

NAPA

WINE, FOOD AND CONVERSATION FROM NAPA VALLEY VINTNERS

A WORLD OF GOOD

How Napa Valley's winemakers have made an impact on the community—and promise to do so for years to come

A Proud Heritage

GENERATIONS OF ITALIAN FAMILIES
PASS ON TRADITIONS

Taste the Towns

AN INSIDE LOOK AT WHERE TO WINE,
DINE AND STAY

Ag Preserve

PROTECTING NAPA VALLEY'S
AGRICULTURAL LANDS

J.P.Morgan

J.P. Morgan is proud to play
a role in promoting, protecting
and enhancing Napa Valley.

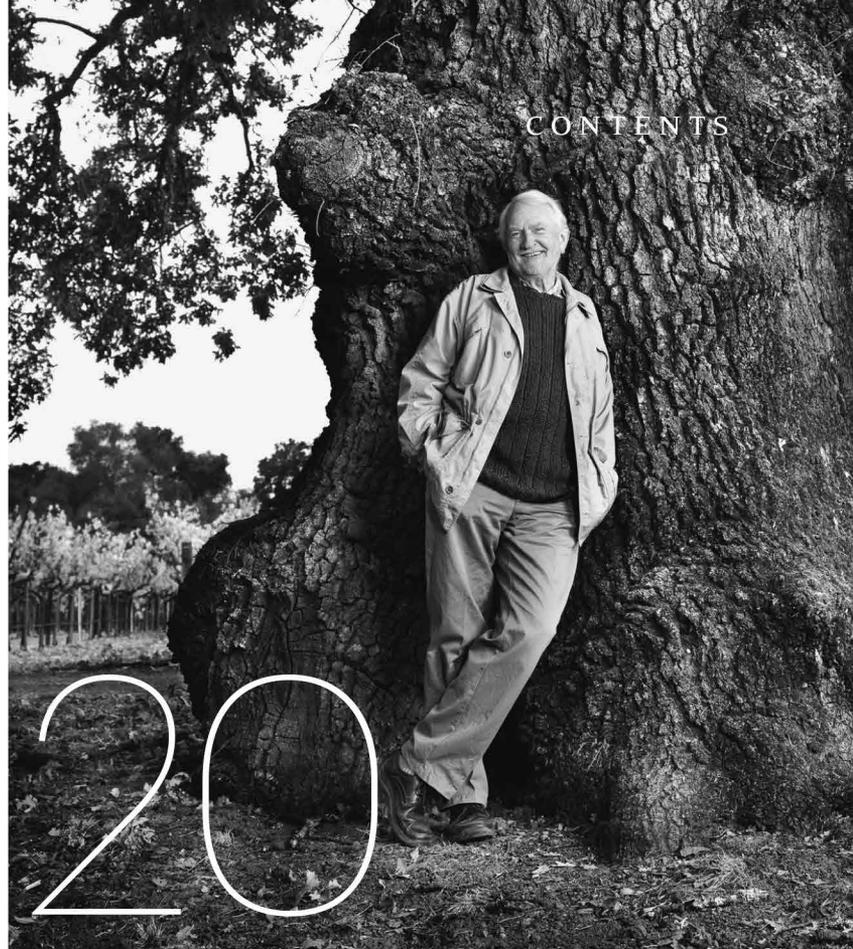


FEATURES

16 CELEBRATING OUR ITALIAN HERITAGE
Four longtime winemaking families bring a taste of Italy to Napa Valley.

20 THE NAPA VALLEY AG PRESERVE
Protecting agriculture as the “best and highest use” of the land.

24 TASTE THE TOWNS
Where to wine, dine and stay in four of Napa Valley’s iconic towns.



DEPARTMENTS

5 PLAN YOUR VISIT
Explore three unique Napa Valley experiences.

6 2014 VINTAGE
Quality and depth of flavor characterize this growing season.

7 VINTAGE RESOURCES
Acquire and enjoy 2014 wines now with our Open The Cellar sale.

8 COLLECTIVE NAPA VALLEY
Auction Weekend 2024 continues a long tradition of generosity.

10 CULTURE
Connections between winemaking and the culinary arts elevate both crafts.

12 CELLAR MASTERS
Meet some of the unsung heroes in winemaking.

15 GLOBAL INFLUENCES
A timeline of international contributions to a rich winemaking continuum.

26 VARIETY SPOTLIGHT
Get to know small but mighty Syrah.

28 WINE & FOOD PAIRINGS
Ben and Ali Koenig of Heritage Eats focus on world flavors—and community.

30 MEET OUR VINTNERS
Harvest interns share what they learned about the wine industry.

32 WHAT SOMMS ARE SAYING
International sommeliers on why they recommend Napa Valley wines.



NAPA VALLEY

NAPA MAGAZINE

Fall/Winter 2024

Issue #18

Produced by | DCP

CONTACT US

Napa Valley Vintners

P.O. Box 141

St. Helena, CA 94574

707.963.3388

nvv@napavintners.com



@NapaVintners



napa valley vintners

NAPA magazine is published by

Napa Valley Vintners. ©2024

All rights reserved.



CHARLES KRUG
Charles Krug
Trendelburg, Germany
(Prussia)

**FREDERICK & JACOB
BERINGER**
Beringer Vineyards
Mainz, Germany

JOHN HENRY FISHER
Mayacamas Vineyards
Germany

VERONICA WANG
Silenus Winery
Zhengzhou, China

ANDRÉ TCHELISTCHEFF
Beaulieu Vineyard (BV)
Moscow, Russia

JACOB SCHRAM
Schramsberg Vineyards
Pfeddersheim, Germany

KENZO TSUJIMOTO
Kenzo Estate Winery
Nara, Japan

**CESARE & ROSA
MONDAVI**
Charles Krug
Sassoferrato, Italy

HI SANG LEE
Dana Estates
South Korea

**DARIOUSH
KHALEDI**
Darioush
Iran

RAJ PATEL
PATEL - Napa Valley
Gujarat, India

FALL/WINTER 2024

What is it about Napa Valley that draws people from all over the world to put roots down here? What international and national influences do they carry with them? And most importantly, how do these points of connection bring people together to create something extraordinary? In this issue, we share stories of the people who have contributed to the success of Napa Valley and how those contributions have led to an ever-evolving community, with the past nurturing the future.

NAPA VALLEY VINTNERS

MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

We asked this issue's writers what they enjoyed most about researching and writing their stories. Here's what they said.



“The symbiotic connection between food and wine, chefs and winemakers in Napa Valley is one where the whole is so much greater than the sum of its parts. These overlapping cultures place craftsmanship at the heart of what they do as they inspire and challenge each other in a place they call home.”

—CATE CONNIFF (“AN EVOLVING CONFLUENCE OF CRAFTSMANSHIP,” PAGE 10) IS A FREELANCE WRITER AND EDITOR FOR NAPA MAGAZINE. BOSTON, MA



“Being of Italian descent, I loved talking with some of the Italian families in Napa Valley for this issue. What stood out: Italians, by their nature, work hard and place gathering at the table with family and friends, with food and wine at hand, as a core part of their lives.”

—MATT VILLANO (“CELEBRATING OUR ITALIAN HERITAGE,” PAGE 16) IS A WRITER AND EDITOR. HEALDSBURG, CA



“The Napa Valley community is like no other—I’ve known this from residing and working in the valley for many years. However, interviewing those that contribute to Collective Napa Valley efforts deepened my level of admiration even further. Napa’s vintners are truly so passionate and generous.”

—RAQUEL ROYERS (“A TRADITION OF GENEROSITY,” PAGE 8) IS A CONTENT CREATOR AND OWNER OF WATCH ME SIP. WINDSOR, CA



“I never thought much about cellar masters, other than Dom Perignon. I was stunned at the amount of complexity the cellar master role entails and how they’re uniquely positioned to innovate across the winemaking process. The cellar master is the unsung hero of winemaking.”

—MARIA C. HUNT (“THE UNSUNG HEROES OF NAPA VALLEY,” PAGE 12) IS A CALIFORNIA-BASED BRAND CONTENT STRATEGIST, AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST WHO EXPLORES CULTURAL STORIES AROUND DRINKS, FOOD, WELLNESS AND DESIGN. OAKLAND, CA



“I’ve always known how important the Ag Preserve is to Napa Valley’s agricultural roots and open spaces, but digging deeper into its origins and the ways in which it continues to protect America’s most iconic winegrowing region was incredibly illuminating.”

—BRIAN FREEDMAN (“THE NAPA VALLEY AG PRESERVE,” PAGE 20) CONTRIBUTES TO *FOOD & WINE DIGITAL*, *FORBES.COM*, *WHISKY ADVOCATE* AND MORE. HIS FIRST BOOK, *CRUSHED: HOW A CHANGING CLIMATE IS ALTERING THE WAY WE DRINK*, WAS PUBLISHED IN 2022. HAVERFORD, PA



“Don’t misinterpret the relatively small number of Syrah vineyards in Napa Valley as an indicator of a lack of passion. Syrah has a fervent following among several producers and the wines they’re making are something special.”

—WANDA MANN (“SMALL BUT MIGHTY,” PAGE 26) IS THE EAST COAST EDITOR OF *THE SOMM JOURNAL* AND NEW YORK EDITOR OF *THE TASTING PANEL*. NEW YORK, NY



“It was fascinating to hear from sommeliers exactly why Napa Valley resonates with so many international wine lovers. It’s clear to me that Napa wines tell a story of camaraderie, innovation and passion that continues to capture hearts (and palates) around the globe.”

