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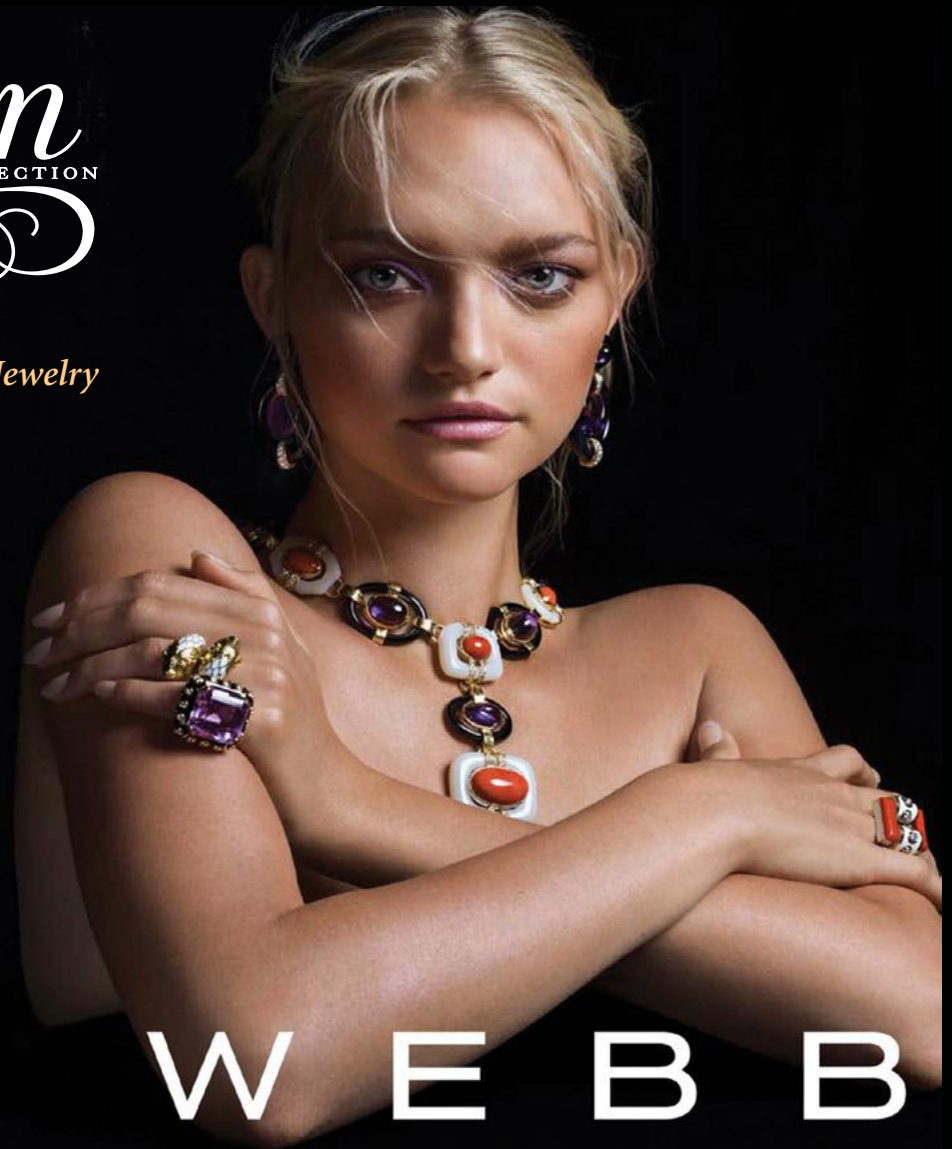
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65° DEPARTMENTS

**PERSONAS**

**AT THE HEART OF GOLF IS GIVING**

By Bettina McBee Hohmann

**THE CRÈME-DE-LA-CRÈME OF COMPASSION**

By Kelly Lefmann

**IN LIGHT OF THE GAME**

By Sarah Joplin

**SCENE**

**AN EVENING WITH RICHARD MACDONALD**

**CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA 2017 A LOOK BACK**

**MONTEREY PENINSULA BALLET THEATER GALA FUNDRAISER**

**WINERY**

**FOLKTALE WINERY: A MODERN DAY FOLKTALE**

By Andrea Stuart

**STAY**

**POST RANCH INN**

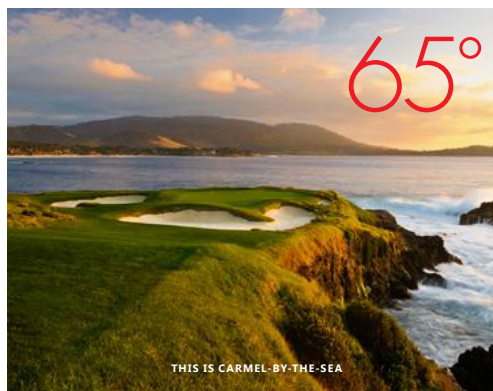
**COMMUNITY**

**LOCAL YOUTH FIND THEIR INNER WARRIOR**

By Kelly Lefmann

**EN POINTE: EXPANDING THE DANCE CENTER'S MISSION**

By Kelly Lefmann



Description:

On this cover we feature the iconic 7th green at sunset on the world-renowned Pebble Beach Golf Course captured by Joann Dost.

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*Duality, bronze 2016*

*(left) RICHARD MACDONALD working with  
models on 'Duality' in Las Vegas Studio.*





# At the Heart of Golf is Giving

By Bettina McBee Hohmann | Photos by Carol Oliva

“It is amazing how four days of golf can change thousands of people’s lives,” says Steve John, CEO of the Monterey Peninsula Foundation. The AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am fuels the grant-making capability of the foundation, which contributes to hundreds of nonprofits on the Central Coast. “The tournament is one of the largest contributors to charity on the PGA Tour,” John explains. In 2017, the foundation gave a record \$12.8 million to nonprofits in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties.

The foundation’s goal for 2018 is to continue to grow its philanthropic footprint while providing an enriching experience for fans, players, celebrities, and volunteers. “When people come to the AT&T, we want them to have a memorable experience,” says John. “We strive to have a highly competitive professional field, and we are excited to continually raise the bar.” The tournament is excited to welcome Rory McIlroy to the pro field this year. McIlroy is an active philanthropist with a mission to support children’s charities, big and small, around the world.

“Bing Crosby founded the tournament, originally known as the ‘clambake,’ to bring celebrities and their pro golfer friends to Pebble Beach to have fun and raise money for charity,” says John. This objective is at the root of the tournament today, and the foundation makes sure the professional and celebrity contestants equally value the philanthropic vision. “At the heart of golf is giving,” he says.

Volunteerism is the tournament’s driving force and makes it a success. “More than two thousand volunteers are devoted to our mission and recognize the value they bring,” says John. “We simply couldn’t host the tournament without them.” Many have volunteered for over forty years, some traveling many miles, at their own expense, to be part of this charitable event.

Lesley Varney, Monterey Peninsula Foundation’s marketing manager, works to orchestrate new attractions that all fans can enjoy. “The

tournament has something for everyone,” says Varney. From virtual reality and swing simulators to the new Club Patron tequila tent, great golf is just the beginning. The Chevron STEM Zone blends science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into golf-themed activities, creating a fun learning environment. Active duty military and veterans can enjoy free admission and access to the Patriots Outpost on the 15th hole. And for the third year, Facebook will host the Million Dollar Hole-in-One for Charity. These and more features will entertain the thousands who attend.

Amateur golfers play alongside professional golfers, who are handpicked, based on their fan appeal and philanthropic commitment. “It’s not about self-promotion,” says John, “giving back is the key.”

Giving back is a year-round endeavor, according to Mary Gunn, Monterey Peninsula Foundation’s director of philanthropy. We have a dual mission of offering an impeccable tournament experience to sponsors, spectators, volunteers, and players—and to make grants that make a difference in our region.” The foundation’s grants are the lifeblood of many organizations, providing operating or program support for organizations large and small. With about 200 awards each year, the tournament impacts thousands of lives.

