



THE WINES OF CHRISTOPHER CARPENTER

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

Chris Carpenter is winemaker for many of Napa Valley's most prestigious wineries, including Cardinale, Lokoya, La Jota Vineyard Co., Mt. Brave, and most recently Hickinbotham Clarendon Vineyard in South Australia's McLaren Vale. Over the past two decades, Chris has earned a reputation for taming Napa Valley's mountain tannins and creating legendary Cabernet Sauvignon. He works closely with the vineyard team to nurture and then manifest the unique character of each vineyard block in elegant wines with great depth, mountain character and historic pedigree. He believes in maximum attention in the vineyards and minimal intervention in the winery to create the purest expression of place.

Chris grew up outside Chicago and developed a thirst for knowledge. With an intellect geared for science and a physique built for athletics, he earned an undergraduate degree in biology at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, while playing Big Ten football. He went on to receive his MBA at the University of Illinois, Chicago, while selling medical products and bartending at an Irish Pub and later a music club. At the club, he was surrounded by musicians and artists, and together, they started exploring and discovering the great food and wine scene in Chicago.

During a visit to Napa Valley in 1993, Chris discovered a lifestyle that could challenge him both intellectually and creatively, while combining his love of science with his growing passion for culinary and wine pursuits. Soon after, he started studying at UC Davis, where he earned a master's degree in both viticulture and enology. He studied further in Italy at the Tenute Antinori, Santa Cristina Estate, now known as Tignanello. There, he worked in the cellar and vineyard and was also hands-on in the lab. Chris credits his time in Italy with teaching him how wine, food and culture are all intertwined.

In 1998, Chris ultimately found himself back in Napa Valley at the Cardinale Estate. In 2000, he was appointed winemaker for Lokoya, where he crafted stellar wines from the finest mountain fruit. He quickly went on to assume the same role for Cardinale a year later, and was named winemaker for La Jota in 2005 and for Mt. Brave in 2007 with the purchase of the vineyard properties on Howell Mountain and Mt. Veeder. In 2012, Chris commenced a new project, Hickinbotham Clarendon Vineyard, in McLaren Vale. Since its establishment in 1971, the Hickinbotham vineyard has become a part of Australia's wine heritage, supplying fruit to produce many of the country's greatest wines. Chris is breathing new life into the historic vineyard and has commenced a new era of Hickinbotham's prestigious legacy, building upon and honoring the vineyard's acclaimed record. His most recent project is Caladan, an elegant synthesis of Cabernet Franc and Merlot from our mountain vineyards in Napa Valley. The inaugural 2015 vintage represents Chris' endless cycle of life, learning and exploration.

The passions that Chris developed in his twenties and thirties continue to shape his personal and professional life. Chris and his wife, Tina, founded the Napa Valley chapter of Slow Food, and he served as chair for Slow Food USA, an organization dedicated to preserving regional foods and supporting small food purveyors, and to celebrating local farmers and chefs. He is the chair of the board of the Napa Valley Youth Symphony and is an avid concert-goer, and he occasionally plays the trombone. Chris continues his love affair with the restaurant business by bartending every Friday night at the Rutherford Grill where he "learns more about human nature and about life in general, behind the plank."

*"Success is achieving the freedom to do what you like to do,
how you like to do it, when you want to do it, and then seeing
others enjoy and appreciate what you've created as a result."*

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