

## Tips and Resources

# for a Great, Green, Wine Country Event

### Venue & Accommodations

- When shopping for venues, request information on their environmental management policies. Most properties that practice sustainability will be pleased to offer details about their current practices and future plans.
- Consider venues with outdoor event space or lots of natural light to reduce energy usage; venues in “walkable” locations; and venues that take advantage of Sonoma Valley’s scenic, cultural, or historic resources.
- When choosing overnight accommodations, look for lodging properties that have made sustainable practices a priority. Many of Sonoma Valley’s hotels and inns have achieved Sonoma Valley Green Business Recognition, Bay Area Green Business Certification, or other awards for sustainability. Many smaller properties have taken a “Sonoma Valley Green Lodging Pledge”.



Sonoma ranks 5th in the state  
for solar power per capita.



For listings of local businesses, please visit  
[www.SonomaChamber.com](http://www.SonomaChamber.com)

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# GREENING



your  
Sonoma Valley  
Wine Country  
Event

## Vendor Selection

- Think globally, shop locally! By choosing local vendors for your Sonoma Valley event, you reduce the environmental footprint. Local event planners, caterers, and other vendors are much more likely to use local foods and other products, and to minimize shipping and transportation associated with serving your event.
- Ask potential vendors about their sustainable business practices. Making your “green” intentions known upfront will lead to a smoother process and greater awareness of the growing consumer interest in sustainable products and services.

## Transportation

- Help facilitate ways for guests/attendees to car-pool or rideshare to the event.
- Work with local transportation companies on options to minimize trips and reduce emissions. Vans, shuttle busses of all sizes, chauffeured hybrid vehicles, scooter rentals, and bicycle rentals are all available in Sonoma Valley.
- Consider participation in a carbon-offset program, or a donation to a local environmental organization such as the Sonoma Ecology Center.



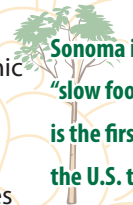
**Sonoma has been recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as a Bicycle Friendly Community.**

## Décor & Table Settings

- Choose reusable table linens, flatware, glasses and dishes, available through local party rental companies.
- If you can't avoid disposables, choose biodegradable and compostable versions such as cups, plates, and cutlery made from cornstarch or potato.
- Purchase local, in-season, flowers, and look for organically grown (no pesticides).
- Consider “living” centerpieces and décor elements such as potted plants that can be reused, taken home, or donated after the event. Other options include edible centerpieces made from local produce, baked goods, or chocolates.

## Food & Drink

- Choose menus made from fresh, local, seasonal foods to minimize the distance “from farm to table”.
- Ask your caterer for organic and vegetarian options.
- Serve water in pitchers. Avoid plastic water bottles and individual bottles or cans of other beverages.
- Serve local wines! Sonoma Valley wineries produce some of the best wines in the world, including many organic and/or sustainably made wines. Locally made beers and spirits are also available.
- Serve coffees and teas that are fair trade and organically grown. Avoid individual sugar and creamer packets, plastic stirrers, and Styrofoam cups.
- Ask your caterer if they compost and/or donate leftovers to local nonprofits.



**Sonoma is a leader in the “slow food” movement, and is the first community in the U.S. to be recognized by Cittaslow International.**

## Entertainment

- Explore what Sonoma Valley has to offer in terms of cultural and historic resources.
- Hire local musicians to entertain, or hire a local artist to create a “live” piece of artwork during your event.
- Consider coupons or passes for local galleries, museums, or tasting rooms as “thank you” for your guests.

## Invitations, Programs & Handouts

- Use e-vites and/or an event website for online registrations & RSVPs as well as maps, schedules, etc.
- Minimize handouts; make materials available as downloads.
- When you do provide printed materials, choose recycled papers, vegetable-based inks, and double-sided copying.
- Ask your photographer to use a photo-sharing website so you and your guests can print or order only their favorites.
- Consider video-recording or video-conferencing your event to reach more participants and allowing attendees to revisit information of particular interest.
- Make waste reduction easy for those attending your event by ensuring that recycling bins are clearly labeled and available.



**The City of Sonoma has a special events policy that applies to the Plaza and other City parks, which prohibits Styrofoam and requires a recycling plan.**