

# Northern California weekend

» Inside Sac's best gift shopping » Skiing like you remember it, in Bear Valley » A Calistoga soak, plus more ways to warm up »

## Sacramento day trip Midtown

**Why go now:** Sacramento's happening Midtown has spawned perfect-for-December hot spots with great eats mixed right in with the shopping, so you can warm up and refuel as you go. **Where is it, again?** On Sac's easy-to-navigate street grid, Midtown stretches from 16th to 29th Streets; businesses cluster on J, K, and L. **Not your grandpa's Sacramento:** In Midtown, the city's suited-up political life gives way to an unbuttoned art and literary scene. **Prezies worth picking up:** Treasures old and new, like vintage wear (I. Magnin silk blouse, Bakelite bangles) at well-curated Bows & Arrows (1712 L St.; 916/444-3606) or any record you can think of at the Beat (1700 J St.; [thebeat.sacramento.com](http://thebeat.sacramento.com)). For hostess gifts or stocking-stuffers, hit sweet, petite Ginger Elizabeth Chocolates (closed Sun; 1801 L St., Ste. 60; [gingerelizabeth.com](http://gingerelizabeth.com)) to pick up gorgeous infused bonbons or a salty cocoa-nib brittle bar. **Break time:** Soothe holiday nerves with a steaming cup at mod Hina's Tea (2319 K St.; [hinastea.com](http://hinastea.com)), with more than 350 teas.

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### 1. Almost like shopping in Paris

**SHOP** Find irresistible *objets* from the City of Light at **Le Petit Paris**: fringed Just Campagne handbags, rainbow-hued Laguiole steak knives, delicate Antoine & Lili cocktail dresses, beautifully made wooden Plan toys, and chic dolls.

**SNACK** In the adjacent cafe, lounge on a baroque divan with a croque monsieur, meticulously pulled espresso, or chewy-crisp macarons. \$; 1221 19th St.; [lepetitparis.us](http://lepetitparis.us)

BY KATE WASHINGTON  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS J. STORY



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### 2. Wine and dine

**SHOP** Need the perfect bottle to take to a holiday party? The stacked racks at **58 Degrees & Holding Co.**—and the helpful staff—will steer you to the right choice from more than 750 bottles, whether it's one of the under-\$20 featured wines of the week or a vintage Jacquesson Champagne.

**SNACK** In the adjoining wine bar, you can order a flight (all the wines are available by the taste, glass, or bottle) and small plates like a bruschetta trio. For just \$20, the three-course Daily 58 menu is a steal. \$; 1217 18th St.; [58degrees.com](http://58degrees.com)



## Leaving so soon? Check out the after-dark scene

**STAY FOR SUPPER**  
**Stylish Ella Dining Room and Bar** is a spacious see-and-be-seen spot on once-moribund K Street. Chef Kelly McCown brings a fresh sensibility to the small-plates menu; don't skip precision-mixed cocktails at the bar. \$\$; closed Sun; 1131 K St.; 916/443-3772.

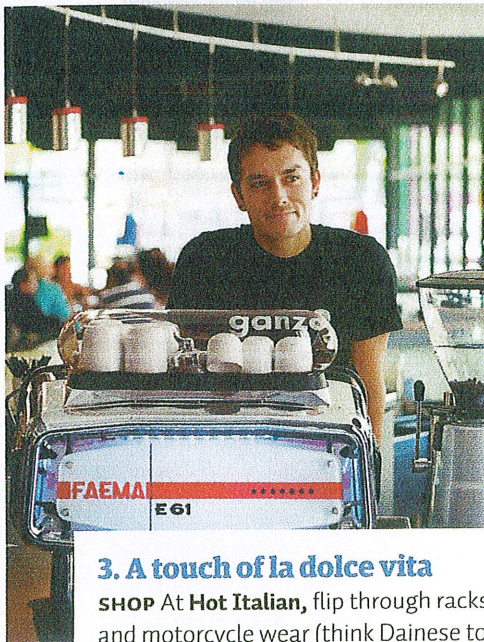
**DINNER AND A SHOW**  
A midcentury-style makeover turned the **Cosmopolitan Cabaret** into an intimate theater, with jazzy shows and small-plates table service from the adjacent Cosmo Café. Upstairs is buzzy nightclub Social. \$; 1000 K St.; [saccosmo.com](http://saccosmo.com)

**SPEAKEASY CHIC**  
For vintage flair, head to the **Shady Lady Saloon**, which pours Jazz Age cocktails like the Hemingway Daiquiri in a cool '20s-look setting (red cut-velvet wallpaper, historic photos of slightly racy flappers). No secret knock required. 1409 R St.; 916/231-9121.

**GO FOR A WALK**  
**The Second Saturday** art walk draws crowds to the best of the city's art scene. For haute photography, duck into **Viewpoint Gallery** (2015 J St.; [viewpointgallery.org](http://viewpointgallery.org)). Street-booth folk art and installations are everywhere. Start at 20th and J Streets; [2nd-sat.com](http://2nd-sat.com)

### Make it an overnight

A few blocks from Midtown lies one of Sacramento's newest hotels, which also happens to be its most fun. The **Citizen Hotel**, in a thoroughly updated 1925 building, riffs on government culture with political cartoons in every room. It's primarily a business hotel, so you'll find steep weekend discounts handy for shopping trips. Don't miss breakfast with housemade sausage at Citizen's eatery, Grange. Rooms from \$139; [citizenhotel.com](http://citizenhotel.com)



### 3. A touch of la dolce vita

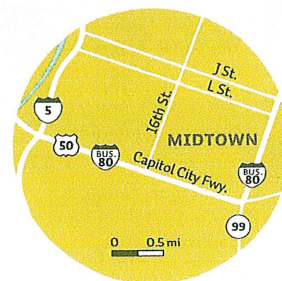
**SHOP** At **Hot Italian**, flip through racks of Italian-designed cycling and motorcycle wear (think Dainese tops and modish jackets) and ogle the Vespas and other scooters.

**SNACK** A few pizza-topped tables amid the racks lead to a dining room where Naples-style pies come blister-crust out of the gorgeous tiled oven. We're partial to the Magnini, lush with smoked salmon and mascarpone, and the sweet Murino, with gorgonzola dolce and pears. \$\$; 1627 16th St.; [hotitalian.net](http://hotitalian.net)

### 4. Something for everyone

**SHOP** Hit Midtown's epicenter at 20th and J for a collection of urbane shops and eateries housed in the new, open-air **MARRS** complex. You'll find stretchy gear at **Asha Yoga** and stocking-stuffers from retro candy to hundreds of magazines at compulsively browsable **Newsbeat**.

**SNACK** Go for bubbles and bites at vibey **Lounge on 20**, fresh-squeezed margaritas and tortilla soup at updated taqueria **Azul**, or a cheese and pepperoni at **Luigi's Slice** (a new outpost of a local 1950s pizza institution). 1050 20th St.; [marrs-sactown.com](http://marrs-sactown.com)



### Getting to Midtown

From U.S. 50, exit at 15th St.; head north on 16th. From I-5, exit on J St. and head east.



**SHARE YOUR WEEKEND FINDS.** Favorite new restaurant? Shopping street? Email your suggestions to the weekend guide editor at [wgeditor@sunset.com](mailto:wgeditor@sunset.com)