—AIDEN CARROLL (“WHAT SOMMS ARE SAYING,” PAGE 32) IS A FREELANCE WINE WRITER AND DATA JOURNALIST. LONDON, ENGLAND

NAPA VALLEY in a Whole NEW LENS

EXPERIENCE THE MANY PLEASURES OF
THIS MULTIFACETED REGION

There's something about being actively engaged with a new experience that lifts us up to the wonders of the world—and ourselves. In our latest winery trip planner, we've outlined a few experiences that make the perfect day trip to the multifaceted Napa Valley.

Join a Master Falconer at Bouchaine Vineyards for an immersion into the use of falcons as a sustainable approach to vineyard management.

Experience the hillside landscape of Napa Valley with Seavey Vineyard's Forest Walk as you are led by co-owner Fred Seavey through 150 acres of ancient oak woodlands and surrounding vineyards.

Immerse yourself in the synergy of food and wine with a Chef's Table Experience at J.H. Wheeler, which includes a tour of their estate gardens followed by preparation of a four-course lunch that brings the garden to the table.

And, yes. There is wine served at all three of these nontraditional experiences.



Scan this code to learn more about Napa Valley experiences.

Clockwise from top left: Views from a Forest Walk at Seavey Vineyard; J.H. Wheeler's garden; up close with a falcon at Bouchaine Vineyards.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SEAVEY VINEYARD; SARAH ANNE RISK; AGENCY MOANALANI JEFFREY

ABUNDANCE AND EXCELLENCE: NAPA VALLEY 2014 VINTAGE

If you ask a vintner, they describe the 2014 vintage as an excellent season, noting perfect weather, abundant crops and good fortune, leading to wines with excellent quality and depth of flavor. Napa Valley wines are known for their age-worthiness, in particular red wines and, even more particularly, Cabernet Sauvignon. Now is a great time to enjoy your cellared wines and they can still show well for many years.

“

“NAPA VALLEY’S 2014 VINTAGE IS ONE OF ITS BEST YEARS
IN THE LAST TWO DECADES.” —James Suckling, May 2017



HOW DID THE 2014 NAPA VALLEY WEATHER CONDITIONS AFFECT THE CABERNET SAUVIGNON FRUIT?

“A warm spring was followed by a long, even growing season with nary a day over 100 degrees the entire summer and fall. The resulting flavor profile leaned toward the plum and blackberry end of the Cabernet fruit spectrum, while still retaining a red cherry core. The complexity is kaleidoscopic.”

—Cathy Corison, Owner, Winemaker and Vineyard Manager, Corison Winery



WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO SEE AND TASTE FROM A 2014 NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON RIGHT NOW?

“These wines are 10 years old, so you will see a tanned leather color in the glass. The taste will have probably taken on a more earthy tone with notes of nuttiness and tobacco, with tannins that have rounded out over time. The wine will be supple, round and have plenty of volume.”

—Michael Beaulac, Director of Winemaking, Merus



Scan this code to learn more about the Open The Cellar sale.

▶ Taste these wines for yourself! Acquire 2014 Napa Valley wines in our upcoming Open The Cellar sale, happening October 14–21, 2024, at openthecellar.com.

Grape harvest at Myriad Cellars.

YOUR VINTAGE GUIDE

EXPLORE THE BREADTH OF NAPA VALLEY'S VINTAGES

Throughout a winemaker's career, they have on average only 20 vintages—in other words, opportunities—to make wine. Each of those years is a different journey from start to finish.

Vintages on a wine bottle reflect the specific set of circumstances that take place during the year. It may be warmer or cooler, rain may come early or late, the growing season may be shorter or longer. Each of these variances has a nuanced impact on the wine. This is one of the best parts for winemakers, as they thrive on the excitement and challenge of vintage variations.



Scan this code to learn more about Napa Valley vintages.

VINTAGE INSIGHTS AT HARVESTNAPA.COM

1. Discover the intricacies of a library wine with vintage recaps, where the history and distinctive characteristics of each year are tracked.
2. Watch SommTV's annual "Napa Valley Vintage Report"—a discussion among winemakers about the vintage—and vintage videos with wine critics and industry professionals such as Karen MacNeil and Amanda McCrossin.
3. Follow the upcoming growing season through near-weekly videos covering everything from the dormant period of a vine's life cycle to veraison, which signifies the ripening of grapes and the lead-up to harvest.



Barrel Auction guests taste one-of-a-kind wines from the barrel before making their bids.

A Tradition of Generosity

COLLECTIVE NAPA VALLEY IS PART OF A LONG HISTORY OF PHILANTHROPY IN NAPA VALLEY • BY RAQUEL ROYERS

Napa Valley, the tradition of generosity runs as deep as the wine. It's a community that puts as much into giving back as it does to growing grapes and making wine.

The spirit of giving is evident through the long-running and highly anticipated Auction Weekend, a community endeavor born in 1981 through a shared desire to give back.

Leading the charge, Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) has been an enduring philanthropic group within the Napa Valley community. From the start, the mission of the organization has been to “promote, protect and enhance Napa Valley.” This mission embodies why visionary leaders created an

event that would not only raise funds for a network of nonprofit partners but would also bring together and truly embody what Napa Valley is all about: community.

Auction Weekend—a series of celebrations including Barrel Auction and Auction Napa Valley—brings together vintners, collectors and wine enthusiasts from around the world for unparalleled wine experiences and lively bidding. What began as a modest fundraiser

evolved into one of the most prestigious wine auctions in the world. Since its inception, NVV has invested more than \$230 million in local healthcare, youth and education programs.

Evolving to keep the efforts going beyond Auction Weekend, NVV created Collective Napa Valley—a philanthropic program offering multiple opportunities for guests to get involved throughout the year. Here, the motto of “great wines, good causes” rings true.

Looking back at 40 years of giving, one can see the significant impact that NVV’s philanthropy has had on the community. One such example is the deep investment made in OLE Health (now known as CommuniCare+OLE), the only nonprofit community health center serving Napa County. In all, NVV’s support of OLE totals more than \$60 million. This has had a considerable impact on the community, as one in four Napa Valley residents rely on these services each year.

“NVV was a huge part of the history of our organization, helping us close funding gaps early in our history to remain operational and later helping us to establish a permanent home for our work in Napa. With the late John Shafer [founder of Shafer Vineyards], they spurred efforts to build our first permanent health center, the Napa Valley Vintners North Napa Campus on Pear Tree Lane, which remains our busiest health center today,” notes Alicia Hardy, CEO of CommuniCare+OLE.

The 2024 Auction Weekend raised \$4.8 million, with proceeds directed to youth mental health. Monies given will help ensure every school-age child in Napa County has access to affordable, quality mental health services and will provide caregivers tools to recognize mental health issues in children for early intervention.

“The generosity of the wineries in Napa Valley knows no bounds,” says Cyril Chappellet, CEO and chairman of Chappellet Vineyard. “We have a level of giving that is unrivaled.”

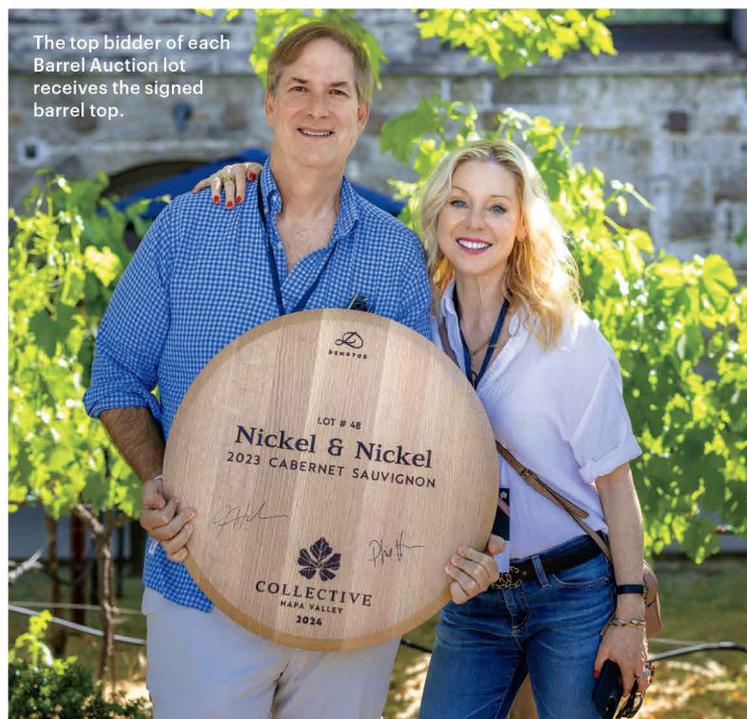


If you’ve spent any time in Napa Valley, you’ve likely felt this generosity of spirit coupled with its welcoming hospitality. And while many would say the heart of Napa Valley is the wine, the true essence is its people.

“Napa is a small community with a big heart. We believe in taking care of this special place with the same devotion we give to our vines and our wines,” says Donna J. Walker, proprietor and owner of Pulido~Walker Estate Vineyard and Winery. “We are so thankful that wine enthusiasts from around the world share our love of Napa Valley and come together to generously support our community.”

“THE GENEROSITY OF THE WINERIES IN NAPA VALLEY KNOWS NO BOUNDS. WE HAVE A LEVEL OF GIVING THAT IS UNRIVALED.”

—CYRIL CHAPPELLET, CEO AND CHAIRMAN, CHAPPELLET VINEYARD



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ALEXANDER RUBIN; CHESTER COOLEY (2)

An Evolving Confluence of Craftsmanship

HOW SYNERGY BETWEEN FOOD AND WINE ELEVATES BOTH ARTS • BY CATE CONNIFF

Whether it's winemaking or the culinary arts, Napa Valley is known for its craftsmanship, drawing people who seek inspiration and camaraderie among fellow artisans.

