

THE DAY OFF

By Justin Goldman



Thanks to Apple, Google, and Facebook, the Santa Clara Valley has become the epicenter of the global economy. The area is sometimes derided for suburban blandness, but if you have a day off here, you can find tons of diversions without driving up to San Francisco.



offers his takes on New Orleans standards. (Kinch got his start as a teenager at the Big Easy's famed Commander's Palace.) Don't miss the Rock-a-Fella Oysters or the mortadella sandwich, which has to be on the short list of America's best sammies.

8 a.m.

Few activities are more soul-restoring than a walk through a redwood grove. Start your day off by unplugging with a hike in Woodside's Wunderlich County Park, where trails climb from the historic Folger Stable, through dry chaparral, and up to shady stands of those mystical, towering trees.



3 p.m.

Hop over to Saratoga for a bit of wine. The quaint downtown's main thoroughfare is lined with tasting rooms, the best of which belongs to Big Basin Vineyards, whose winery is located up the hill in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The syrahs here are superb.

10 a.m.

Head back to the Hotel Nia, which opened in Menlo Park in March on a plot surrounded by Facebook offices. Wash the trail dust off with a dip in the pool, then soak up a few rays in a poolside cabana before grabbing a cup of locally roasted Verve coffee at the open-air Porta Blu restaurant.



5 p.m.

The Bay Area is sports-mad, and the NFL's 49ers have ruled the roost here since the days of Joe Montana and Jerry Rice. The Niners opened Levi's Stadium in San Jose in 2014, and the team has a bunch of primetime games on the slate this season. Looking for a different flavor of pigskin? On January 7, Levi's Stadium hosts the 2019 College Football Playoff National Championship.

Silicon Valley

Your one-day must-do itinerary for the world's tech hub

11:30 a.m.

Zip down El Camino Real to Stanford University's Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts, which houses the largest collection of Rodin works in the U.S. Budget at least 15 minutes to tremble before the bronze cast of *The Gates of Hell*.



9 p.m.

Make your way back up to downtown Palo Alto for dinner at Protégé, a new spot from chef Anthony Secviar and master sommelier Dennis Kelly, both formerly of the French Laundry. No reservation? Sit in the sleek lounge and order dishes such as cured Hawaiian kampachi "Fish and Chips" and an amazing "Brick Chicken" Cornish game hen. Toast your low-tech day off with whatever Kelly chooses from his impressive wine cellar.

1:30 p.m.

Once you're done pondering eternal damnation, drive over to Los Gatos for lunch at The Bywater, where chef David Kinch (of the three-Michelin-starred Manresa)

Thomas Anderson (Wunderlich County Park); courtesy of Hotel Nia (pool); courtesy of Big Basin Vineyards (wine); Damon Farver/Cal Sport Media/Alamy Live News (49ers); Douglas Friedman (Protégé)