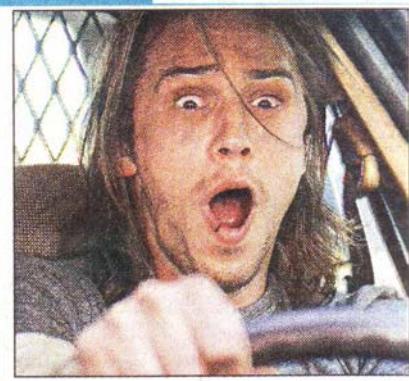


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By Dale Robinette, Sony Pictures

James Franco: In Pineapple Express.

A weekly look at the second-home market

Sonoma County, Calif.

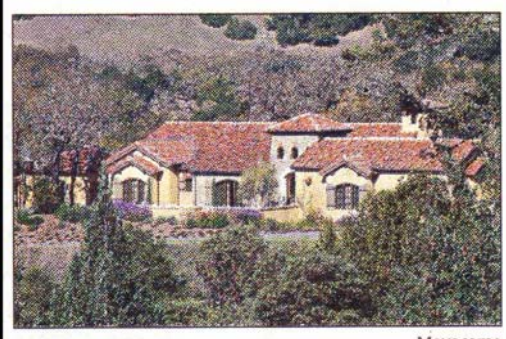
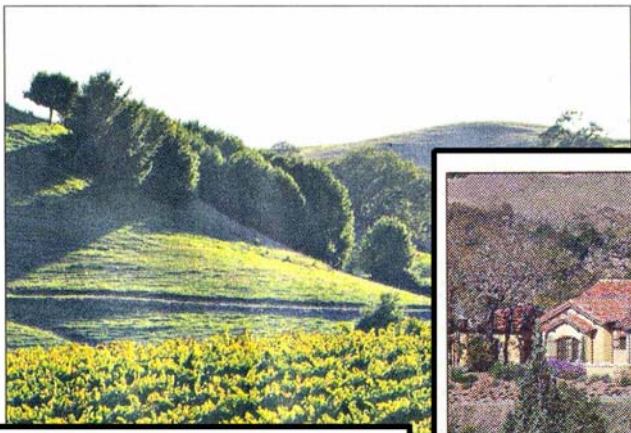
Drink in the homegrown atmosphere

By Larry Olmsted
Special for USA TODAY

For years, Sonoma has been called the "next Napa," a reference to its more developed sister valley in the nation's top winemaking region of Northern California. That honor now shifts to some other up-and-coming area, because Sonoma is no longer the "next" anything. Sonoma has arrived.

Both Sonoma and Napa counties begin just north of the San Francisco Bay Area. Sonoma caught up with Napa in wine quality years ago, but it took longer to catch up in resort, residential, shopping and dining infrastructure. Long a second-home choice for Bay Area urbanites, Sonoma is now casting a far wider net.

The major attraction is still the wine lifestyle. Wineries, farms, top restaurants and makers of artisanal food create an atmosphere of good living — a homegrown Tuscany or Provence.



Mayacama

► **Mayacama.** Between Santa Rosa and Healdsburg, this gated development (mayacama.com) quickly has become a premiere golf community with its Jack Nicklaus signature course. In addition to traditional clubhouse golf storage, all members get a second locker — for wine. A few lots for custom homes remain, typically about 1½ acres and \$1.3 million. Mayacama recently introduced fractional ownership in 30 casitas, villas and homes with shares ranging from \$225,000 to \$1.65 million.

On the market: This is for a one-fourth share (90 nights) in a hillside home in the Mayacama community. Unlike many fractional ownership plans, the deed allows buyers to fully capture any appreciation.

High-end price \$1,500,000

- **Bedrooms:** 3
- **Bathrooms:** 3
- **Size:** 3,600 square feet
- **Features:** Multiple outdoor living areas, wine cellar, private pool and hot tub, two-car garage. Daily maid service and access to club facilities including golf, spa, tennis, dining and room service.

whose cottage and grave are in Jack London State Historic Park.

Don't miss
Sonoma County Fair, late July to early August.

Getting there
One- to two-hour drive from San Francisco/Oakland.

Tourism information
sonomacounty.com

often get an increase of up to 20 degrees simply by crossing the Golden Gate Bridge. Residents play golf and grill outdoors all year long.

Most second-home interest is within weekend driving distance of San Francisco/Oakland. The area includes the Sonoma Valley in the south, stretching about 10 miles north from the town of Sonoma, encompassing Glen Ellen and Kenwood. This is "old" Sonoma, where development is limited. In Sonoma town, residents walk to a village green encircled with shops, restaurants and wineries.

Ideal conditions: Much of the Sonoma, Calif., landscape is redwood forest and the artisan food and great weather make it popular with visitors.

A look at three Sonoma County neighborhoods

- **Town of Sonoma.** With fewer than 9,000 residents, Sonoma has a style with the quaintness of a New England village. Jill Silvers, a Real Estate, says prices start at about \$500,000 for a two-bedroom house and a typical four-bedroom house on half-acre runs \$2.5 million.
- **Healdsburg.** Downtown is similar to Sonoma with shops and main green, but many establishments are newer, and the atmosphere with deluxe lodging and spas. The residential market is hot. A handful of two- and three-bedroom houses are available for \$1.5 million and a few three- to five-bedrooms go for more than \$3 million.

A grueling schedule: Phelps, shown using training paddles during a session last November at the University of Michigan's Canham Natatorium, swims nearly 50 miles a week during peak training phases.

Built to swim, Phelps found a focus and refuge in water

Kid who 'never sat still' aims for eighth Olympic gold, Olympic history

As many Americans face rising gas prices and job uncertainty, figures show that state and federal governments boosted spending 7.8% in 2007 compared with 2007 while revenue fell 1.5%. The federal government is on a hiring binge as the private sector jobs disappear.

In a move to curb spending, President Bush signed a bill Monday to pressure the Legislature to cut the budget. He signed an order to suspend part-time and temporary employees for the pay of 200,000 others.

