



ADVERTISEMENT

## NEVADA CITY

Nevada City, with its quaint brick storefronts, boutiques and Victorian homes, is among the best-preserved of all Gold Rush towns. Its entire downtown district, more than 90 buildings, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

By Dave Carter

## GRASS VALLEY

Grass Valley, the larger of the two cities, is built around a downtown historic district that dates to the 1850s. Today, Grass Valley is a bustling center of commerce with surprising choices in shopping, dining and wine tasting. The Center for the Arts provides a year around stage for concerts and the performing arts.

Through the years, the underground mines of Grass Valley produced more than \$900 million in gold, making it the richest of all California mining communities.

Much of this Gold Rush history is captured at the 800-acre Empire Mine State Historic Park on the southeast side of town. Here visitors can explore the site of California's richest mine, the stone mansion once occupied by its owner and the immaculate rose gardens surrounding it. An underground mine train is now being developed and expected to offer rides beginning in 2007 or 2008.

The North Star Mining Museum, off Mill Street one mile from the downtown historic district, offers one of California's most extensive collections of mining memorabilia.

Interesting and offbeat shops, book stores, a number of good restaurants and coffee houses are found in Nevada City. The historic Nevada Theatre and Miners Foundry Cultural Center provide venues for the performing arts, with concerts, movies, plays and other performances offered throughout the year.

Families will enjoy the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum which can be visited by rail from the Northern Queen Inn near the edge of town. The tours also visit an old mine site and Chinese cemetery.



## GATEWAY TO THE NATIONAL FOREST

Nevada City and Grass Valley stand at the gateway to the Tahoe National Forest and its many rivers, lakes and trails. Other nearby attractions include South Yuba River State Park, the state's first river corridor state park; the Bridgeport covered bridge, the longest single-span covered bridge in the nation; Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park, an early center of hydraulic gold mining; and several lakes and campgrounds.

From the Reno, Tahoe and Truckee areas, take westbound Interstate 80 to State Scenic Route 20. Nevada City is 50 miles from Truckee, Grass Valley 54. From Sacramento, take eastbound I-80 to Auburn and State Route 49 north to Grass Valley. Grass Valley is 60 miles from the state capital.

Walking tour maps, gold mining history brochures and trail guides to some of the best hiking and mountain biking trails in the area are available from Chamber of Commerce visitor centers in Grass Valley and Nevada City.

## INFORMATION

For more information and a local calendar of events, contact the Grass Valley/Nevada County Chamber of Commerce, 248 Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945. Call (530) 273-4667 or toll-free in California, 1-800-655-4667, or go to [www.grassvalleychamber.com](http://www.grassvalleychamber.com).

Or contact the Nevada City Chamber of Commerce, 132 Main Street, Nevada City, CA 95959. Call (530) 265-2692 or toll-free, 1-800-655-NJOY, or go to [www.nevadacitychamber.com](http://www.nevadacitychamber.com).

*Courtesy of Joint Chambers of Commerce of Nevada County*

*For a glimpse into California's golden past, travelers should plan a visit to the Grass Valley-Nevada City area in the Northern Sierra Gold Country, midway between Lake Tahoe and Sacramento.*

*Located along the northern reaches of Highway 49, the state's "Golden Chain" highway, Grass Valley and Nevada City offer an intriguing look into California's Old West, with plenty of Gold Rush history, including the state's richest gold mine, which is now a state historic park. The area also offers abundant outdoor recreation and wide choices in dining, nightlife and lodging, including a dozen historic bed and breakfast inns.*



# Discover California Gold

# In Grass Valley and Nevada City