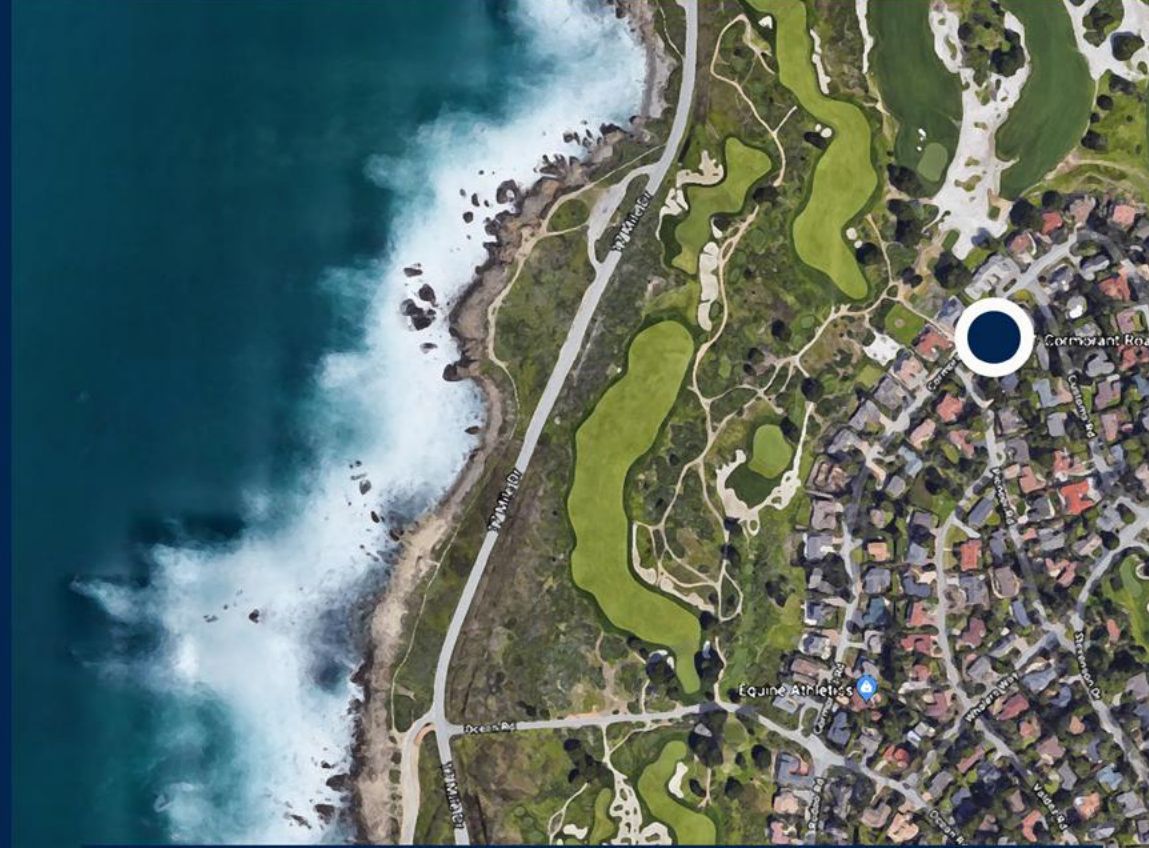
“Golf is a wonderful sport,” says John, “Our tournament is the only one of its kind that combines celebrities and athletes with professional golfers at this level.”

Everyone wins at the AT&T Pro-Am. The team at Monterey Peninsula Foundation work tirelessly to make sure that everyone has a great experience at the tournament while supporting our community. And they love every minute of it.

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# In Light of the Game

By Sarah Joplin | Photos by Joann Dost

As the first rays of light break over the horizon and spill across the land, Joann Dost is often there to greet them. This has been the case for nearly four decades, since she wrapped up her days as a Ladies Professional Golf Association touring pro and shifted her professional focus to photography. Though she first developed a knack for shooting landscapes in her off time while playing on the Australian Ladies Professional Golf Tour—and found encouragement from mentors, including none other than Ansel Adams—her early photography days centered on tournament coverage. She has long enjoyed capturing the excitement of the competition and the camaraderie of the game.

Dost's photographic career is deeply embedded with the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am (formerly The Crosby). She began photographing tournaments for the United States Golf Association (USGA) in 1981, first with The Walker Cup, and then the U.S. Open. It was inside the ropes during this professional initiation that Dost heard a respected voice of the game, famed writer Herbert Warren Wind, bark over her shoulder, "Do you really think you can photograph?" Bristling at the barb, then novice Dost didn't know how to respond. However, USGA Magazine provided a resounding "yes" by publishing her event coverage. Its pages revealed not only a keen eye for the action but also how her tournament playing experience brought to bear on her photographic instinct for timing, positioning, and composition. Dost then photographed the 1982 Crosby tournament and went on to provide USGA coverage of the majors over the following ten years. Her early work garnered the attention of Kathryn Crosby, and Dost provided photographs of the event directly to the Crosby family during the 1980s.



Pioneering the field of golf landscape photography was an outgrowth of Dost's tournament assignments. Her eye naturally developed a sensibility of the golf architecture that provides the field of play. Private and public facilities began hiring her to create compelling course photo archives for their marketing and editorial campaigns as well as for tournament awards and clubhouse decor. Over time, she traveled extensively, stateside and overseas, met many of the greats of the game, and wove herself into the fabric of the modern golf industry.

Dost toiled to build her reputation shot by shot, often appearing on magazine covers and winning awards; project by project, including USGA Museum exhibits and corporate accounts from Ritz-Carlton to Wells Fargo; and relationship by relationship, from the Crosby family to playing golf with Arnold Palmer on her fiftieth birthday to photographing for Jack Nicklaus during his final round at St. Andrews. Her hard work has been a labor of love.

She also has a passion for photographing golf courses, rating them as a longstanding Top 100 Courses panelist for Golf Magazine, and consulting with courses to build memberships and gain notoriety. While Dost doesn't play much golf these days, she humbly admits that she's been awarded several honorary club memberships for her ambassadorship role. Her competitive juices still flow freely as she challenges herself to find the best shot

through the lens, rather than to achieve the best score.

For now, as the last beams of the day recede into the darkening twilight, Dost is there to capture them through her lens on the golf course. It has been said that if you love what you do, you never work a day in your life. By that measure, Dost has been one of the privileged few who found her calling and followed her muse. Her timeless photographs capture the voice of the landscape and continue to echo her vision of the beauty of the game.



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A photograph of a rustic bedroom interior. The room features wood-paneled walls and a ceiling with exposed wooden beams. A fireplace with a fire burning inside is visible on the left. A bed with a patterned pillow and white linens is in the foreground. Large windows in the background offer a view of a forest. The lighting is warm and ambient.

## Steps from Heaven: Post Ranch Inn

By Michael Cervin | Photos by Kodiak Greenwood

Judiciously placed on an extraordinary Big Sur coastline ridgetop, Post Ranch Inn feels like it is just steps from heaven. And it is.

Resting 1,200 feet above sea level, with the Pacific Ocean just below and the Santa Lucia Mountains enveloping from behind, the 40 rooms in this hidden gem provide sanctuary. The Ranch is 100 unadulterated acres of redwood groves, fields, gentle inclines, and capacious blue skies. But it was the jaw-dropping vistas of the ocean that prompted the building of the Ranch in 1992.

The success of the Ranch is not only its unique location but also its plethora of diverse rooms, both rustic and luxurious, from sod-roofed structures with ocean views to tree houses set among mature trees, elevated nine feet in the air. Many of the rooms have heated floors, wood-burning fireplaces, and 600-thread-count organic bed linens made exclusively for the Ranch. Also included are complimentary snacks, including fresh made chocolate chip cookies and local wines.

There are no TVs in the rooms, and because you are immersed in the natural beauty of the Central Coast, you couldn't find anything nearly as compelling as what is outside your door. With miles of private hiking trails, an outdoor heated pool, a fitness room, hammocks set amidst redwood trees, daily yoga and meditation, and nightly star gazing, everything you would need is located here. A hybrid Lexus fleet is available for guests to tour the Big Sur region. The mercantile shop, with local art, books, and jewelry, has expanded onto a



full e-commerce website so that the Ranch can be with you, wherever you are. The Post Gallery features unique works of art and is currently showing “She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not: Twelve Female Photographers’ Views Of The Male Subject,” a retrospective of the last 100 years through the keen eyes of female shutterbugs.

A gourmet breakfast at the restaurant, Sierra Mar, is included with stays and offers fresh fruit, morning-baked pastries, and an omelet station. While the lunch menu rotates seasonally, the four-course prix-fixe dinner menu changes every night and features an award-winning wine list of over 14,000 wines. Visiting Post Ranch Inn is a sojourn, a pilgrimage, a place where body, mind, and soul are treated to a few days of heaven.