It takes a dedication to craft, combined with skills and experience to take raw materials and turn them into something of substance. These people who nurture the vineyards and farms, taking up tools of the trade in cellars and kitchens, help us savor life just a bit more.

SETTING THE STAGE

While the lineage goes back much further, certainly the launch of both the Culinary Institute of America's (CIA) Greystone campus and Thomas

Keller's French Laundry in the mid-'90s brought new synergies between wine and food in Napa Valley to a larger stage.

Since then, the connections between those who make wine and the people who cook food have only deepened by being close to the source of their craft, be it a nearby farm where they forage, the Pacific for fresh seafood or, of course, the grapes—all are sources of inspiration by which they ply their craft and find community.

The culinary program at Louis M. Martini Winery is designed to enhance tasting experiences.



LOUIS M. MARTINI WINERY



Top: Chef Christopher Kostow's menus include foraged ingredients and produce from his farm. Right: PRESS Chef Philip Tessier brings excellence and craftsmanship to both fine dining and more casual fare.



ARTISANS OF AGRICULTURE

“There is a borderless way that we live and work among agriculture,” notes Samantha Rudd, owner of both Rudd Estate winery and PRESS restaurant. “While both our wines and food can be elevated and world-class, it all starts with farming; farming to wine, farming to food.”

Chef Christopher Kostow, known for earning three stars at the former Restaurant at Meadowood, agrees. Kostow has found that growing his own produce, foraging freely and weaving wine through his menus provides a narrative of Napa Valley’s bounty. “I believe that those of us who work with food, who work with wine in Napa Valley are all members of the same artisan class,” says Kostow. “We are the makers, using what surrounds us through the seasons to tell a story on the plate and in a glass.”

A SENSE OF PLACE

Chefs creating culinary programs at the valley’s wineries are a breed of craftspeople looking to tease out the nuances of a particular wine.

Born and raised in Napa Valley, Executive Chef Aaron Meneghelli, who helms the culinary program at Louis M. Martini Winery, is one of these people. Having earned his culinary chops with Napa Valley’s wines in mind at Robert Mondavi Winery and then a stellar roster of Napa Valley restaurants, Chef Meneghelli has deeply rooted skills in bringing various vineyard terroirs to the forefront in his culinary offerings.

“The balance on a plate allows the balance in our wines to really show up,” says Meneghelli, “revealing flavors that might otherwise be harder to discover and diving deeper into the experience of what a wine can be.”

SHIFTING SENSIBILITIES

There is no shortage of Michelin stars awarded to Napa Valley restaurants for their food and wine programs. (PRESS restaurant has one and Chef Kostow received several while at the Restaurant at Meadowood.) Many of these starred establishments have also delved into projects of a more casual vibe with the same attention to craftsmanship.

Chef Kostow and his wife, Martina, opened The Charter Oak restaurant in 2017 with its communal tables and rustic-refined approach to food,

much of it from the restaurant’s nearby organic farm. Loveski Deli, a riff on a Jewish delicatessen, opened in 2021 at Napa’s Oxbow Public Market.

And the team at PRESS, with its first star earned in 2023 under the tutelage of Chef Philip Tessier, is opening Under-Study, a fun marketplace concept next door to the restaurant.

“I thought it would be neat to have a Spanish-style market, packed shoulder to shoulder at long counters with charcuterie, a butchery, prepared foods and pop-ups from area food vendors,” says Tessier. “We’re creating something for the community and visitors where we can bring our same standards to play in a looser experience.”

HARD WORK AND GLIMMERS OF JOY

So, what does it take to stay the course in the cultures of food and wine in Napa Valley?

“You need to have the drive to sustain your passion when cooking food or making wine here,” responds Meneghelli. “There is a level of competitiveness *and* sportsmanship in our community that pushes us to always stay on our toes while supporting each other along the way.”

And, it might be added, the effort requires a certain grit and resilience.

“There is so much joy in what we do here,” muses Rudd. “Including the really, really hard parts of the craft.”

The Unsung Heroes of Napa Valley

CELLAR MASTERS SHARE INSIDE STORIES FROM THEIR ALL-IMPORTANT ROLES

— BY MARIA C. HUNT —



Cellar masters are an integral part of the winemaking process.

When it comes to crafting wine in Napa Valley, there are scores of unseen people who contribute to a successful vintage. And behind every successful winemaker and winery, there's a cellar master ensuring that every detail of the winemaker's vision is realized.

To use a baseball analogy, a utility player is someone skilled at a little bit of everything. That's an apt metaphor for a cellar master. They're the ultimate winery insider, with their hands on everything from the intricacies of pressing fruit to the science of fermentation and from the alchemy of barrel aging to the timing of final bottling—along with keeping everyone safe.

Across Napa Valley, every cellar master's job is different depending on the winery's size and the wines they make. It's an ideal job for people who like variety and growth, since the cellar master does so many things and there are various ways to advance through the ranks.

Some Napa Valley cellar masters reveal what makes their role one of the most fulfilling jobs in the wine industry.



Cakebread Cellars
cellar master
James Sconzo.

AN INSPIRING ROLE

James Sconzo, 33, majored in English, but after his first harvest he dreamed of becoming a cellar master. “I fell in love with the pace and the nuances,” says Sconzo, cellar master at Cakebread Cellars in Rutherford. “I enjoy the fact that I can get my hands dirty and there’s hard work involved.”

Sconzo meets daily with the winemakers and then coordinates his cellar supervisors to ensure tasks get carried out by the year-round staff of 12. “The winemakers make stylistic decisions and I coordinate the workflow,” he says.

Sconzo also juggles hiring interns and seasonal staff, maintaining equipment and liaising with environmental agencies. But his favorite part of the role is keeping the team inspired. He does it by mixing jobs like cleaning and topping off barrels with executing more complex wine-making processes. Lately, he’s trained them on new resource-saving technology, including cleaning tanks with UV light instead of water and using high solids and crossflow filters instead of disposable pads to clarify the wine and remove bacteria.

“I try to help make sure that people are finding fulfillment and seeing a forward direction in the work we do here,” he says, whether they’re seeking a career or just a steady paycheck. He uses humor and storytelling about how the team made it through demanding seasons to keep everyone’s spirits up. “At the end of the day, there’s great satisfaction in pouring a glass of wine your hands went into making and knowing what we had to do to get that,” Sconzo says.

UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITIES

Harvest can be a challenging time of the year for any winery. But it also can present unexpected opportunities to innovate. In 2022, Joel Guzman, the 38-year-old cellar master at Benessere, a boutique winery in St. Helena, recalls the Aglianico grapes were so heavy that they leaked a lot of juice on the way to the press. “I started collecting the juice and at the end of the day I had 15 gallons,” says Guzman. He fermented it into a dry rosé with notes of strawberry and cherry, then asked winemaker Matt Reid to taste it. Reid liked the wine so much that in 2023, they picked Aglianico early to specifically make another rosé.

Guzman works with a small team of two other people to bring in 10 different grapes, from Aglianico to Zinfandel. Sometimes a few varieties ripen at the same time and getting stressed out isn’t an option. “When you have five or six different grapes coming in, you may not have available tanks and you have to act right away,” Guzman says. “You ask your brain to work a little bit harder and you have to be patient and positive.”

He’s skilled at thinking ahead, having part of the team prepare tanks, while others weigh fruit and remove leaves and shriveled grapes to get the fruit ready for the next step. The team warms up each tank before adding yeast to start the fermentation process, then watches very carefully to make sure the temperature doesn’t get hot enough to kill the yeast. Guzman uses hot and cold valves to manually set tank temperatures to accommodate this high-wire act, an expertise born from years of experience.



Joel Guzman, cellar
master at Benessere.

Carlos Torres, cellar master at Ehlers Estate.



SKILLS AND CURIOSITY

While being a cellar master is a great way to learn the wine-making business, for some it's a culmination of a long career filled with many roles that required learning needed skills.

Carlos Torres, 46, the cellar master at Ehlers Estate, never planned to move to the U.S. He was happy in Guanajuato, Mexico, working in a pasta factory. But his brother-in-law found a job in Napa Valley and offered to help him find work here. Torres found he loved working in vineyards, pruning and tying vines. He eventually moved into the cellar, learning everything from doing pump-overs and cleaning tanks to racking barrels and bottling during his 17-year tenure.

When winemaker Adam Casto joined Ehlers in 2023, he saw that Torres had the skills and curiosity to be a successful cellar master.

The two men work closely as Torres expands his flavor vocabulary, technical skills and knowledge of fermentation and blending. He's learning how to measure the progress of malolactic fermentation and the differences between the subtle flavors imparted by a Bel Air wine barrel versus one made by Seguin Moreau. "I love everything, but doing the blends with the winemaker is the culmination of the job and it's really satisfying to see the winemaker's point of view realized in a vintage," Torres says.

He reflects on how different his life is compared to when he worked at the pasta factory. "Before I was told what to do and how to do it," he says. "Now I'm learning a new way of working where I have to think about things and have an opinion."

One of the best perks of his cellar master role is living on the Ehlers vineyard property with his family. The veranda of their white farmhouse is filled with flowers and the sounds of their pet finches and canaries. "It's very beautiful and tranquil," Torres says. "I'm very content to be here."

