Get Outta Town

Summer is here and that means it's time to go exploring. Throw a swimsuit and extra pair of organic cotton undies in the car, pull out an old-fashioned map (the nav system is backup), blast the traveling music and get the heck out of San Francisco. Bring along a favorite playmate or take a chance on a romantic encounter. Our destination? The hippest, chicest resorts within a short radius of San Francisco that pamper and wow their guests — and the planet — at every turn. These magical spots can make us feel as if we have been on vacation for a week when it was only two days. So let's leave our carbon troubles at home and get outta town. After all, the most eco-friendly getaway is nature itself.

*Editor's Note: Nature Well*
POST RANCH INN

Touch the Sky
Paradise beckons from atop Big Sur. Book one of the new cliff-top suites at the famed Post Ranch Inn. In the eco-know before green was in, Post Ranch sported the first gray water recycling system in California. The new drop-dead gorgeous rooms are nestled on the hillside and crafted with reclaimed wood and Cor-ten, which turns a brilliant orange and lasts forever. Not only were no trees removed, but privacy was enhanced by planting additional redwoods and oaks. Soak in a private outdoor hot tub carved from a granite boulder and dine with awe-inspiring views of the sea. There’s no finer romantic and luxurious eco-escape.
Highway 1, Big Sur | 831.667.2200
www.postranchinn.com

CARNEROS INN

Relax and Uncork
I have only stayed at the bucolic Carneros Inn once, and it was in one of their shack daddy, two-room suites, the adjoining room being the perfect refuge from loud snoring companions. Feeling the radiant heat under my feet in the expansive bathroom, I suspected there was an eco-scientist at work. My hunch was pleasantly confirmed with the discovery that this pastoral PumpJack estate was built locally with the planet in mind. Thrills abound, like Java-Logs for the fireplaces, purified water, recycling, geo-heating, fruit trees and vegetable gardens. Dive into the pool and ogle the breathtaking views of the vineyards.
Then raid the mini-bar and uncork a favorite bottle. This rustic, elegant inn was designed so guests can linger in their room for hours. Good for traffic, yes, but even better for the imagination.
4048 Sonoma Highway, Napa | 707.299.4900
www.thecarnerosinn.com

CALISTOGA RANCH

A Natural Beauty
If nature-filled luxury had an address, the Calistoga Ranch would be it. This intimate sanctuary in the Wine Country is like a five-star tree house without the climb. More than 90 percent of the trees on the 157-acre property have been saved and it shows. My hillside cottage deck was built around a spectacular 500-year-old oak tree and more branches greeted me in the outdoor shower. The ranch is experiencing a green renaissance, which includes a soothing spa, gourmet organic food, refillable paraben-free bath products, cork recycling, native plants and the upcoming check-in service. Outdoors and indoors, it all becomes a blur, and there are no bugs, just pure bliss.
580 Lommel Road, Calistoga | 707.254.2800
www.calistogaranch.com

/ORCHARD GARDEN HOTEL

Urban Jungle or Ripe for the Picking
I have been enamored with the Orchard Garden Hotel since it opened and if I could make its sustainable restaurant Roots my home office, I would. The bar is stocked with VeeV açai spirits and organic varietals, plus the daily vegetable puree soups make me warmer than the planet on CO2. A destination with high eco-cred, the Orchard Garden is one of the first LEED-certified green hotels in the nation. While there are no apple trees growing in the rooms yet, the laundry list of enviro-friendly features is dazzling and will impress out-of-town guests with its only-in-SF mojo. Keep an eye out for the sustainable wood and reincarnated materials, local art and smart key cards that turn off the lights when leaving the room — the ultimate in fabulous green luxury.
466 Bush Street, San Francisco | 415.399.9807
www.theorchardgardenhotel.com

OUT 'N' ABOUT TREESORT

Treesleeper
Spend the night under the stars in a tree, or rather an expertly constructed tree house at the Out 'n' About Treesort at the California and Oregon border. The mission is to save the property’s 36 acres through ecotourism and Costa Rican style. Be adventurous by day with the 10 zip lines, canopy walkways, nearby Oregon caves, redwood forests and beautiful coastal beaches. This is a family-friendly place where kids are welcome, but sleeping in a tree sounds pretty romantic to me. Power, lights and fans included, and the 20 tree houses book quickly, so potential guests are encouraged to reserve a spot early.
300 Page Creek Road, Cave Junction, Ore. 541.592.2208 | www.treehouses.com