



Pause & Effect Key Messaging: May-October 2023

1. KEY MESSAGES

Key Message: Sonoma County is a place that inspires you to take time to [pause](#), connect, and find joy in all moments, big and small.

Supporting Statements:

- As a premier wine and food destination, Sonoma County attracts travelers seeking a getaway that feeds the senses, connects people through meaningful experiences, and provides “merit badge” memories that last a lifetime.
- Every activity in Sonoma County offers the opportunity to pause and allow life to truly open up through both exuberant, breathtaking experiences and quiet moments. From forest bathing in the redwoods to smelling and tasting wines, craft beers, spirits, and ciders and non-alcoholics like shrubs, teas and mocktails, you can take a moment to engage your senses and find joy. Opportunities for pause:
 - Forest bathing in Sugarloaf SP or Red Car Winery
 - Hiking the parks like Jack London State Historic Park or the vineyards (such as Paradise Ridge’s free vineyard walk).
 - Cedar-enzyme bath at Osmosis Day Spa
 - Medlock Ames Immersive Sound Experience
 - Hallberg Butterfly Sanctuary
 - Charlie’s Acres Sanctuary
 - Epicurean Connection and other cheesemakers
 - Farm visits including olive tastings like Goldridge Organic Farms
 - Transcendence Theatre Company’s Broadway Under the Stars
 - Charlie’s Acres teaches you about animals, while you enjoy meditation and yoga.
- Sonoma County is a destination that embodies and supports ways for visitors to lessen the impact of their trip on our land and precious resources.
 - 99% sustainable certified vineyards, including several dry-farmed, [biodynamic and organic wineries and vineyards](#)
 - Leave No Trace partnership
 - Kind Traveler partnership - hotel booking engine that gives a portion of the rate back to local nonprofit organizations.
 - Sustainable, green-certified winery buildings (Silver Oak, Jordan, Inman, Nalle, Ridge Vineyards)
 - [Organic, sustainable farms](#) and [farmer’s markets](#)
 - Low intervention/natural wines
 - Cider production using heirloom apples like the Gravenstein apple

- Gleaning with Farm to Pantry or other volunteer organizations
- Select hotels and wineries in Sonoma County offer yoga, spas, meditation, microcurrent mats, etc., to really allow you time to unwind.
 - Flamingo Resort: Sound Bath, Yoga and Meditation
 - Dawn Ranch: Yoga and microcurrent mats
 - Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa: Geothermal Mineral Pools
 - Vintner's Resort: Spa, CBD-based treatments
 - Farmhouse Inn & Spa: The Wellness Barn, Pedal Spa Package
 - Gaige House + Ryokan: traditional Japanese style soaking bath

Key Message: Take time to intentionally learn about the growers, makers and creators that make Sonoma County a special place at the many farmers' markets, festivals and events.

Supporting Statements:

- [Festivals and events](#) that honor our region's long standing commitment to stewardship and preservation:
 - Taste of Sonoma (June 24, 2023) showcases Sonoma County's renowned vintners. A perfect opportunity to slow down and intentionally enjoy the region's bounty.
 - Gay Wine Weekend (July 14-16) gives attendees a special three-day opportunity to celebrate Sonoma County's longstanding commitment to inclusivity (it's long been a [welcoming destination](#)). Your participation supports Face to Face and the Sonoma County HIV/AIDS network.
 - Gravenstein Apple Festival (Aug. 12-13, 2023) honors an [heirloom apple](#) variety unique to Sonoma County. The Fair is 95% zero waste.
 - Wine Country Distillery Festival (Aug. 12, 2023) celebrates the craft distillers who take the time to make small-batch, locally-sourced spirits in Sonoma County.
 - Art in the Redwoods Festival (Aug. 17-20, 2023) celebrates our region's many artists, purveyors and creators amongst the Redwoods.
 - Sonoma County Wine Auction (Sept. 14-16, 2023) gives back in a big and meaningful way. Your participation makes an impact to more than 400 local organizations supporting the environment, education and literacy, social services, health and human services, arts and culture and emergency response.
 - Sonoma County Harvest Fair (Oct. 14, 2023) highlights local agricultural, industrial and recreational growers, makers and crafters. From the Fair's inception in 1975, it has become a treasured event.
 - Additional inspiration for festival and events season [here](#).

Key Message: Being mindful and considering the impact on your surroundings is part of Sonoma County's ethos. For generations, we've practiced sustainable gardening and farming techniques, championed water conservation, and stewarded the land and waterways throughout our beautiful destination.

Supporting Statements:

- For generations, this has been a place to pause and reflect on our surroundings and become purposeful stewards of land and community.
 - Benziger produces first biodynamic wine in Sonoma County
- With [agriculture being the backbone](#) of Sonoma County, life on a farm is a school of patience. You can't hurry crops or make an ox in a day or two.
- Taking time to be mindful of your surroundings helps you travel with care and experience the destination responsibly. As a visitor, you can be a steward and help protect and preserve this special place.
 - Stay at Kind Traveler hotels and give back or volunteer at Farm to Pantry/Redwood Food Bank/Pepperwood/Charlie's Acres/Russian Riverkeeper/Sonoma Land Trust. See <https://www.kindtraveler.com/causes>
 - Sonoma County's mindfulness shows in its care and attention to all the details, from food and drink to its vast and diverse ecosystems. A few examples include:
 - Single Thread and Little Saint plus their farm
 - [Jackson Family Wines](#), including [Jackson-Kendall \(history; sustainability\)](#)
 - [Buena Vista](#) (one of California's [oldest wineries](#); experimenting w/ dry farming practices since 1800s);
 - [Small, family-owned wineries in the family for several generations](#)

Key Message: Sonoma County inspires you to make more sustainable choices that have a positive effect on the destination. The decision to be a good steward of the Earth while traveling begins with an intentional decision to pause in our normal lives, and seek out ways to travel mindfully and consider our impact on the destinations we visit.