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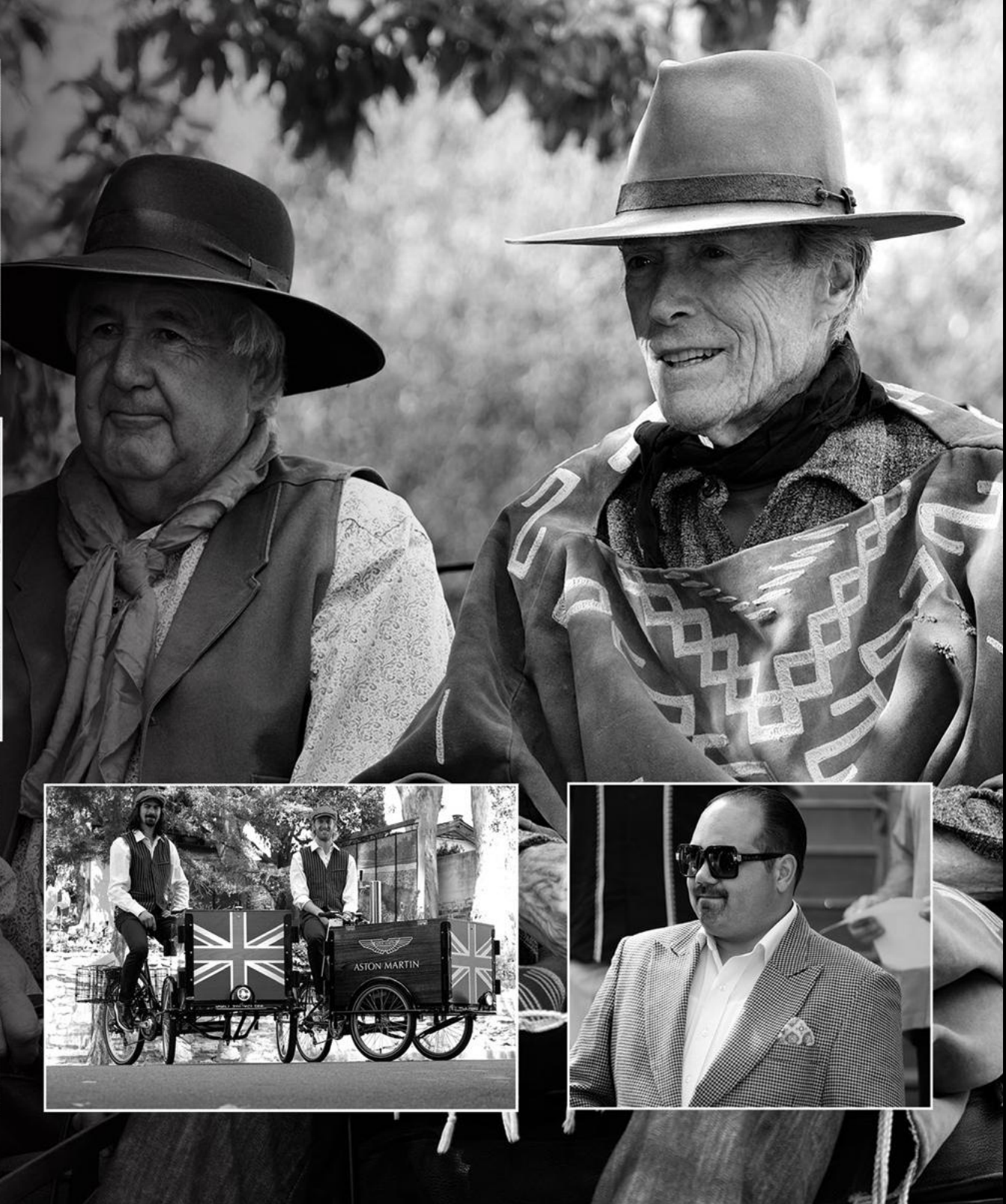
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Carmel-by-the-Sea 2017

A Look Back



# It Takes a Village

By Andrea Stuart

When Mayor of Carmel Steve Dallas thinks back on 2017, he gushes with pride. “What a great 2017! This City Council, along with our city staff, have accomplished so much. It is always great when a team comes together to do the best for the ‘village.’ And it clearly shows that this team is working on all cylinders,” says Dallas.

As Mayor of Carmel, Dallas talks buoyantly about the dozens of positive changes that have taken place in the city. A couple of the most notable developments include the PG&E settlement—which requires PG&E to conduct regular system-wide inspections and the installation of natural gas distribution line protection equipment—and the implementation of a 15-year contract between the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea and the Sunset Cultural Center, Inc. confirms the Sunset Center will run the Forest Theater.

The Public Works Department was particularly productive in its progressiveness. One of the most notable accomplishments is that the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea became the first Monterey Peninsula agency to pass an ordinance eliminating plastic utensils, straws, and disposable food packaging, promoting recycling and compostable/biodegradable alternatives.

“Our ‘village’ is a special place to each one of us whether we live, work, or visit,” says Dallas. “And I know we will continue to do our very best to preserve and protect our ‘village’ for years to come.”







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# Risk & Reward: Stillwater Construction's Secret Recipe

By Andrea Stuart | Photos by Darren Lovecchio



Carmel's charm is only rivaled by its popularity, which can pose space challenges. The implementation of mixed-use development answers this dilemma with a sustainable approach to freeing up space as vehicular travel is reduced due to the merging of commercial and residential areas. This encourages residents to remain local. "We are leaning toward TOD [Transit Oriented Development]," says Dan Silverie, Jr. TOD integrates housing, office, retail, and other uses into a walkable neighborhood, often located within a half-mile of public transportation.

Meeting these challenges, Stillwater Construction engages in calculated risk-taking, which is essential to learning their limits. "We are growing as a company and on a thriving job site," says Silverie, Jr. In order to answer the calling for effectual living and work spaces, Silverie, Jr. and the rest of the Stillwater team embrace and celebrate risk. "Without taking risks, it's impossible to learn the skills that enable you to thrive in life," he says.



As Silverie, Jr. and his crew work diligently on birthing mixed-use development in Carmel, he affirms that while working on such sites has inherent risks, it also poses many opportunities to bridge the gap between the various construction and building entities as they work together and learn each other's regulations and skillsets. This allows them to come together on common projects and share in each other's crafts. It's another ingenious way of remaining mindful on the job and providing a safe and productive construction site. The ultimate reward is a project that imbues functionality and style into the community in which it resides.

*For more information about Stillwater Construction, Inc., visit [stillwater-inc.com](http://stillwater-inc.com) or email [rene@stillwater-inc.com](mailto:rene@stillwater-inc.com).*



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FOLK



FOLKTALE

# Modern Day Folktale

By Andrea Stuart | Photos by Carol Oliva

Sequestered at the north end of Carmel Valley lies a little fairy tale frosted in a 35-year history. Currently enjoying its second identity, Folktale Winery, with its enchanting architecture, captivating gardens, and expressive wines, is capturing the hearts and palates of wine and food lovers.

Greg Ahn, winemaker and winery owner, fell in love with Folktale the way Prince Charming fell in love with his fair maiden. After 10 years of gallantly riding past the Folktale property on trips in and out of the valley, Greg was drawn in by the sunshine-drenched winery and captivated by its spirit. What he thought was a quaint little chateau turned out to be a 15-acre kingdom reaching from Carmel Valley Road to the winding Carmel River.

Sleeping in her nest of vines and roses, Folktale invited Greg to walk upon its cobblestone pathways. He immediately knew Folktale would make a beautiful town square setting with its courtyards and locality between Carmel and downtown Carmel Valley. The winery's name plays to this vision, making Folktale a community destination where stories are shared, and memories are made with each glass of wine and locally-sourced meal.

Sustainable practices ensure that each wine imbues the heart, aromas, and flavors of the respected terroir and meticulous winemaking methods. Folktale's on-site 5-acre 100% organic vineyard and it's 300 acres of vineyards in the Arroyo Seco AVA

impart their secrets into each glass, waiting to be discovered.

Two thousand and eighteen promises to bring excitement, especially for members, as Folktale brings its music series to the Barrel Room alongside jazz and folk concerts in the Gallery. The annual Chef Duel continues to surprise the palate and gets better each year, while the winery's culinary event offerings expand. "I truly believe that our wines are incredible expressions of the quality grown in Monterey County, which I would happily put up against any region in the world," says Greg. When describing their wines, he says they taste like honesty and fun, a reflection of the intention put into the winery. "Our clone specific wines are blowing my mind. Our Le Mistral brand might be the best California Rhône varieties I've tasted, period."

Folktale is the result of a community calling. "Our wines are pushing balance of acid and expression of grape and vintage. It's a return to an older world style that I love," concludes Greg.

The future of Folktale looks as auspicious as any great fairytale. Represented by innovative business practices, creativity in winemaking, and a welcoming atmosphere, Folktale is a place where residents and visitors can step away from the rush of life and enter their own fairytales.

***For more information go to: [folktalewinery.com](http://folktalewinery.com)***





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# The Crème-de-la-Crème of Compassion

By Kelley Lefmann | Photos by Carol Oliva

As Senior Culinary Event Director for Coastal Luxury Management, Dorothy Maras has as much passion for philanthropy as she does for food. She has held board positions on the local chapters of the American Institute of Wine & Food, Les Dames d' Escoffier International, and Meals on Wheels. Pebble Beach Food & Wine, an annual event operated by Coastal Luxury Management, has benefited the Boys & Girls Club, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for Monterey County, and a number of local culinary scholarship funds.

In addition, Maras was named Meals on Wheels' Woman of The Year for her 18 years of involvement with its Culinary Classique d' Elegance fundraiser. There, she coordinated chefs and solicited wine sponsors.

"My mother can be credited for instilling in me the compassion and empathy to care for others who were not able to care for themselves," notes Maras. "My takeaway from her was to feed those in need at all times." Whether making a pot of soup for a sick neighbor or feeding thousands of people for four days while coordinating 140 world-class chefs and ordering 12 tons of food for them to cook, Maras is right at home. "I am driven to do things as perfectly as possible, and I love taking on challenges that most would run from," she says. "Hopefully, I will even succeed."

