

A number of high-end developments are not just targeting those who want to live in wine country but who want to "live the experience" and produce their own private label wines. Casa Palmero and Algodon Wine Estates are private vineyard residences that facilitate homeowners in the winemaking process. Oenophiles get to choose their own grapes, decide on their growing techniques and design their own labels. "A wine country estate is not only an investment, but also a lifestyle," Ostropolsky says. "Normally looselo come from bic cities looking for a radical chance, and when they achieve this change

California's Central Coast, in the midst of its wine boom. As a boy, he delivered olive oil to local wineries. In 2004, Pruitt relocated to the Texas Hill Country, bought several properties and made a home for his wife and soon an a 52 acre pareal in the town of Dripping Springs, an up-and-coming wine destination about 20 minutes from downtown Austin. Last year, Pruitt opened Bell Springs Winery on his property. The recent drought has forced him to delay plants to grow his own grapes, so for the time being he sources his fruit from vineyards in California, Washington and other areas of Texas and then produces and bottles his own wine on site. "That's the downside of this area for growing grapes. We have very wet seasons," and went, we seasons, and we work, and we want.

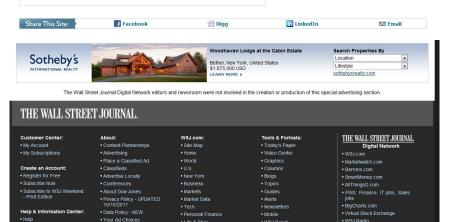
Pruit was buoyed by the tremendous growth he witnessed in California, which gave him an inkling of the inventment opportunities in Teach Turgenoing wine region. "From a business perspective, I saw that we were on the cup of becoming a huge destination for people who love wine. Property in this area has been a fantastic inventment. There's a desire for people to live in wine country, and that's definitely the case that's lappening right now." But before it is his inventment, it is his home, a place to 'enjoy an

The wine country pace is slower, more relaxed. It takes replanted urbanites and suburbanites time to assimilate to the more examalifiestyle, says Terence Collins of Home & Ranch Sothely's International Reality in Templeton, Calif., and a vineyard owner himself. Most of his clients are searching for a large estate home on a vineyard to cultivate their own grapes or for property that has a winery. 'From a buyer's perspective, there are absolutely stunning deals available out there now. With the economy, buyers have amazing opportunities to go in and purchase beautiful properties with vines on them and live the wine country dream.'' Collins' Central Coast region is a relatively affordable one. Property with a 4,000- to 5,000-square-foot home on 50 cares can be half of less than 85 million.

Are there drawbacks to living in wine country? For some, settling in a tourist destination takes some getting used to. Wine regions in the U.S. draw some 27 million winery visits a year, according to the National Association of American Wineries. And when those crowds disappear for the season, so goes an important social component.

But Michael Volpatt, the accidental wine country resident, says he's "100 percent sold" on the lifestyle. "I feel like I found my Mecca. I thought my home was going to be a fun weekend place that I'd go up to on weekends, but then it turned into a life-altering experience."

LIVING ARCHIVE



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