HONING THE SENSES

While cellar masters are skilled in using instruments like a meter to measure wine pH or a hydrometer to determine density, they also need to use their sense of smell to know how wines are developing. Just a single off aroma can be a clue that a fermentation is stuck and an undesirable bacteria is taking over. "Your nose will tell you all of that," says Addie Dearden, 26, who was the cellar master and production enologist at Crocker & Starr Wines in St. Helena until July 2024. A healthy fermentation smells vibrant and yeasty, while a troubled one reminds her of a pork and chive dumpling with soy sauce. She always follows up with a chemical analysis to confirm what she's smelling.

After graduating from the Viticulture and Enology program at U.C. Davis, Dearden wanted to join a small winery where she could be part of the entire operation. At Crocker & Starr, she worked alongside winemaker Julie Robertson and founding winemaker and owner Pamela Starr (herself a former cellar master) to manage a wine's progression from grape to barrel to bottle. Dearden also hired interns, received shipments and sat in on marketing and financial meetings.

"It's like drinking out of a firehose but it was a good way to learn," says Dearden. "Being an enologist and cellar master does set you on a good path for a winemaking role, so I made it my goal to be as well-rounded as possible."

Addie Dearden.



FROM TOP: ISREAL VELENCIA; ALEXANDER RUBIN

WHEN CULTURES MINGLE

Today, Napa Valley boasts some of the best and the brightest wine professionals from around the country and across the globe. But the migration to this fertile grape-growing region has a long history. Here are a few highlights of how people followed a North Star to Napa Valley and their contributions to a rich winemaking continuum.

1838:

The history of Napa Valley's wine industry begins with George C. Yount, a Mexican citizen of European origin, who planted Napa Valley's first vinifera vineyard.

1861:

Charles Krug, who had emigrated from Prussia (now part of Germany), founded Napa Valley's first bonded winery.

LATE 1800s:

A flood of European immigrants played foundational roles in Napa Valley's fledgling wine industry. The first wave was dominated largely by those of Germanic origin—including Jacob Schram (Schramsberg Vineyards*), John Henry Fischer (Mayacamas Vineyards*) and Frederick and Jacob Beringer (Beringer Vineyards*)—though Swiss, Italian, Finnish and French immigrants would go on to play equally important parts.

1938:

Georges de Latour, the owner of Beaulieu Vineyard, set off to Paris in search of a winemaker well-versed in chemistry to solve issues of quality winemaking in the cellar. He returned with André Tchelistcheff, a Russian émigré who had studied enology at the Pasteur Institute. Tchelistcheff went on to elevate nearly the entire Napa Valley wine industry with his expertise.

1966:

Robert Mondavi (a second-generation immigrant) opened his eponymous winery, which is heralded by many as the starting point of Napa Valley's modern history. Mondavi was the first to rely heavily on stainless steel tanks for fermentation (a new technology at the time).

1979:

Opus One launched, marking the valley's first Napa/Bordeaux collaboration and reinforcing the Judgment of Paris' message: Napa Valley wines truly could compete with the world's best.

Present Day:

Currently, the ties between Napa Valley and Bordeaux are stronger than ever, with multiple local wineries having either been purchased (Flora Springs Winery & Vineyards) or established (Dominus Estate) by prominent Bordelais. The Champenois have also long been investing in Napa and surrounding areas, with Chandon, Mumm Napa and recently Diamond Creek Vineyards all boasting French ownership. Italian (Antinori Napa Valley) and Spanish (Artesa Vineyards & Winery) outposts can also be found. In short, Napa Valley's renown is underscored by the fact that the top wineries of the world have established businesses here.

Heritage in ownership is expanding. Some notable wineries include Kenzo Estate (Japanese), Lithology (Argentinian), Dana Estates (South Korean), Mi Sueño Winery (Mexican), Silenus Winery (Chinese), Darioush (Iranian) and PATEL - Napa Valley (Indian), among others.

**Current winery name*

Celebrating [OUR] Italian Heritage

Four longtime local families represent the best of Italy ... and Napa Valley

—
BY MATT VILLANO



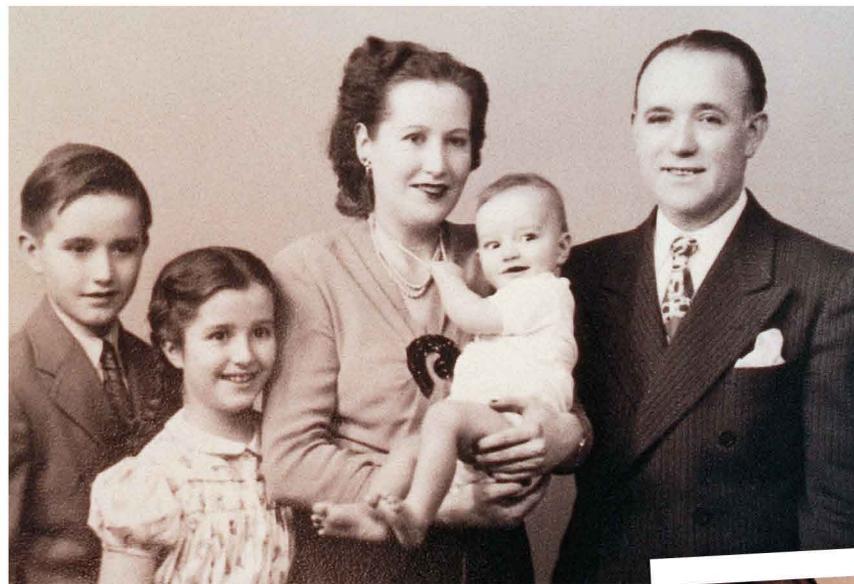
Sutter Home Winery (pictured here in 1920) closed during Prohibition; the Trinchero family reopened the winery in 1948.

➤➤ *Italian culture and the Napa Valley lifestyle have a lot in common. Both celebrate great wine and good food. Both value family. Both thrive in a Mediterranean climate.*

Italian families in Napa Valley have demonstrated a commitment to nurturing the land and the vines, ensuring that their legacy of quality and tradition is passed down to future generations. This approach has contributed to the sustained excellence and reputation of Napa Valley as a premier wine-producing region.

October is Italian-American Heritage Month, which makes it a perfect time to spotlight four Italian families, the wineries they created and why they chose to settle in Napa.

[*Trincher Family Estates*]



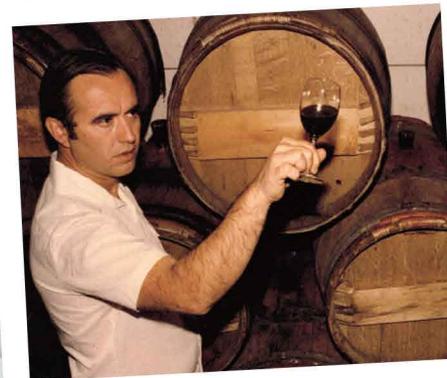
Left: Mary and Mario Trincherio with their children in the 1940s. Below: Second-generation vintner Bob Trincherio.

Mario Trincherio emigrated from Italy in 1927 and began the Trincherio family journey into the wine business 20 years later, after leaving New York City to find a better life in Napa Valley. Another Mario, grandson to the original, runs the company today as principal and vice chairman of the board.

Trincherio says the family's appreciation of long-term relationships has been a key to evolution over the years.

"Relationships matter to us and that has built a reputation for integrity that attracts great team members and great partners," he says. "While we have our differences of opinions and experiences within our own family, we all make an effort to sit down over good food and wine to connect and appreciate how lucky we are to be in this amazing business together as a family."

Trincherio adds that Napa wineries all seem to look out for each other. "It's a real sense of community," he says. "Despite being competitors, many wineries collaborate and support each other, recognizing that a rising tide lifts all ships."

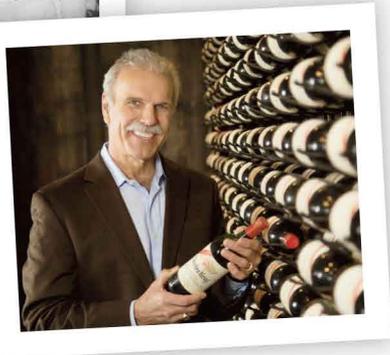
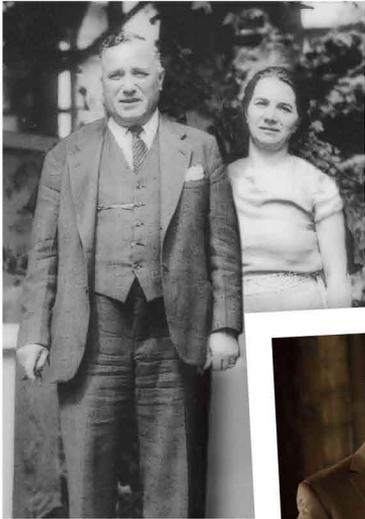


Left: Mario Trincherio is part of the third Trincherio generation.

"Relationships matter to us and that has built a reputation for integrity that attracts great team members and great partners."

—MARIO TRINCHERO, PRINCIPAL AND VICE CHAIRMAN, TRINCHERO FAMILY ESTATES

Right: Founder Charles Krug. Below: Cesare and Rosa Mondavi bought Charles Krug winery in 1943.



Right: Peter Mondavi Jr.

[Charles Krug]

Cesare and Rosa Mondavi purchased this St. Helena winery in 1943, roughly 80 years after Charles Krug started it as Napa’s first bonded winery. Today it is owned by the Peter Mondavi Sr. family.

For Peter Mondavi Jr., third-generation co-proprietor, everything about his family’s Italian heritage revolves around the table.

