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RUTH REICHL

TRAVEL SMART: NEW DIGS IN WINE COUNTRY

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Gourmet's editor in chief finds country comfort right in the middle of town at California's most luxurious eco-resort.



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“The greenest luxury hotel in America,” is how the new [Bardessono](#) bills itself. So I was expecting to find it set in one of Napa Valley’s verdant vineyards and drove right past the place, which is smack dab in the middle of Yountville (and only a couple of blocks from [The French Laundry](#)). It still looks disconcertingly raw on the outside, so I was happy to find that my room was all space, light, and modern comfort. The bed was swathed in crisp organic cotton, there were (for once) plenty of plugs for my various devices, good light, and a cozy fireplace.

Then I wandered into the bathroom and gasped. It was a mini-spa, big enough to set up the hidden massage table, with a huge bathtub next to a window. Looking out into the garden I discovered an outdoor shower. I couldn't resist; afterward I ordered breakfast on my private patio. It was exactly what you'd expect from a place whose "director of guest experiences" worked with Alice Waters for years: Blue Bottle coffee, farm eggs with yolks like marigolds (served in little [Staub](#) casseroles), grilled bread, homemade jams, crisp bacon. When I called to ask if I could check out late the receptionist said sympathetically, "It's hard to leave, isn't it?"

Sertl says: Sidewalks probably don't appear in anyone's vision of Napa, but they're a welcome addition. From Bardessono, you can walk to The French Laundry, or head in the other direction to [Redd](#), the restaurant (and vintner hangout) so minimalist you'd think it was helicoptered in from SoHo.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAMMY TODD DYESS

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