

# Love Letters: Saratoga, CA

Huffington Post

Posted: 06/19/2013 7:43 am

*A native of Medicine Lodge, Kansas, Doris Cooper is now the Marketing Director and co-owner of Saratoga, California's Cooper Garrod winery, a family-owned estate located on 120 acres of land overlooking the Saratoga foothills as well as Cooper Garrod Farms.*

Dear Saratoga CA,

Maybe it's the CA instead of the NY that makes you a delectable secret. Maybe it's how the village tucks into resplendent foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains and beckoned San Franciscans when families of yore summered outside the city. Maybe it's the genuinely friendly locals - the kind who smile and say hello as you walk down the street - being modest, even when boutique wineries and inspired restaurants are so much a part of life here. It's a secret love affair for those of us who know you! You are fabulous to live in and only moments from Silicon Valley.

Saratoga, I married one of your long-standing natives, so discovering your secrets is like an outsider's delight for me. Things a native takes for granted? Big name performers in the intimate concert bowl of The Mountain Winery, which was home to French immigrant Paul Masson when he chose the site for winemaking. Serene karma that envelops you walking paths of Hakone Gardens, the oldest Japanese garden and estate in the Western Hemisphere. Hillside views from San Jose to San Francisco when horseback riding with Garrod Farms, along trails of the Fremont-Older Open Space. Your hillsides are one of your secret treasures, and it was love that brought me to them.

Another native family warmly welcomes guests to well-appointed Saratoga Oaks Lodge in The Village, steps from Michelin-starred destination The Plumed Horse, renowned Sent Sovi restaurant and wine lounge, or the innovative menus of The Basin and Casa de Cobre. What's not to love about such abundantly rich choices? You do love to pamper us, Saratoga, and it should be no secret that Preston Wynne Spa exudes rejuvenation from behind its tasteful black awning at the street front for Plaza del Roble - which, when ones knows - is also home to the hairstyling and color artistry of James Craig Salon plus abundant expressions of love in the exquisite jewelry of Deja and Co.

Love abounds with your glorious wedding destinations, Saratoga! The pergola of Saratoga Country Club sets off hillside views as your backdrop. Hakone Gardens frames intimate vows exchanged. Senator James Phelan built Villa Montalvo so his love affair with Saratoga could flourish. Little did he suspect then how many other lovers would celebrate amidst Montalvo's grounds! Nor did Julia Morgan as she designed the arts-and-crafts Saratoga Foothill Club, a CA historic location for special nuptials. My Love brought me to discover his home, Saratoga, where others begin their love stories.

People think you're a sleepy little hamlet, Saratoga. They may not know you are The Wine Wonder of Silicon Valley, but they're going to love you when they find out! Four tasting rooms side-by-side in The Village: Cinnabar, Big Basin Vineyards, Michael Martella & Michael Michaud; Savannah-Chanelle up Highway 9. At Cooper-Garrod Estate Vineyards, part of my secret love is sharing the Cabernet Sauvignon of our backyard with red-tailed hawks and the occasional bobcat who saunters by.

Saratoga, you're a secret I've come to love as my home. You're just too good a secret to keep forever, though...

Love, Doris

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/love-letters/love-letters-saratoga-ca\\_b\\_3423341.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/love-letters/love-letters-saratoga-ca_b_3423341.html)