His father, Peter Mondavi Sr., wanted to make wines meant to drink at dinner. “These wines are elegant and balanced, specifically made to have with a meal,” the younger Peter Mondavi says.

He adds that his family still tries to have dinner together every night—another Italian tradition. “We talk about the family, the wine business, the winery and about food,” he says. “That’s a tradition from the Old World that is very strong in our family.”

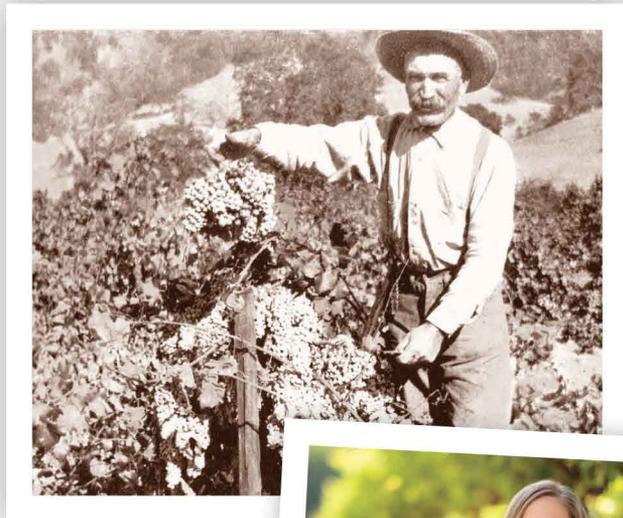
[Nichelini Family Winery]

This St. Helena winery, founded in 1890, is the oldest family-owned winery in the Napa Valley. Anton and Caterina Nichelini were Italian-Swiss immigrants who started the winery and went on to have 12 children.

Winemaker Aimee Sunseri is the current owner, representing the fifth generation. Sunseri credits her family’s Italian heritage with a welcoming attitude that has endured.

“I can’t tell you how many times I’ve heard the same story from multiple people about how they visited our winery 40 years ago and Jimmy Nick—the third winemaker for our family—would wave down people passing by the winery,” she says. “He’d offer them some wine to taste and then before you know it, they were invited to a family dinner.”

Sunseri notes that some of the other lessons she’s learned from her Italian ancestors include never giving up, working with very little to make something great and sticking together even when you don’t always agree.



Top: Anton Nichelini founded his winery in 1890. Right: Fifth-generation winemaker and current Nichelini Family Winery owner Aimee Sunseri.



[Battuello Vineyards]

Below: Craig Battuello is part of the third generation.



Left: A young Dave Battuello with his dad, Craig, and grandfather Dominic.



Right: Dave Battuello, his wife, Torey, and their children.

This St. Helena winery was founded in 1909 by Matteo Battuello and his wife, Serafina, who immigrated to California from Northern Italy. CEO and Vineyard Manager Dave Battuello, who represents the fourth generation, runs the operation today.

Battuello says his family's heritage has instilled in him a deep appreciation for the values of hard work, family and tradition.

"These principles guide every aspect of our vineyard's operations, from the meticulous care of the vines to the crafting of our wines," he says.

Looking back, Battuello remembers his grandfather Dominic tapping on his bedroom window in the mornings when he wasn't in school, then having Dave spend the entire day working to complete a task at hand. "He taught me the importance of seeing a job through to the end, no matter how long it took," says Battuello.

"These principles [hard work, family and tradition] guide every aspect of our vineyard's operations, from the meticulous care of the vines to the crafting of our wines." —DAVE BATTUELLO, CEO AND VINEYARD MANAGER, BATTUELLO VINEYARDS

PROTECTING AGRICULTURE AS THE “BEST AND HIGHEST USE”
OF LAND IN NAPA VALLEY

THE NAPA VALLEY AG PRESERVE

BY BRIAN FREEDMAN

N

o one could have known it at the time, but the formal adoption of the Napa Valley Agriculture Preserve in 1968 was one of the key factors in allowing this beloved region to become world renowned for winegrowing.

What on the surface looked like a novel set of citizen-determined zoning ordinances has, for more than half a century, saved some of the finest vineyard land in America, while preserving

the open space and natural beauty associated with other national treasures.

Contrary to how it may seem today, Napa Valley’s role as America’s preeminent winegrowing region, and as a bastion of agriculture at the highest level, wasn’t always a foregone conclusion. It took the foresight, bravery and tireless work of a generation of Napa visionaries in the 1960s to set the stage,

and the diligence and dedication of subsequent generations, to keep Napa Valley’s vineyard vistas going the way of the Joni Mitchell song lyrics to “pave paradise to put up a parking lot.”

THE GREATEST NAPA VALLEY GENERATION

In the 1950s, Santa Clara was one of the top agricultural counties in the Bay Area. “And then, boom: It’s just like somebody flipped a switch and the subdivisions and the shopping centers and the office parks” started going up, explains Hugh Davies, President of Schramsberg Vineyards.

As the son of the late Jack and Jamie Davies and the president of the board of the Jack. L. Davies Napa Valley Agricultural Land Preservation Fund (JLD Ag Fund), Davies is one of many second- and third-generation vintners working to protect Napa Valley and to keep the vision of their parents and grandparents alive.

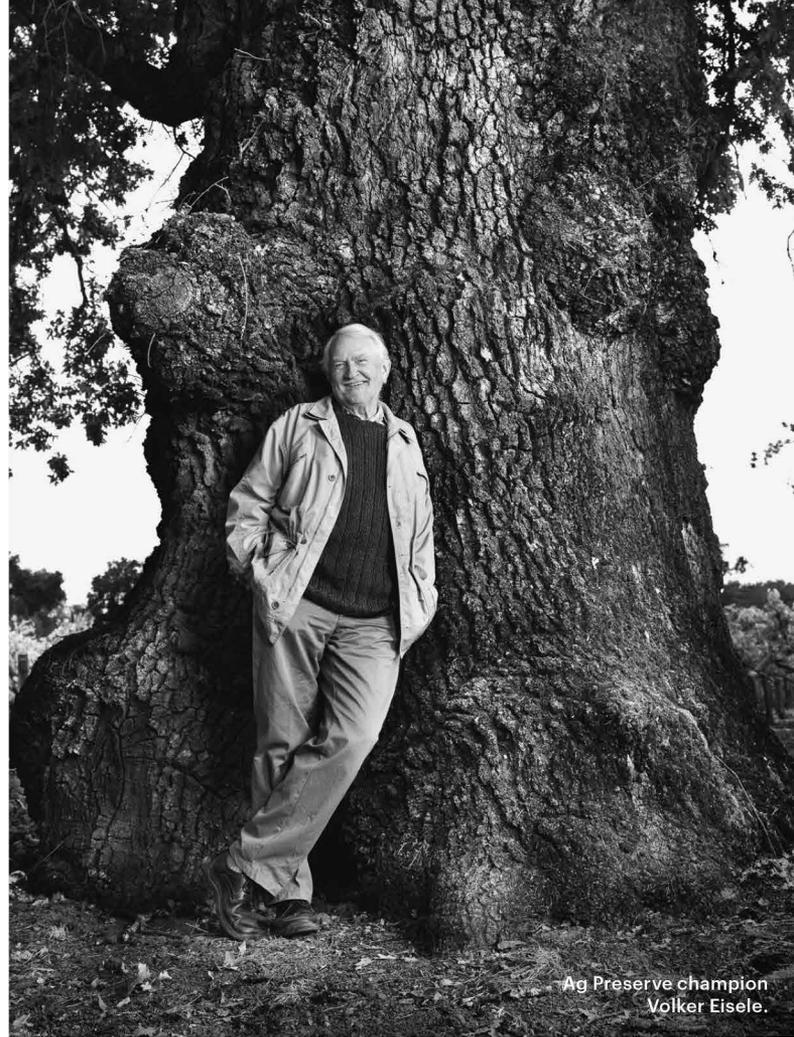


“There were enough people in Napa Valley in the mid-’60s, including my father, who had seen what could be overdeveloped so quickly. This drove them to come up with a hard-won plan, ultimately the Napa Valley Ag Preserve.”

—HUGH DAVIES, PRESIDENT, SCHRAMSBERG VINEYARDS



Landmark regulations preserve lands for agricultural use.



Ag Preserve champion
Volker Eisele.



Visionary efforts in the 1960s helped Napa Valley become the outstanding winegrowing region it is today.

“There were enough people in Napa Valley in the mid-’60s, including my father, who had seen what could be overdeveloped so quickly. This drove them to come up with a hard-won plan, ultimately the Napa Valley Ag Preserve, recognizing that Napa Valley had unique properties for growing fine wine grapes,” says Davies.

This landmark set of zoning laws established agriculture and open space as the best and highest use of unincorporated county land from Napa to Calistoga, encompassing the valley floor and foothills. The ordinance dictated that the only commercial activity allowed in these areas was agriculture and set minimum lot sizes that prevented further subdivision of land parcels.

Since its inception when 26,000 acres were protected, not one acre of land in the Ag Preserve has been lost; in fact, it has expanded to more than 32,000 acres.

THE GOOD FIGHT

Passing the Ag Preserve into law wasn’t an easy process. No other legally binding agricultural protection of this kind had ever before been implemented in the United States, and its passage took a massive effort of community education and often fierce debate.

“From what I know ... not everybody liked the idea,” Davies continues. “And there were some really tough meetings where this topic was debated.” But the persistence of legends like Jack Davies, Gene Trefethen, Volker Eisele, Dorothy Erskine, Si and June Foote and many others won out, after more than 55 town hall-style meetings and volunteers going door to door to garner community support.