One might argue that Maras has already found great success, being a recent recipient of the American Culinary Federation's (ACF) President's award. The ACF is the nation's largest professional association for chefs, cooks, educators, students, and food service industry professionals. The award recognized her service to and support of the chef community—in particular, her involvement in coordinating local chefs to raise funds for the Soberanes Fire Fund.

"I was honored to receive this award from my colleagues," says Maras. "I am used to organizing behind the scenes at large events, and I am relatively unfamiliar with being center stage for honors." For a woman whose work ethic has earned her the nickname "The Chef Whisperer," that kind of humility is the right ingredient for someone with strong leadership qualities.

When asked about her current passion, Maras replies, "Mentoring the next generation of culinary professionals." There were very few women in the field when she first entered the hospitality arena. "It was always a trial by fire, being measured in a man's world. I had to do things twice as well and three times as fast in order to earn my stripes." Because Maras had neither a mentor nor any female role models to give her advice, her mission is to show young culinarians what a "rewarding and incredible ride it is to work in our field." Sounds like a recipe for success.

Humility, leadership, and a drive to keep growing set Maras apart from those who are simply looking to brand themselves. "The only place for me to go from this point in my career is up," she says. "Throw me some bigger challenges, and I will do my best to manage them." Maras' vision for the future is to illuminate the culinary industry and engender more awareness and respect for the trade. "Not everyone is cut out to be a doctor, lawyer, or software engineer," she says. "The world needs to be fed by responsible people who care about the trust that has been given to them by the public." In this ministry to others, Maras has already done so much to elevate her industry.

***To learn more about Pebble Beach Food & Wine, visit [pbfw.com](http://pbfw.com).***





Photos by Darren Lovecchio





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# Local Youth Find Their Inner Warrior

*Carmel Martial Arts Academy Builds Strength, Confidence*

By Kelley Lefmann | Photos by Darren Lovecchio

Carmel Martial Arts Academy is quickly becoming a fixture in the development of our local youth. Through the practice of Seibukan Jujutsu, the Academy encourages a culture of self-refinement by teaching the principles of a time-honored martial art in a way that honors competition with oneself.

The program was founded in 2014 by Chief Instructor Chris Patterson (“Sensei” in Japanese). Patterson saw an opportunity to bring this practice to local youth, and partnered with the Carmel Youth Center, which hosts the Seibukan program for both youth and adults. “I believe in the power I gained through my own training. If I can help kids be confident, assertive, and determined when challenges arise,” he adds, “I will have accomplished my mission.”

The Academy offers training for youth ages six to 14. Recently, a group of young ladies have ascended the ranks, acting as ambassadors for the program. “When a young person commits their mind to learning something, the physical skills can be developed,” says Patterson.

He also says it’s “not the gender of the warrior that matters, it’s their ability to commit to mastering the skills required.” Training teaches students to master themselves through lifelong commitments that help them focus on learning, increasing awareness, and being able to assert their safety. “The sooner they learn this, the more they’ll be able to make decisions based from their own ability to achieve.”

One student, Alexis Pine, notes that she “once hid behind the door.” Now approaching her black belt, she reflects on how her confidence has soared. Today, jujutsu helps Alexis build a sense of personal power within.

Another young warrior who recently received her black belt, Kai’lee Vining, says that jujutsu helps her remain grounded. “I have a large family . . . sometimes

things can get crazy at home.” It has also helped the once quiet, shy student evolve into an assistant instructor and mentor to her younger peers.

Roslyn Hamilton, a seventh-grade student of jujutsu, describes it as “a way to protect myself from bullying, and find my inner tiger.” She also adds that Patterson has helped her practice mindfulness. “He introduces a different element each month (earth, air, fire, water) and helps empower us to recognize our feelings, read the energy of others and of a situation, so we can draw upon our training as needed.” Jujutsu is also “a good stress-reliever,” says 11-year-old student Bella Bony. She enjoys the elements of both training and play, including the use of punching bags and bokkens (wooden versions of traditional Japanese swords).



These young ladies embody the kind of leadership that the academy aspires to cultivate. They have initiated their own jujutsu demonstration at Santa Catalina School, bringing awareness of the martial art to an English homestays program from Japan.

“We are one of the few programs offering our youth this sort of vital-life-skills training, which is not taught in schools today,” says Patterson. Parents have a short time to prepare their children for adulthood and Patterson believes that their program helps build students’ lifelong skills and confidence while enabling them to protect themselves.”

Looking ahead, Patterson sees the program growing. They are always adding more value to the community with the goal of remaining a resource for youth and their families. There is a one-month trial program available.

***For more information, visit [carmelmartialartsacademy.com](http://carmelmartialartsacademy.com).***



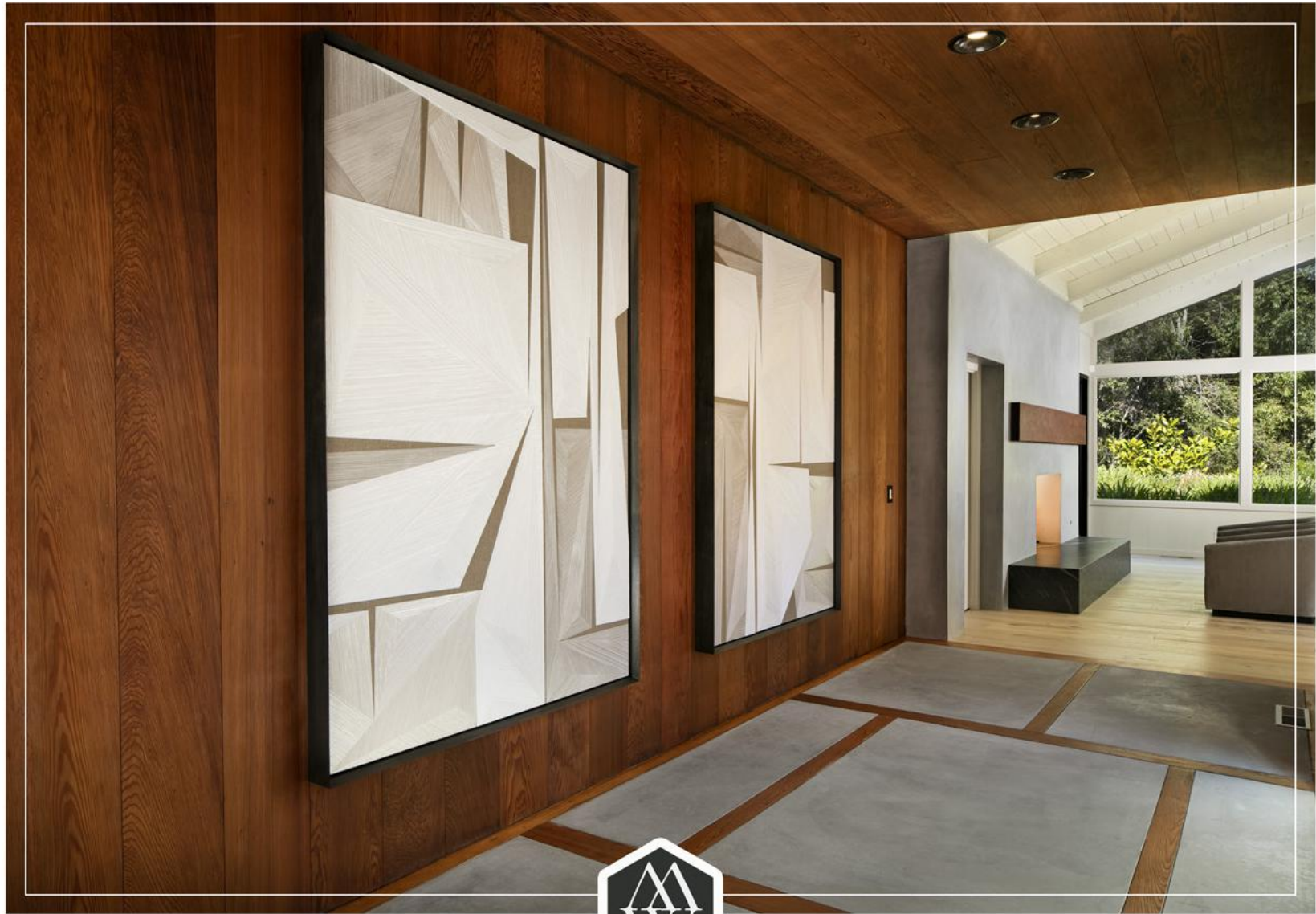
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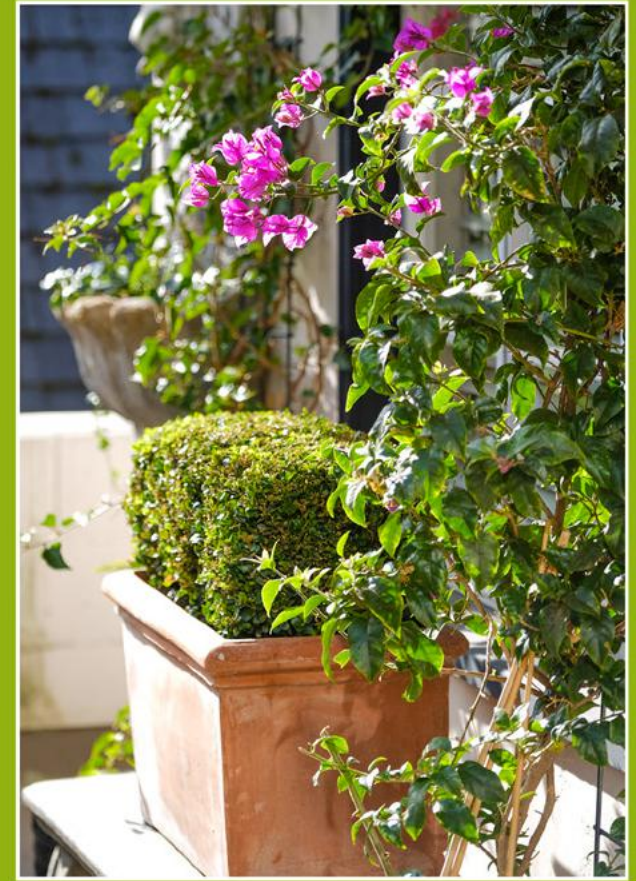
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# En Pointe: Expanding the Dance Center's Mission