Supporting Statements:

- Every choice we make during our travels affects the destination - and every choice is an opportunity to travel sustainably and leave this place better than you found it.
- Research shows that travelers are increasingly seeking meaningful and authentic experiences - the new frontier is "travel that makes you a better human" and Sonoma County leads by example in responsible and sustainable tourism.
- The latest sustainable travel studies from Expedia Group and Booking.com shows there is an increased desire from consumers to travel sustainably and responsibly, but they don't always know how to within a destination. Sonoma County [makes it easy](#) to travel responsibly and helps you feel good about your decisions. From its partnerships with [Leave No Trace](#) and [Kind Traveler](#) to its [intentional itineraries](#), you can be a part of leaving this special place better for the next generation of visitors.
- Traveling mindfully to Sonoma County allows us to have experiences that can be savored in a place focused on and long committed to preservation and sustainability.
- Traveling mindfully to Sonoma County and minimizing overall travel impact helps to preserve the destination and its offerings so it can be enjoyed by future generations.
- Sonoma County is a destination deeply rooted in preservation and sustainable practices for generations - visitors are encouraged to pause and make mindful decisions when traveling and throughout the region and to carry these behaviors forward.
- When you pause to consider your travel impact, you can make mindful decisions that positively affect the community, environment and its future.
 - Take a bike tour instead of your car.

- Use the SMART train to travel to or within Sonoma County. [Taking the train and bringing a bike](#) - The [Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit](#) — commonly known as the SMART train — provides a convenient and easy way to explore large parts of Sonoma County by bike. Every two-car train can hold up to 24 bicycles, and all stations offer storage that includes bike racks and secured bike lockers. Work is underway on a pathway running next to or near SMART tracks, which when finished, will stretch for 70 miles between Sonoma and Marin counties, becoming one of the nation's longest bicycle/pedestrian pathways. See a map of the pathway's progress.
- Arrive at Charles M. Schulz Airport (STS) instead of Bay Area airports to reduce your carbon footprint. [Flying to Sonoma County more sustainably](#) - The local Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport (STS) in Santa Rosa is an airport member of [The Good Traveler](#), the world's first aviation-focused carbon offset program.

Key Message: Life Opens Up in Sonoma County during moments of mindfulness and stillness.

Supporting Statements:

- Pausing allows us to be inspired or see things from a different perspective.
 - Entrepreneurs like Watertreks EcoTours Suki Waters, Quail & Condor's owners Chef Sean McGaughey and Melissa Yanc.
- Pausing on vacation allows us to reflect and return home with a new take on life and travel.
- Pausing gives your body a chance to regain balance and promotes relaxation. This, in turn, allows you to move forward with your next activity with intention.
- Pausing protects your inner peace. When you take that extra beat, you feel better and will have a more memorable vacation.
 - Activities like [Yoga in the vineyards](#)
 - [Forest bathing](#) with Jenny Harrow-Keeler at Red Car Wines or guides at our Regional Parks.

Key Message: Sonoma County vacations provide an opportunity for longer pauses and meaningful moments of play, and this is best done when you are intentional with your travel choices. Sonoma County embodies a holistic approach to wellbeing, making it the ideal destination to fully experience the positive effect of a trip to our destination.

Supporting Statements:

- While consumers are generally prioritizing health and well-being now more than ever following the pandemic, studies show that many still find vacations just as stressful as their regular schedules because they worry about work and home or stay too busy during vacations ([Source](#)).
- Americans are using their PTO more than ever following the pandemic, but studies show that most people find vacations just as stressful as their regular schedule because they worry about work and home or stay too busy during vacations ([Source](#)).
- Being busy is not the same as being active. Active vacations incorporate pauses to reflect on yourself and your surroundings so you can move forward with activities in a meaningful, sustainable way. Sonoma County provides ample opportunities for both pause and reflection, as well as active, intentional play - all perfect for recharging your mind, body and spirit.

- Sonoma County's [intentional itineraries](#) include a mix of carefully-curated experiences that allow you to be as active (or not!) as you want to be during your visit while making it easy to build in moments of mindfulness. Each itinerary is designed to help you transform well-being into actually being well.
- The Sonoma County experience feeds your soul, enriches your life, helps you relax, rejuvenate and restore inner peace. See Sonoma County's [Soulful Travel](#)

Key Message: Sonoma County values and embraces diversity, and is a welcoming destination for visitors of all backgrounds and abilities.

Supporting statements and businesses:

- Sonoma County is the ancestral home of three tribes of Native Americans: Kasia Pomo, Wappo, and Miwok. Their descendants pride themselves in keeping traditions going in Sonoma County. Visitors can learn from their cultural experiences, including museums, cultural centers, crafts, and food offerings.
- As a “majority minority” destination, Sonoma County’s cultural and food experiences are often influenced by a rich tapestry of local minorities.
- Equality Vines in Guerneville was founded by the plaintiff who secured same-sex marriage rights by the Supreme Court.
- LGBTQ+ events abound in Sonoma County, especially during the summer months. From Pride to Gay Wine Weekend, Ladies Weekend to Lazy Bear, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and their allies, celebrate their diversity and resilience.
- A wide-range of [Black-owned businesses, restaurants and cafes](#) can be found throughout Sonoma County including Big River Coffee, Cafe Frida, Corner 103, Table Culture Provisions and EARTHSeed Farm on your next trip.
- The Inclusion Festival in Petaluma is a musical festival for people with special needs and their families, friends, and allies. The 3rd annual festival was held on May 13, 2023.