Ultimately, the Napa County Board of Supervisors passed the nation’s landmark Ag Preserve into law. And with its passing dramatically changing the course of how Napa Valley evolved and in doing so, helped to define American wine culture as we know it today.

AN AMERICAN ORIGINAL

After a successful career helping the Kaiser Corporation, Gene Trefethen wanted to purchase land in Napa Valley with his wife, Katie. The year was 1968 and arguments against the adoption of the proposed Ag Preserve were in full-throated expression. There were serious concerns that passage would depress land values, since commercial development was widely assumed to be the best use of the proposed protected acreage.

But the Trefethens didn’t see it that way. They were so confident in the Ag Preserve’s long-term benefits that they predicated the purchase of what would become Trefethen Family Vineyards on its passage.

“Granddaddy had grown up in the Santa Clara Valley, which was becoming the Silicon Valley, before they came to Napa,” says Hailey Trefethen, the third generation of the family in Napa Valley. “They had a walnut farm in Walnut Creek and realized that they had some of the last walnuts there. So, when he came here, he wanted something that was going to stay in agriculture.”

At the time, no one had any way of knowing that in less than a decade Napa Valley would leap onto the world wine stage—the Judgment of Paris was still eight years away—and there was no assurance that growing grapes would be as profitable as developing the land commercially. “There was one way that you got local people to vote for the measure,” Trefethen continues. “To make their land more valuable with the Ag Preserve. You bet on agriculture, which wasn’t something that people were really doing at the time.”

This seems obvious in hindsight, given today’s skyrocketing value of prime Napa Valley land, but it wasn’t the case when it was being debated. Still, Trefethen took a chance, purchased the land once the Ag Preserve was approved and the rest, as the old cliché goes, is history.



“There was one way that you got local people to vote for the measure, to make their land more valuable with the Ag Preserve. You bet on agriculture, which wasn’t something that people were really doing at the time.”

—HAILEY TREFETHEN, TREFETHEN FAMILY VINEYARDS

“This past year several students were awarded \$20,000 to help with their college education. The goal is that they might come back and be involved in the Napa farming community.”

—RICH SALVESTRIN, OWNER AND DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, SALVESTRIN



AN ONGOING PROCESS

The Ag Preserve was voted into effect more than half a century ago, but it’s far from a static relic of that era. Indeed, over the intervening decades, there have been several extensions to it, both in terms of the parcel sizes permitted within its boundaries, as well as the timeframe through which it will be in force. Most famously, a measure was passed overwhelmingly by Napa County residents in 2008 that extended the Agricultural Lands Preservation Initiative for another 50 years, until 2058.

Still, it’s an ongoing effort. Educating younger generations about both the history of how Napa Valley became synonymous with grape growing in America, as well as the importance of nurturing that land far into the future, is a dynamic priority.

Every year, for example, the JLD Ag Fund awards scholarships to high school students who plan on going into agriculture. “This past year,” notes Rich Salvestrin, owner and director of vineyard and winery operations of Salvestrin, third-generation vintner and a board member of the JLD Ag Fund, “several students were awarded \$20,000 to help with their college education.”

The goal, he explains, is that “they might come back and be involved in the Napa farming community.”

Another generational advocate is Christiane Eisele, an emergency room physician who after living in New Orleans moved home to Napa Valley. Her family name is synonymous with Napa Valley wine and her father, Volker Eisele, was instrumental in many land use issues as well as the Ag Preserve. As a JLD Ag Fund board member, she helps raise money and awareness of the need to continually move the needle forward in protecting Napa Valley’s agricultural heritage; there’s even an agriculture-based scholarship in her father’s name at Napa Valley College, a source of immense pride.

Her time away has given her a renewed perspective on the importance of looking deeper than the fame of Napa Valley and focusing on what makes it so special: “This is an agricultural community ... that’s actually what makes the valley so great,” Eisele says.

And that’s worth protecting, which is what the Ag Preserve has done for more than 50 years and will continue to do so for generations to come.

SARAH LANE STUDIOS AND STUDIO TWELVE

PROTECTING NAPA VALLEY’S WATERSHED



Beyond the protection of the valley floor, Napa County also designated a huge area as agriculture, watershed and open space zoning, recognizing the threats of erosion that hillside and valley floor vineyard development could pose to Napa’s watersheds.



In 1991, comprehensive and rigorous conservation ordinances were enacted that regulated hillside development and ensured that vineyards had ample setbacks from streams.

444,000 acres

These ordinances, along with additional conservation easements inspired by the Ag Preserve, have placed 90% of Napa County land under permanent or high levels of protection from development.

Jeff Durham, center, and Joey Wołosz, right, of Gentleman Farmer Bungalow.



TASTE THE TOWNS



Mia Carta.

WHERE TO WINE, DINE AND STAY IN FOUR OF NAPA VALLEY'S ICONIC TOWNS

» NAPA

WINE: Experience Napa's nested appellations at **Mia Carta**, a thoughtfully designed tasting lounge in downtown Napa. Home to a collective of five family-owned and operated small-lot Napa Valley wineries—including **Earthshine Wines** and **McKahn Wines**—the restored space offers wines by the glass and bottle as well as rotating themed offerings.

DINE: **Gentleman Farmer Wines** recently opened their downtown space, **Gentleman Farmer Bungalow**, where owners and husbands **Joey Wołosz** and **Jeff Durham** serve their inspired wines, thoughtfully paired with a multicourse breakfast, lunch or dinner. Check out the unique **Breakfast of Champions** experience, which starts with a guided 5K run along the Napa River.

STAY: Overlooking the Napa River, **River Terrace Inn** is the perfect blend of urban hospitality and serenity, and their ideal location is steps from **Oxbow Public Market** and **Copia**. The renovated rooms are spacious and the entire hotel is dog-friendly, offering treats, a dog bed and a surprise gift for your four-legged friend.

FROM TOP: MICHAEL CUFFE; MIA CARTA

» YOUNTVILLE

WINE: Handwritten Wines welcomes guests to their village-like collection of spaces, one of which includes an antique drafting table for letter writing with a quill—a nod to Handwritten’s name. Visitors can taste single AVA Cabernet Sauvignons in a side-by-side comparative format or opt for the Bread & Butter Experience, where wines are accompanied with a baguette, three butters, jamón and shaved cheese.

DINE: Beloved by locals and visitors alike, Ciccio offers a California-Italian inspired menu with wood-fired pizzas, fresh pastas and salads featuring ingredients from their nearby farm. Their wine list includes many Napa Valley offerings and a full bar featuring a selection of aperitif-inspired cocktails. Insider’s tip: get there at opening to snag some spots at the six-seater bar.

STAY: Discover **The Cottages of Napa Valley**, a hidden gem featuring historic cottages in a tranquil garden setting. Fully refurbished, rooms include a kitchenette and private patio with an outdoor wood-burning chiminea for relaxing. Enjoy a complimentary bottle of wine, a breakfast basket of Bouchon Bakery pastries, bicycles, picnic backpack and more. A true delight for a mini getaway.



Charlie's.

» ST. HELENA

WINE: Nestled into the foothills of St. Helena, **Boeschen Vineyards** welcomes visitors for a personalized tour providing unique insight into their winemaking process and family history. The 11-acre estate features wine caves, an extensive rose garden and a car barn showcasing co-founder Dann Boeschen’s vintage racing collection.

DINE: One of St. Helena’s best new restaurants, **Charlie’s** is a family-run business dedicated to highlighting the bounty of the region with globally inspired flavors. Open Thursday through Monday for lunch, dinner, happy hour and even late-night dining, anything on their seasonal menu can be made gluten-free—including their fried chicken, which is also offered after 5 p.m. as a six-piece takeaway bucket alongside a bottle of sparkling wine.

STAY: With expansive vineyard and mountain views and a property rich with culture and history, **Alila Napa Valley** is a retreat designed to immerse guests in Napa Valley’s charm. Set amid Beringer Vineyards, its rooms and suites feature private balconies, stunning views and every comfort imaginable, offering guests the opportunity to unwind in luxurious serenity.

» CALISTOGA

WINE: Experience the quiet beauty of **Laura Michael Wines**, a boutique winery specializing in Cabernet Sauvignon and estate-grown Zinfandel. Tastings are offered daily and are often hosted by one of the owners, Laura and Michael Swanton. Take in your experience while enjoying a picnic in their extensive gardens featured in *Sunset* magazine.

DINE: Get a taste of Southern hospitality at **Evangeline**, a “casual French bistro with a Creole soul.” Take a seat in the cozy dining room or heated outdoor patio and enjoy staples like steak frites, shrimp etouffee and gumbo. Cocktails showcase the classic spirits of New Orleans while the wine list pays homage to the wines of Napa Valley. Come for the food and wine, stay for the vibe.

STAY: Looking for something different? Check out **Dr. Wilkinson’s Backyard Resort & Mineral Springs**, an iconic resort and spa. Founded in 1952 by pioneering wellness experts John and Edy Wilkinson, the renovated mid-century-inspired resort offers mud baths and spa treatments, healing mineral pool soaks and **House of Better**, a new restaurant featuring Southwestern food with a nourishing slant.



Handwritten Wines.



Dr. Wilkinson's Backyard Resort & Mineral Springs.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY

NAPA VALLEY WINEMAKERS ARE PRODUCING EXCEPTIONAL SYRAH

— BY WANDA MANN —

Cabernet Sauvignon wears the crown in Napa Valley, but every king needs a court and Syrah is a treasured member of this elite entourage.