By Kelley Lefmann | Photos by Michael Troutman

*To dance is to be out of yourself. Larger, more beautiful, more powerful. - Agnes De Mille*

Tia Brown and business partner Laura Jeselnick are no strangers to the spotlight. With storied careers as professional dancers and dance instructors, the co-owners of The Dance Center, in Carmel, are casting a new light on performance art.

When they opened The Dance Center in 2015, they had seven competition teams and their focus was on providing recreational and pre-professional dance classes to youth and adults.

This community effort quickly transformed into an institution with a mission: to teach children that they can do anything they put their minds to, according to Brown. "Our youngest student is two years old," she says. "From a young age, our students are taught camaraderie, teamwork, and how to encourage one another." Brown is a passionate teacher and advocate, noting, "[the business] was not created for us, it was for the community."

The programming has continued into its second act with the opening of the Monterey Peninsula Ballet Theatre, a nonprofit that launched in February 2017. Its cast of 115 dancers spans all ages, and its first performance, *The Nutcracker*, was held at the Sunset Center in December 2017.

Brown always knew that she would open her own studio—she had been teaching dance for 22 years, starting in college, and thirteen years after moving to California, she partnered with Jeselnick and did just that. "We really answered the community's call to offer more for the children," says Brown, "so we launched The Monterey Peninsula Ballet Theatre." It was a natural next step, after having directed

*The Nutcracker* Ballet on the Monterey Peninsula for years. "We are giving students a preprofessional opportunity to perform in a fundamental ballet," she explains. "The skills, teamwork, organization, scheduling, etc., help them grow as individuals."

Together with an experienced staff of dance instructors, Brown and Jeselnick are creating professional ballerinas as well as patrons of the fine arts. One of their former dancers, a recent college graduate, returned to Carmel to dance with children as young as age five. Natalie Lobo, who held the role of the Sugarplum Fairy, notes, "This opportunity has molded and created me. It opened my eyes to all that I can be, do, and give. I hope it continues for the next generation."

Brown and Jeselnick are mentoring individuals who feel successful and yet may not become dancers, per se. Part of the program's outreach includes busing in students from other areas to expose them to what transpires behind the curtain. This can empower and inspire children who may not otherwise have the opportunity to be touched by a creation of art. Underserved children can experience other aspects of the fine arts from dancing to the art of stage sets.

For Brown, the message is universal, regardless of the students' particular interests or roles: "The objective is to be present and to give back. It's the most important thing to realize at a young age."

**For more information, visit [mpballettheatre.org](http://mpballettheatre.org) or [dancecarmel.com](http://dancecarmel.com).**



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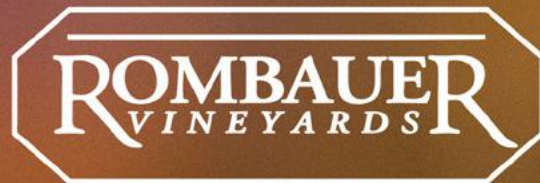


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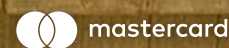
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Description:  
Late afternoon capture of  
Napa Valley vineyards by  
Dan Ambrosi.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

by Rich Medel

Happy New Year!



We're stepping into 2018 with big smiles on our faces because we have the pleasure of getting to know our community more intimately with each issue we publish. As you turn the pages this winter, we think you'll find a buffet of tantalizing morsels.

On the cover of 65°, we are proud to feature Joann Dost's image of the legendary 7th green at sunset at Pebble Beach Golf Course. From golf pro to golf

photographer, Joann also shares her journey about becoming an award-winning golf photographer.

During the making of this issue, we enjoyed spending time at Post Ranch Inn in Big Sur, Folktale Winery and Vineyards in Carmel, and Hotel Yountville in Napa Valley. While in Napa, we had a blast at the Napa Valley Film Festival, which featured more than 100 screenings.

We're now looking forward to the Pebble Beach AT&T Pro-Am in February, and offer a peek inside the tournament and the heart-centered purpose behind it.

Staying in the spirit of community-centeredness, we offer a story about The Dance Center in Carmel, which molds young minds and bodies through inspirational instruction that promotes individuality. Their fundraising efforts proved their passions for youth.

And since we love wine, it was only fitting we interview the Queen of Cabernet and the First Lady of Wine, Heidi Barrett, a maven winemaker whose reputation for being a joy surely flavors her libations.

Special thanks to My Black Car, which always provides amazing service. And thank you to all our advertisers and readers. We are very blessed to do what we do and you make it possible.

*Rich*

# 57°

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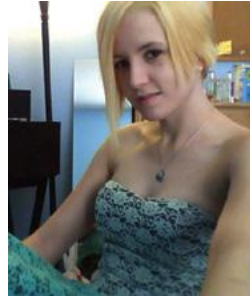
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# Photography+Intelligence, Squared

By Michael Cervin | Photos by Dan Ambrosi

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then one of Daniel Ambrosi's large format panoramic photographic scenes is worth infinitely more.

Can a photograph speak to you in such a way that you are transformed emotionally, physically, even spiritually? Ambrosi, based in Half Moon Bay, thinks so. He's been exploring unique methods of visual presentation since graduating from Cornell University with degrees in architecture and 3-D graphics. His work hangs in galleries in Florida, DZINE Gallery in San Francisco, the offices of Google New York and Google San Francisco, the lobby of the Oceano Hotel in Half Moon Bay, and many other locations.

"I've always been a very visually focused person," says Ambrosi. "When I was at Cornell, I caught wind of what was happening in the basement." Down in the bowels of Cornell, pioneering efforts for 3-D computer graphics were underway, and Ambrosi was hoping to use it within the architecture community. But architects were not quite ready for the technology, so Ambrosi ended up marketing for a Silicon Valley graphics company "to chase my real love: visualization technology and 3-D graphics," he says. "I've always had this lust and passion for technology."

Ambrosi started with traditional photography. "I definitely have an eye for composition. I'm an avid hiker and skier and lover of beautiful places, like Napa and the California coast," he says. He wanted to share his images and experiences with others but was frustrated by his inability to communicate the emotion of what he had photographed through traditional means. "My images were falling flat—they captured the visual scene, but not the immersiveness, the feeling that I feel in the middle of my chest," he says of an awe-inspiring view. "I wanted to bottle that experience with such fidelity that others could have the same experience."

So he began to ruminate, pulling ideas from art history, American landscape painters from the late 1800s, and hyperrealism and experimenting with panoramic stitching, trying to capture nature's vistas with a higher degree of vibrancy. High dynamic range (HDR) software was the answer. It essentially increases the luminosity of a photograph using multiple exposures over time, in order to capture greater details from light and dark, of the photo, bringing them together to create texture and depth. Ambrosi devised a unique form of computational photography that generates extreme, HDR-immersive, vibrant images, and found an unconventional partner in his work—artificial intelligence (AI).



Google engineers had already developed DeepDream, a computer vision program designed to visualize the inner workings of Google's Deep Learning artificial intelligence models. When Google released the software, it was originally used as a diagnostic tool to categorize images—identifying faces in your Facebook photographs, for example—but it had the ability, in a sense, to reimagine what it was looking at.

"The computer was essentially fantasizing, not unlike us when we see figures in clouds," he explains. He decided to apply this to his landscapes, using AI to augment his photographs. Thus his "Dreamscapes" images were born—nature provides the scene, Ambrosi captures that scene, and AI "takes it over the goal line," he says, explaining that it reworks each individual pixel in ways Ambrosi can oversee but not control. It's science fiction meets artistic integrity, and the result is imagery you've never before experienced.

