-based restaurant in the Russian River Valley. This historic 1890s farmhouse offers indoor or outdoor wine tasting and dining in a bucolic setting; menu items are sourced from the more than 45 different types of vegetables grown on the property.

After lunch, set your sights on Gary Farrell Winery, technically in Healdsburg, but just a short drive up the hill, directly across from your Farmhouse Inn home base. It's hard to imagine a better vantage point from which to savor the splendors of the Russian River Valley than Gary Farrell - renowned for its pinot noir and chardonnay. From your terrace perch overlooking the forested valley below, enjoy a plate of local gourmet cheeses selected expressly to complement each tasting as your wine educator explains the origins of each delicious pour.

Head back the short distance to the Farmhouse Inn and lounge by the pool, or on your private

patio. Explore the sylvan gardens (designed and landscaped expertly by Roland Crighton, formerly with Valley Crest Design Group and now with Forma Design Partners) and the many seating areas, water features, and vine covered trellises that will likely make you consider a remodel or rejuvenation of your own backyard.

Though there are other restaurant choices in town, a stay at the Farmhouse Inn is not complete without dinner at its charming restaurant. Chef Steve Litke has maintained his Michelin-star status for six consecutive years, and his 'Rabbit, Rabbit, Rabbit' dinner entr  (rabbit served three ways) is legendary. He sources the ingredients for his ever-changing menu from the Bartolomei's ranch, and from local artisan farmers, and the results are spectacular, and a perfect way to end a perfect day in Forestville.

Farmhouse Inn and Restaurant, 7871 River Road, Forestville, 707-887-3300; [www.farmhouseinn.com](http://www.farmhouseinn.com)



Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

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