Syrah from Napa could be considered a rarity: In 2023, only 663 acres in the valley were planted to Syrah. Meanwhile, more than 24,000 of Napa’s 46,128 acres of vineyards are planted to Cabernet Sauvignon. However, the variety has fervent fans in Napa and a select group of the valley’s winemakers are applying their expertise to craft exceptional Syrahs. Why are they passionate about this regal red variety from France’s Rhône Valley?

“There’s nothing like a beautiful Syrah,” says Elias Fernandez, winemaker at Shafer Vineyards. He states that their customers “love

Syrah’s classic hallmarks—those meaty, spicy, gamey, dark-fruited aromas and flavors.”

Napa’s diverse terroirs and microclimates are a perfect match with Syrah. “Syrah is a very accommodating variety when it comes to climate, terroir and winemaking style. There is no mistaking what’s in your glass is Syrah and the experience of tasting it can run a large range of flavor profiles, color and aromatics,” explains Mike Smith, winemaker for Myriad Cellars and Quivet Cellars.

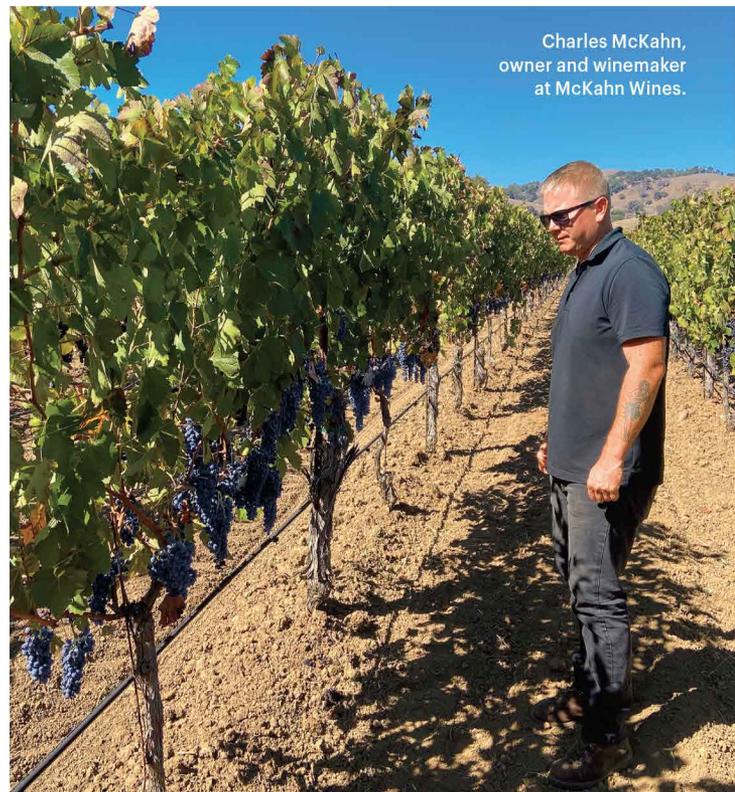
Whether Syrah is planted in Calistoga or Oak Knoll, every producer makes a critical decision in the cellar: To blend or not to blend? There are no rules and it is the winemaker’s prerogative to make a single-variety Syrah or indulge in a bit of matchmaking and blend it with another variety.

Charles McKahn, owner and winemaker at McKahn Wines, makes a bottling of 100% Syrah with grapes “sourced from Hudson Ranch in the northwest corner of Los Carneros. McKahn believes “the warm climate and well-drained soil produce a

FROM LEFT: MI SUEÑO WINERY; MCKAHN WINES



Rolando Herrera, owner and winemaker at Mi Sueño Winery.



Charles McKahn, owner and winemaker at McKahn Wines.

Syrachs may be blended or single-variety, depending on the winemaker.



Elias Fernandez, winemaker at Shafer Vineyards.

“SYRAH IS A VERY ACCOMMODATING VARIETY WHEN IT COMES TO CLIMATE, TERROIR AND WINEMAKING STYLE. ... IT CAN RUN A LARGE RANGE OF FLAVOR PROFILES, COLOR AND AROMATICS.”

—MIKE SMITH, WINEMAKER FOR MYRIAD CELLARS AND QUIVET CELLARS

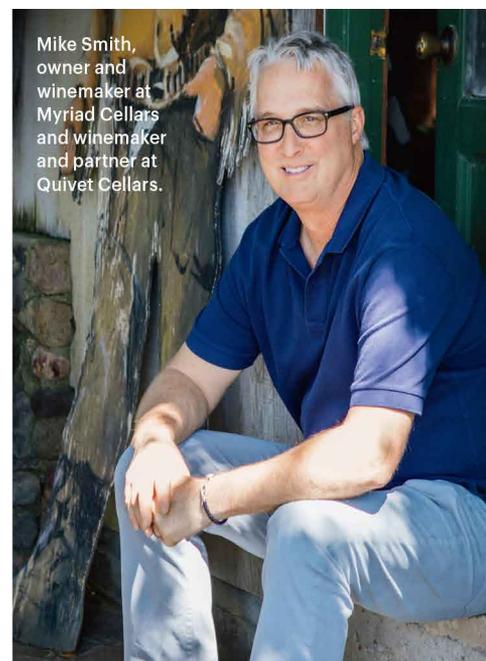
deeply concentrated wine that does not need blending with other varieties.” Smith from Quivet also opts not to blend his Syrah from Kenefick Ranch Winery in the Calistoga AVA. He describes it as a warm site where the grapes reach “full phenolic ripeness” and “to temper this ripeness, I ferment the grapes with 100% whole-cluster stem inclusion, which imparts a layer of peppery spice and ground white pepper.”

Syrah shines on its own, but Fernandez from Shafer opts to blend their grapes from just south of the Stags Leap District. “Joining Syrah with Petite Sirah is such an exceptional, rich and almost joyful blend.” He adds: “The blend brings out the very best in each variety, with Petite Sirah adding blueberry notes to complement the gamey characteristics of Syrah.” And although its name implies that Petite Sirah is a tiny version of Syrah, it isn’t. Also known as Durif, Petite Sirah is a cross between Syrah and a nearly extinct grape variety called Peloursin.

Rolando Herrera, farmer and winemaker at Mi Sueño Winery, sees beauty in both single-variety and blended Syrah: “I like to produce Syrah both for blending and as a stand-alone wine to showcase the beauty and complexity of the variety.” From grapes grown at their estate vineyard in Oak Knoll, Mi Sueño produces Syrah with “a very nice structure and richness.” In blends, it adds “nice minerality and complexity of flavors.”

When it comes to food pairing, Syrah from Napa Valley is quite versatile. “I love Syrah with a hearty braised beef and vegetable stew infused with thyme and herbes de Provence. The power and savoriness of this dish highlight everything in the wine,” says Smith. McKahn suggests Syrah paired with Christmas Day prime rib for the holiday season. Fernandez finds Syrah “particularly compelling with game and grilled meats. Lamb is always one of my favorites.” Herrera recommends mole with baby pork ribs or pork posole.

Whatever pairing you choose, Herrera encourages everyone to spend some time getting to know Syrah from Napa Valley: “As delicious as our Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon are in this valley, some days all we need is a glass of Syrah to refresh our palate and appreciate its singular beauty.”



Mike Smith, owner and winemaker at Myriad Cellars and partner at Quivet Cellars.

Bringing World Flavors to Napa Valley

BEN AND ALI KOENIG HAVE CREATED A WELCOMING GLOBAL KITCHEN IN HERITAGE EATS

What is it about Napa Valley that beckons people—from around the country, from around the world—to migrate here, with their talents, heart and dreams, to create a new home?

For Ben and Ali Koenig of Heritage Eats, a blending of entrepreneurial spirit, world travels and finding fertile soil in which to raise a family formed an irresistible allure to set down new roots.

After making the leap from the East Coast to Napa Valley, where Ben was helping open a restaurant, the Koenigs fell in love with the valley's welcoming spirit and sense of community.

But the siren song of world travels beckoned, so at an “inflection point” in his life, Ben set out on an adventurous trek through the Middle East and Asia, with Ali joining him for the last part of the trip. Staying in hostels, eating in homes and making forays through street food markets sparked the idea of bringing these “every day, enticing global flavors back to Napa Valley.”

And so, Heritage Eats was born.

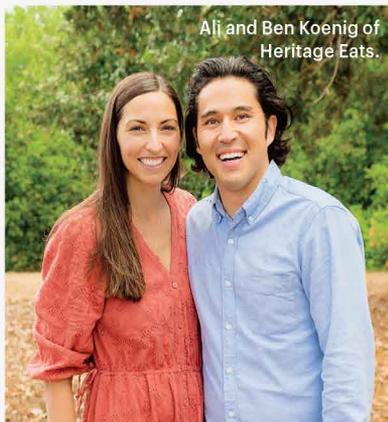
At the time (2015), the Koenigs sensed an opportunity for bringing mid-tier “fast-fine” food drawn from global home kitchens and Northern California's rich bounty to their new home. Ben notes, “after connecting with people in the community, we felt that their adventurous spirits,

attuned palates, world travels and mingling of people from different cultures and places in the world would be ripe for our concept of high quality, good-for-you, Tuesday-evening-after-work-food for the family.”

The restaurant has become a cornerstone of opportunity for their staff, many of whom got their first job out of local high schools and community college at Heritage Eats (and their subsequent businesses, including Best Food Truck Ever, Napa Valley Lobster Co. and Mothers Tacos), with some finding a career.

“We feel a sense of deep gratitude to the Napa community for embracing us as one of their own,” says Ali. “That support has allowed us to grow a family and our restaurant group, bringing the flavors of the world to Napa Valley.”