"The most common response to my work is, 'Wow, it's like I can walk right into that scene.'" By creating this visceral response, Ambrosi is accomplishing his goal and giving people a fundamentally new experience: "I want to put more beauty and peace in the world."

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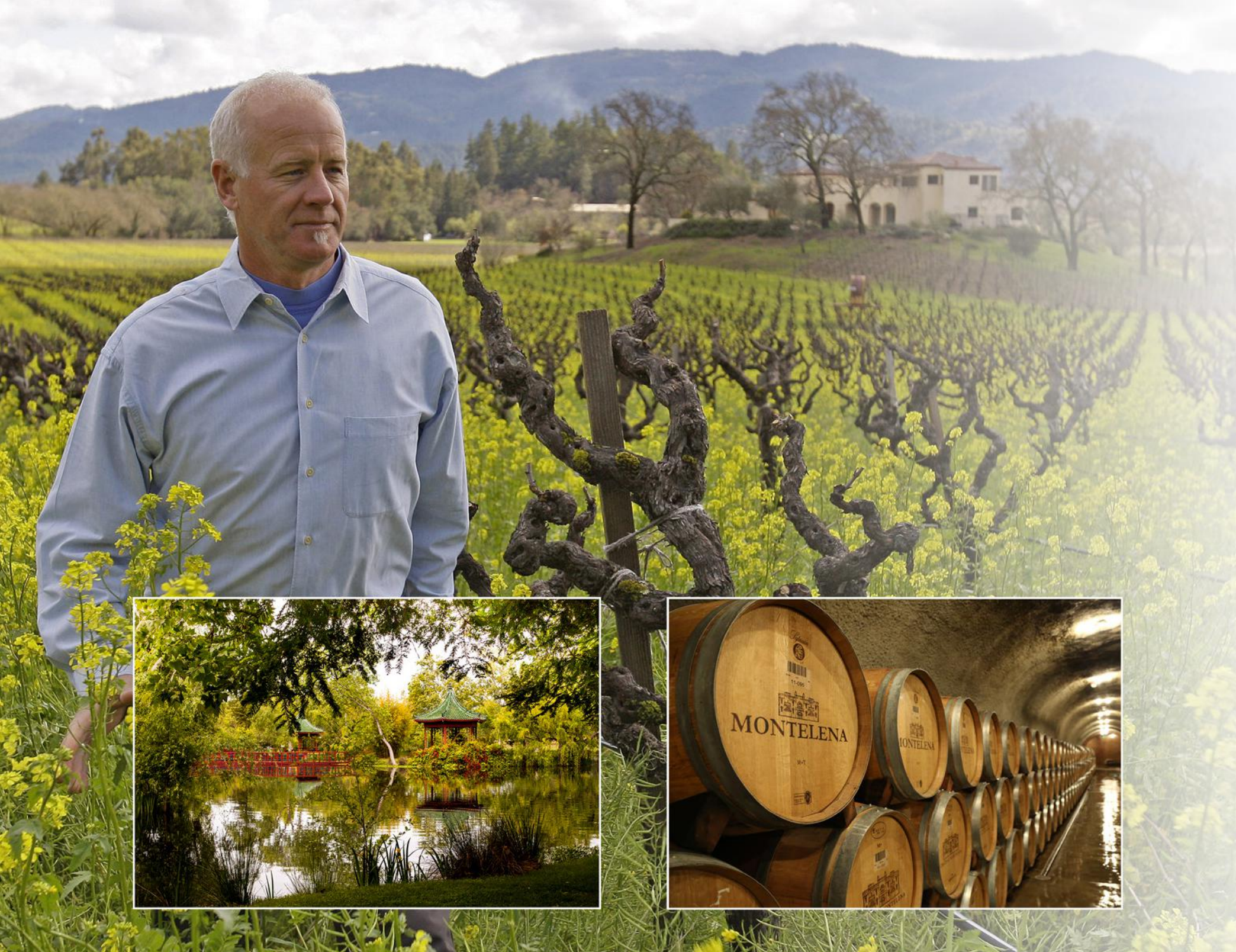

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# Chateau Montelena: Story in a Bottle

By Fran Endicott Miller | Photo Courtesy of Chateau Montelena

Chateau Montelena's renown can be attributed to several factors. The Calistoga winery's unlikely Chardonnay victory at the 1976 Judgment of Paris blind tasting is a decided component, as is Hollywood's 2008 cult classic film *Bottle Shock* and its whimsical and somewhat farcical portrayal of the events leading to the historic win. But the winery's legendary status is largely due to the pioneering spirit of founder Jim Barrett who helped to revolutionize Napa Valley winemaking and build a global reputation for Napa Cabernet Sauvignon. Jim's dream and guiding principal was to embrace the practices that would justify the title American First Growth. Jim's son Bo Barrett has ensured that his father's dream continue to be realized. As the winery's current CEO, Bo has overseen Chateau Montelena's winemaking for more than 30 years and his wines continue to set a Napa Valley standard.

Since the winery's founding in 1972, Bo has been involved in every vintage. With each passing year, his team's Estate Cabernet, one of modern Napa Valley's first signature wines, continues to shine as one of the best representations of the Valley's viticultural artisanship. With grapes made from the same vineyard, by the same owners, with the same cellar crew, method, and winemaking style, their Estate Cabernet is a consistent benchmark of quality.

Key to this steadiness is Chateau Montelena's prized 120-acre estate vineyard comprised of three sub-soil types that provide the best possible palate of flavor characteristic from which to make the finest wines. Chateau Montelena's history, philosophy, leadership, and winning winemaking style all begin and end with this unique piece of land. And the winemaking team knows every inch of every acre. They understand the complex connections between land, terroir, and style, and they believe in letting

the vineyard speak for itself. They've yet to be disappointed in its bounty.

But tradition need not impede modernization. Bo and his team have welcomed innovation in everything from sustainable growing practices to the utilization of green energy. Environmental impact has always been paramount; in 1999 the team extended the winery's underground cellar further into the hillside to create a barrel cave tunnel system eliminating the need for refrigeration. In 2007, solar energy was added. Farming protocols avoid chemicals; each year 750,000 ladybugs are released into the vineyard to combat unwanted pests. And all wine shipments utilize recycled, eco-friendly materials.

Nearly as highly prized as its Estate Cabernet is the winery's serene locale and its historic 19th century English Gothic Chateau, which houses the tasting room. The stone castle overlooks a garden, lake, and vineyards that reach the base of Mount St. Helena. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the majestic structure features rusticated stone walls, a battlement with crenels and merlons, narrow arched windows, a large arched door in the place of a portcullis, and bartizans with faux arrow slits. Though its architectural attribution is unknown, it is believed that the design was inspired by the Cellar of Chateau Lafite in France.

Even though Bo Barrett acknowledges that some of his winery's notability is the result of *Bottle Shock* notoriety, he takes pride in knowing that it is, and always has been, the wine itself that puts Chateau Montelena on the wine map. While he he prides himself and his life's work on each perfect vintage of their Estate Cabernet, he admits that being portrayed on the big screen by Chris Pine isn't too shabby.



# Blazing a New Trail

By Katherine Matuszak

Five short weeks ago, Michael Bergin hit the road with his wife and six-month-old daughter for their next adventure. Bergin, the new Director of Sales, Marketing, and Events for Andaz Napa, has grown accustomed to picking up and setting down new roots. He started with Hyatt Hotels, the corporation that owns Andaz, in South Florida. From there, his work took him to Chicago, across to Lake Tahoe, down to San Diego, and then back up to Tahoe.

Before settling in Yountville, the family spent their first weeks in the area at a hotel in downtown Napa, discovering new restaurants and tasting rooms that are likely to become regular haunts.

One of these was Angele, a restaurant serving French cuisine. “There’s a patio overlooking the river, and it has this indoor-outdoor feel with a great atmosphere,” says Bergin. “It’s part of the whole Main Street Renaissance; they renovated part of an old building and turned it into this fantastic restaurant.”

They also enjoyed their time in the Gabrielle Collection taste+ tasting room, which offers popcorn and chocolates as fun pairings with fantastic wines.

Other standouts included Oenotri, which features excellent Italian food and an ever-changing menu, Azzurro Pizzeria, which has especially good appetizers, and Mark Herold, a winery offering types of wines you may not expect in Napa as well as a very casual environment.

While in Tahoe, Bergin and his wife liked to ski, but they are keen to find what their new home offers. Bergin, a former triathlete who participated in three Ironman races, stopped training with the arrival of his daughter, but plans to stay active as he and his wife explore new hiking



trails. When asked how Napa and his old home differ, Bergin reflects, “They’re both beautiful, just in different ways, but Napa has a lot to offer from a cultural perspective.”







# Hotel Yountville: Some Kind of Wonderful

By Michael Cervin

There are many wonderful choices of places to stay in Yountville, one of Napa's smallest communities, with just 3,000 people. But a visit to Napa requires a stay worthy of your surroundings, and Hotel Yountville is just such a place.

