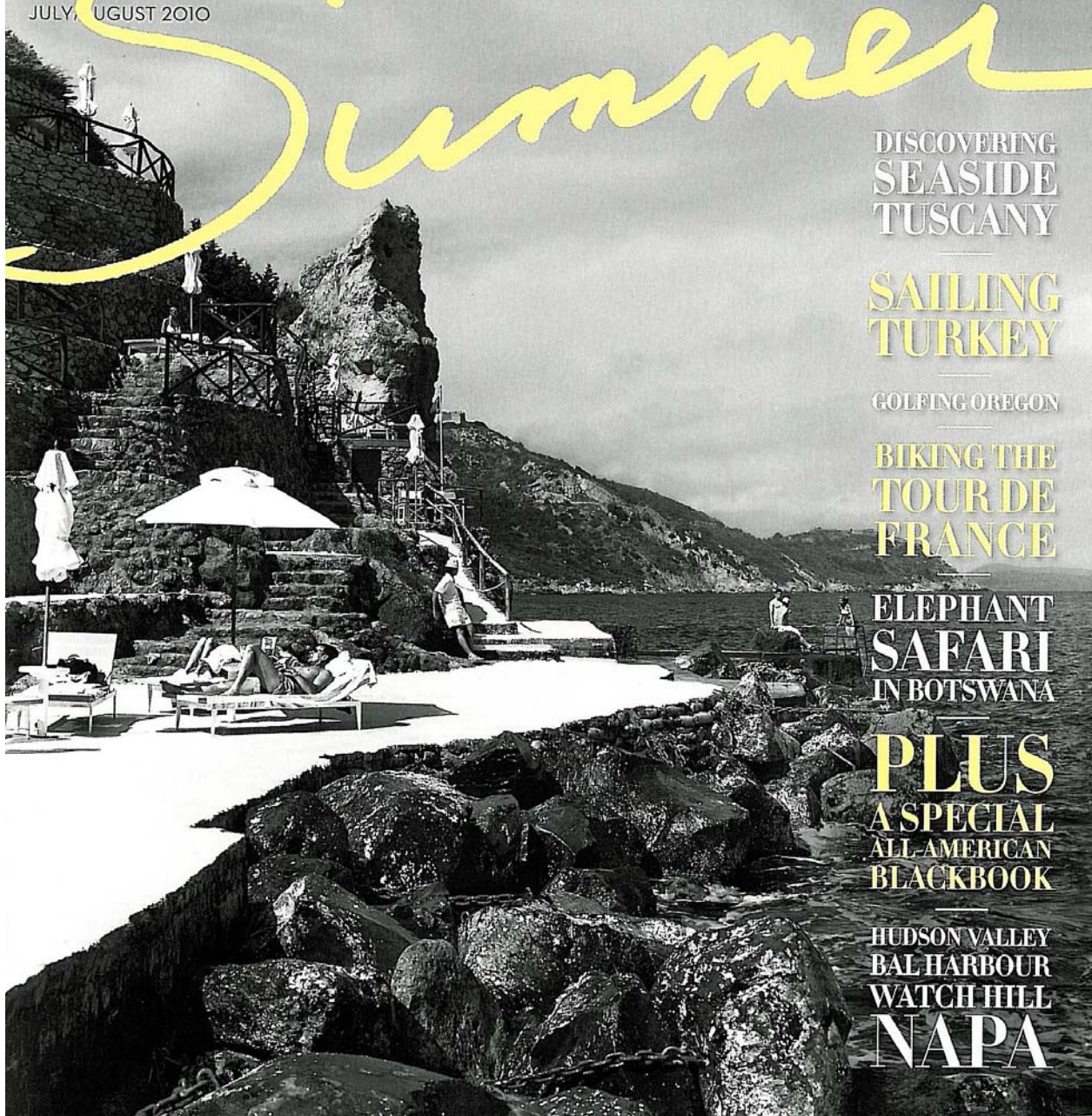


# DEPARTURES

JULY/AUGUST 2010



DISCOVERING  
SEASIDE  
TUSCANY

SAILING  
TURKEY

GOLFING OREGON

BIKING THE  
TOUR DE  
FRANCE

ELEPHANT  
SAFARI  
IN BOTSWANA

PLUS  
A SPECIAL  
ALL-AMERICAN  
BLACKBOOK

HUDSON VALLEY  
BAL HARBOUR  
WATCH HILL  
NAPA

Wining & Dining

# Napa Valley Now

California's most celebrated wine region is buzzing with stylish hotels, smart tasting experiences, and talented new players. **STEPHEN WALLIS** reports.

*Special American Edition*

**BLACKBOOK**

## IMMERSION COURSES

Tastings, vintner dinners, and classes are a dime a dozen in Napa Valley (okay, maybe not a “dime” in this notoriously expensive region), and it can be difficult for visitors to distinguish the good stuff from the ordinary. But a number of wineries and inns have introduced distinctive, top-quality experiences revolving around wine and food. Here's a short list of possibilities.

### **CALISTOGA RANCH**

*Calistoga*

Northern Napa Valley's premier hotel has teamed up with neighboring Hourglass winery to create a “Winemaker for a Weekend” program. Described by Hourglass owner Jeff Smith as “part backstage pass, part roll-your-sleeves-up-and-participate, part Napa lifestyle,” it's two nights at Calistoga Ranch and the better part of two days with Smith, who takes guests into the vineyard and winery to learn about terroir, farming, and winemaking. A terrific cook, Smith makes dinner one night, pairing, for example, his Cab Franc with Chilean sea bass steamed with rose petals “to accentuate the wine's rose and green tea notes.” The package also includes a dinner at the hotel and a treatment at its spa. *From \$7,500 per couple. At 580 Lommel Rd.; 707-254-2800; calistogaranch.com.*