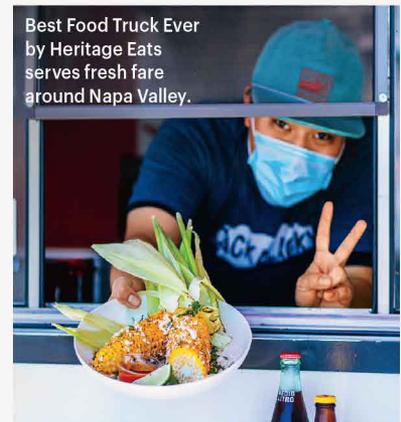
“WE FEEL A SENSE OF DEEP GRATITUDE TO THE NAPA COMMUNITY FOR EMBRACING US AS ONE OF THEIR OWN.” —ALI KOENIG, HERITAGE EATS



Ali and Ben Koenig of Heritage Eats.



The Koenigs want to build connections through their food.



Best Food Truck Ever by Heritage Eats serves fresh fare around Napa Valley.

This burger variation from Heritage Eats elevates the dish with a well-seasoned lamb patty.



HERITAGE EATS' GRILLED LAMB BURGER WITH AIOLI

Who wouldn't want a bit of Mediterranean mood in the cooler months of fall and winter? These lamb burgers, fragrant with garlicky aioli and touches of rosemary, work well with a Syrah (see page 26) and a cozy evening. Regular or sweet potato fries complete the burger vibe.

AIOLI:

- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1½ cups mayonnaise of your choice
- Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

Place all ingredients in a mixing bowl and combine well. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes to allow flavors to develop.

LAMB BURGER (SERVES 4):

- 1 pound ground lamb
- ¼ cup onion, minced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- ¼ cup Italian parsley, finely chopped

- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Kosher salt, to taste
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese, more if desired

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix together all ingredients except the feta just enough to combine. Divide lamb mixture into four, four-ounce

patties. Do not pack the patties too tightly as this will make them dense.

2. Grill on medium-high heat for two minutes per side or until desired doneness.
3. Top with feta cheese and let warm, but not completely melt.
4. Lightly grill buns on both sides and spread with a generous amount of aioli.
5. Top with a burger patty and your choice of greens.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS

- Buns: Brioche (soft/buttery), ciabatta (heartier bun with more bite), whole wheat (soft and slightly earthy)
- Greens: Baby arugula (peppery/tender), spring mix (light in flavor and very tender) or any hearty lettuce of your liking. Toss in a light drizzle of fresh lemon juice and cracked black pepper.



EVERY YEAR, NAPA VALLEY ATTRACTS ENTHUSIASTIC HARVEST INTERNS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

Here is a look at what brought them to Napa, what they learned and how their experience in Napa Valley helps shape their careers in winemaking.



HALA ASSAAD HARK
BATROUN, LEBANON
DOMINUS ESTATE

WHAT IS IT ABOUT NAPA VALLEY THAT MADE YOU WANT TO DO YOUR INTERNSHIP HERE?

"Napa, for me, is not just a place to make wine; it is a dream that has resided within me for 12 years—a place I never imagined I could reach, being from Lebanon. Working in this esteemed wine region is not just a job; it's the fulfillment of a lifelong dream that continues to inspire my love for the art of winemaking."

[Editor's note: Hala is the first Lebanese to graduate with a B.S. from the Viticulture and Enology program at U.C. Davis.]

JACOB VITO
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
VENGE VINEYARDS

WHAT SETS NAPA APART FROM OTHER WINE REGIONS?

"From my perspective, the sheer quality and amount of resources in Napa really set it apart. The whole valley is filled with world-class wineries pulling in high-quality fruit made in great facilities that are led by intelligent people. There are places where some of those boxes can be checked, or where only a handful of producers can check them, but in Napa it is a standard met by countless places. Consistent excellence like that is hard to find, but this valley has it."



EMMANUELLE ROH
VÉTROZ, SWITZERLAND
ROBERT CRAIG WINERY

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST TAKEAWAY FROM YOUR INTERNSHIP, AND HOW DO YOU PLAN TO INTEGRATE IT INTO YOUR WORK MOVING FORWARD?

"I found the way of making wine very similar to what I have seen in my home region, but there are a few methods that I will take back with me. One being how strict the winery is about cleaning and organization. For example, I really enjoyed receiving specific work orders each morning. Finally, I met a lot of people from both Napa and all over the world and I am very grateful for these connections."

HSIN JUI "CHARRET" HO
TAINAN, TAIWAN
AMICI CELLARS

HOW DOES MAKING NAPA VALLEY YOUR INTERNSHIP DESTINATION AFFECT YOUR CAREER GROWTH?

"I came from a background of studying and working in the hospitality beverage industry and have some experience in the beverage distribution sector. I chose a harvest internship in Napa so that I could learn more about wine production and fully understand the three-tier system of the wine industry. Napa Valley attracts the world's finest winemakers, vintners and wine experts. Being able to work here and learn from them will give me the clarity I need as I determine which aspect of the industry I would like to pursue."



 To learn more about Napa Valley vintners, visit napavalley.wine/makers/vintners.



Artisans of Wine & Food at The Boca Raton

Raising a glass to all that's good

JANUARY 17-19, 2025



The Boca Raton's Artisans of Wine & Food is a premier experience hosted in partnership with Napa Valley Vintners, welcoming club members, hotel guests and wine connoisseurs for a sophisticated weekend affair featuring exclusively Napa Valley wines.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17

Enjoy an inspired winemaker-hosted dinner, orchestrated by some of the most celebrated chefs, followed by an after-hours event.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18

Join in one or more morning activities, including a Vintners Invitational Golf Tournament or a winemaker series. In the afternoon, meet up at the Napa Valley Tasting Pavilion.

It all comes to a crescendo during a gala and reception prepared by a Michelin-starred chef, followed by a distinctive wine auction with proceeds benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Napa Valley and Palm Beach County.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

Before departing, indulge in an elevated brunch experience complete with a sparkling wine bar and live music.



Scan the QR code for more information or to purchase tickets to this spectacular weekend of Napa Valley wine and coastal luxury.



WORLD-CLASS WINES

Despite its relatively short history in the world of wine, Napa Valley has grown to be a globally recognized and revered region. We spoke to international sommeliers to find out why Napa Valley wines make it onto their lists. • BY AIDEN CARROLL



“What surprises us are Napa Valley Sauvignon Blancs. With their unique combination of structure, depth and complexity, I believe they’re standing up to Bordeaux and New Zealand as some of the best in the world. I like to serve them with our crab cakes. The zingy notes of unripe passionfruit really help balance the saline richness of the crab.”

—ALBERT HILDT, NAPAGRILL, ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Suggested wine: Arkenstone Sauvignon Blanc



“Guests come in looking for a hearty meal after a round of golf at St Andrews Links. We use native Scottish cattle breeds, dry-aged and charred over our grill. Napa Valley Cabs are a natural pairing, standing up to the gorgeous marbling. One of my favorite dishes is a traditional fridge pâté made from prime rib trimmings. I usually serve this with a Napa Cabernet that’s more minty, with the freshness of the wine offsetting the rich pâté.”

—DANIEL DAS, HAWKSMOOR, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

Suggested wine: Silver Oak Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon



“People come to Claridge’s with expectations of the highest standard of British luxury, pairing traditional dishes like Beef Wellington with a classic Napa Cab. But sometimes people want to be surprised. One of my favorite surprises is a Ribolla from Napa Valley. Served with our dill and cucumber salad, its minerality and floral notes demonstrate the finesse of Napa Valley winemaking today.”

—EMMA DENNEY, CLARIDGE’S, LONDON, ENGLAND

Suggested wine: Matthiasson Ribolla Gialla



“Our restaurant, Zanaya, focuses on food from the Mexican Pacific Coast. Our signature dish is Pescado Zarandeado, [an entree that utilizes] a 500-year-old technique for grilling chili-marinated fish over a wood-fired oven. The dish pairs beautifully with a Napa Valley Chardonnay. Fresh citrus notes accentuate the chili, while the fuller-bodied style stands up to the smokiness of the oven. I’m not surprised it works well—there’s a strong legacy of Mexican-owned producers in Napa Valley—and seeing them on our wine list is a point of pride for me.”

—JOSUÉ PEREA, FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Suggested wine: Llamas Family Wines Carneros Chardonnay



@comeoveroctober

LOVE WINE?

Come Over and Celebrate This October!

Come Over October is a national campaign encouraging wine lovers to invite friends, colleagues, and family to “come over” during the month of October to share some wine at home, in a restaurant, at an outdoor event, or wherever you gather.

So, this October, get creative as you get together with friends, family, and wine, and plan your own Come Over October gathering. Visit www.ComeOverOctober.com for ideas, tips, and more.

Don't forget to tag us @comeoveroctober and share your Come Over October celebration!

Brought to you by COME TOGETHER —
A Community for Wine Inc, a mission-driven
company dedicated to promoting the social, cultural
and historical attributes of wine.

come
together
A COMMUNITY FOR WINE

@cometogetherforwine

Collectible, Creative and Incomparable.

Premiere Napa Valley wines tell the stories of the soils, microclimates and remarkable personalities which make up the mosaic of Napa Valley. They represent quality and innovation and are among the world's rarest wines.

premierenapavalley.com

“Each one-of-a-kind wine is meticulously crafted to showcase a snapshot of time and place... an exclusive story unique to each vintner and collector.”

– Renée Ary, Duckhorn Vineyards



PREMIERE
NAPA VALLEY