Set on five acres, the hotel, which hosts 80 rooms and suites, a restaurant and fitness center, and an on-site spa, feels intimate. The property is ideally situated within walking distance to Yountville's top-rated restaurants and tasting rooms. It's also close to the City of Napa, set squarely in wine country and most notably adjacent to Stag's Leap District, known for its elegant Cabernet. "Hotel Yountville provides guests with a wine country retreat unparalleled in charm, personality, and romance," says Vice President of Operations Sileshi Mengiste, and it offers these characteristics in abundance.

Hotel Yountville was remodeled in 2014, and features a rustic stone exterior that is accented with natural wood hues. The rooms feel less like a hotel, and more like your friend's very nice guesthouse: comfortable, spacious, classy, yet unpretentious. Their gas fireplaces and jet tubs make use of natural tones and fabrics that are reminiscent of Yountville itself. The hotel's pool, with its hot tub and fire pit, is surrounded by Italian Cypress trees that stand like sentinels around the perimeter, and the pool's lounge offers plenty of space for gatherings.

Complimentary bicycles allow guests to explore the community and nearby vineyards. They may order a picnic lunch, complete with a bottle of wine, to bring along on their journey. Upon request, the hotel can arrange a full-day, guided bike tour. The Heritage Oak Café, which offers breakfast and lunch, has a seasonal menu ripe with fresh ingredients pulled from local farms.

"Located in the heart of Napa, our guests are immersed in a unique hotel experience that has made Hotel Yountville a destination favorite, and placed in an ideal location to explore our beloved wine country," says Mengiste. Though most guests are from California, the hotel's reputation has spread far and wide, with nearly half of all visitors from international locales. What keeps everyone coming back is that secure and home-like feeling that permeates the hotel, from the look and feel, to the rooms and open spaces, to the friendly staff. When Napa beckons—and she will—Hotel Yountville will help answer the call.

*More information at: [www.hotelyountville.com](http://www.hotelyountville.com)*





# Napa Valley's Cult Cabernet Queen

By Fran Endicott-Miller

Renowned wine critic Robert Parker has dubbed her the Queen of Cabernet and the First Lady of Wine, but Heidi Barrett is also known as the hardest working winemaker in Napa. Eight wineries and ten brands showcase her winemaking artistry, and she oversees her own label, La Sirena, while partnering with husband Bo Barrett (winemaker and CEO of Chateau Montelena) in crafting wines for their joint venture, Barrett and Barrett.

When a wine bears her signature, one is assured of her all-encompassing involvement in the process. "They get me on a day-to-day basis," says Barrett. "I'm at the sorting table and on the crush pad."

She tries to group her wineries into four locations for travel expediency and is reluctant to accept jobs that are more than a 30-minute drive from her Calistoga home. Her one outlier is Kenzo Estate, in Napa's southeast corner, an hour's drive away, but her skills as a helicopter pilot allow her to avoid the Highway 29 crawl.

A 1980 graduate of UC Davis' viticulture program, Barrett began attracting critical acclaim shortly thereafter as winemaker for Buehler Vineyards, where her unique talents were quickly recognized. She was raised in a household that celebrated wine and art, and was influenced by their combined aesthetic. Her craft reflects an artisan approach—one that is highly valued by cult wine collectors. "My dad, a winemaker, was the scientist, and my mom was the artist, and I was drawn to both fields," says Barrett, also an accomplished jeweler and painter. One of her paintings, *A Secret Vineyard*, graces the label of a 2016 red blend produced by Amuse Bouche, a boutique winery at which she has been winemaker for 15 years.

With so many labels and varieties under her watch, one wonders how a single winemaker can generate vastly differing flavors. Barrett has heard the

question many times and admits she loves the challenge of working with a multitude. "Every vineyard is different, and every vintage is different," she says. "There's a big distinction in the raw ingredients of every grape grown. No two vineyards are alike, and that keeps things interesting. I strive to make the best possible wines, with emphasis on the potential of each vineyard and its unique characteristics."



In the 1990s, her abilities were fully recognized with her creation of powerful yet elegant Cabernets. Her famous Maya cult Cabernet blend received two perfect 100-point scores from Parker, as did her Screaming Eagle Cabernet. A six-liter bottle of her 1992 Screaming Eagle set a world record for the highest price ever paid for a single bottle of wine at the 2000 Napa Valley Wine Auction, selling for \$500,000.

Barrett's winemaking talent has put her on the world stage, according to her good friend Leslie Sbrocco, author, wine consultant, and host of KQED's *Check Please! Bay Area*. "She is recognized as one of the best in the business, and her contributions to Napa Valley have been significant," says Sbrocco. "But what's most impressive about Heidi is her approachability and engaging personality."

When not winemaking, painting, or helicoptering, Barrett enjoys scuba diving (the La Sirena label features a mermaid likeness in homage to Barrett's love of the ocean), skiing, gardening, mushroom hunting, and spending time with Bo and their two daughters; Remi oversees sales and marketing for Barrett and Barrett, and Chelsea is a winemaker with Joel Gott Wines.

Says Sbrocco, "Heidi not only crafts fantastic wine, she is simply a joy to be around. She is a winemaking legend with a passion for squeezing the best from a grape and the most out of life."

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# See It all in St. Helena

By Malorie McEligot

Weekend warriors rejoice! I have put together the quintessential guide for your next weekend in Napa Valley. Starting with where to stay!

I recently enjoyed a two-night stay at the Southbridge Hotel in St. Helena. Conveniently located off Highway 29, in between downtown St. Helena shops, Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch, Merryvale Winery, and directly across the street from the famous burger joint Gotts Roadside. The hotel is filled with spacious rooms, thoughtful amenities—forgot your charger? They have a kit you can buy—and fresh Model Bakery English muffins (one of Oprah Winfrey’s Favorite things) as part of a continental breakfast. Yes, please!

When we finally began to wind down from our long day, we opted to take a short cut through the Merryvale Winery property—rather than walk the four blocks to local restaurants downtown—to get to one of our favorite happy hours at Farmstead at Long Meadow Ranch. Farmstead is known for its farm-to-table cuisine, which is grown or raised on their ranches throughout California. Some of my favorite items include the Mini Ham Sandwiches, Pulled Pork Nachos (happy hour), Grilled Artichoke, and Fried Chicken. The list goes on and on. If you’re in need of some comfort food to soak up all that Cabernet Sauvignon, this is one of my go-to locales.

Speaking of Cabernet Sauvignon, I am purposefully mentioning wineries last because this topic could easily become a book! I’ve narrowed it down to a few of my favorite wineries in St. Helena, starting with Titus Vineyards, located on Silverado Trail just north of downtown St. Helena. In 2016, they opened the doors to their winery and hospitality center. Sprawling vineyard views and production tours make this the perfect stop for anyone wanting to “see it all!” They are celebrating their 50th harvest this year.

Another St. Helena favorite is Crocker & Starr Winery. They also boast a new winery, which offers great production and vineyard tours of their historic property. They specialize in Cabernet Franc and one of my personal favorites, Sauvignon Blanc. It’s a classic winery experience you do not want to miss.

Finally, for those seeking views of the valley floor, I suggest making a call to Barnett Vineyards located on Spring Mountain. They produce some gorgeous Spring Mountain AVA Cabernet Sauvignon, in addition to Pinot Noir, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, and Sauvignon Blanc. They also have the cutest golden retrievers, who welcome you upon arrival. If that’s not a good enough reason to visit, I’m not sure what is! If you visit any of these places, make sure to tell them VineLiving sent you! Enjoy your next weekend in Napa Valley!



Photo by Shea Evans



Photo by Shea Evans



Photo courtesy of Southbridge Napa Valley



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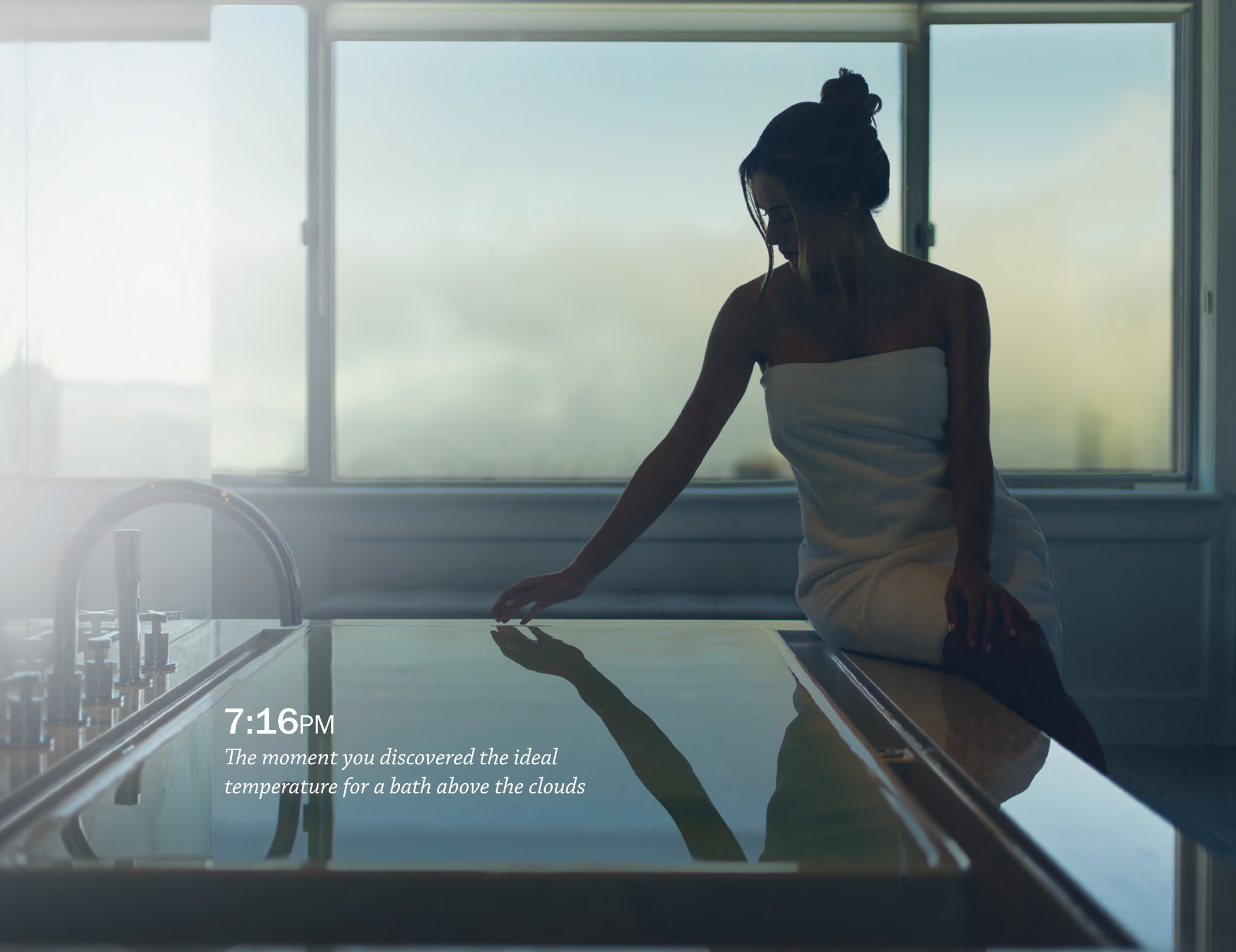




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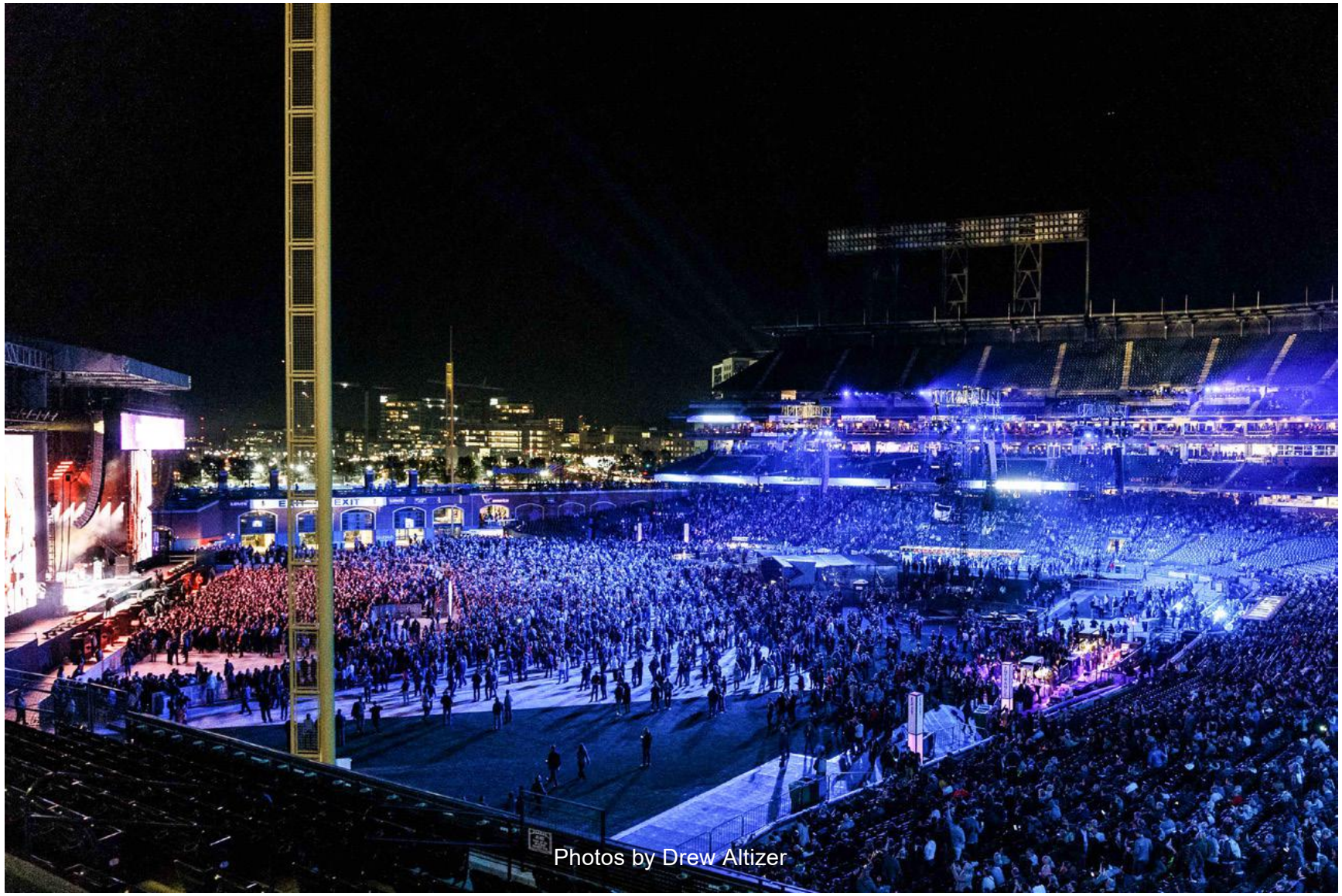
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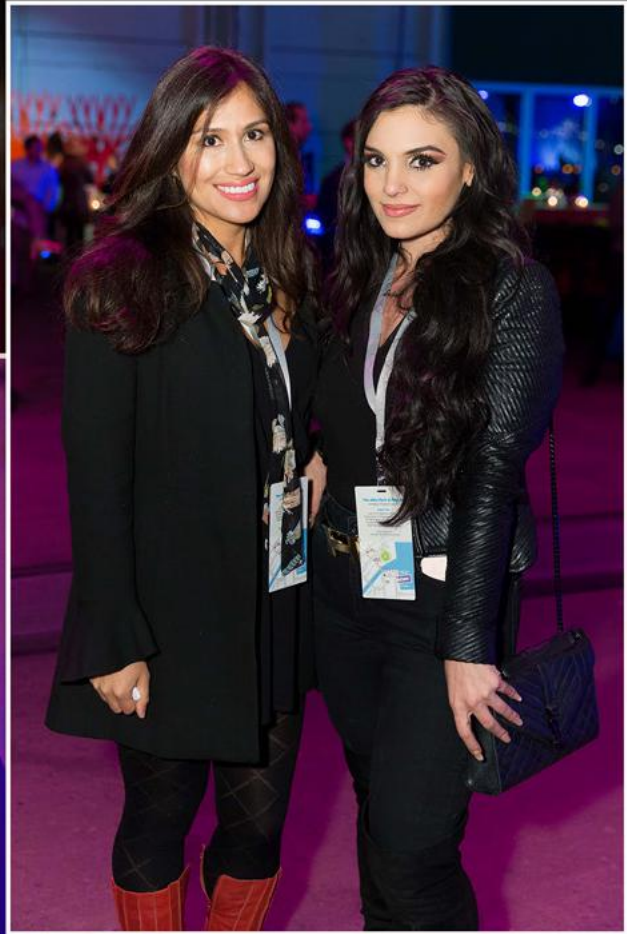
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# Poised for Politics

By Jennifer Moulaison | Photos by Dan Rapa

Positioned among the near-dozen hopefuls officially slated to run for Lieutenant Governor of California in the 2018 election is Marjan Fariba. The story of her rise to this notable ambition is not typical. She has cultivated a career that reflects her personal experiences, interests, and passions.

A self-admitted proponent of change and progress, Fariba emigrated from Iran to Columbus, Ohio in 1976, and was enrolled in Ohio State University by the age of 16. “I was fortunate to have the ability to stay in school as long as necessary. My parents believed it was imperative for me to finish my course of studies in a field that most interested me, instead of rushing through college with just any degree,” she says. After meeting Kamiar, the man who became her husband and father to her two sons, Kamron and Kia, Fariba transferred to San Jose State University, where a careful consideration of her interests led her to a Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations and Marketing. From there, she pursued and acquired an advanced professional certificate from Stanford in Early Education Studies.

Fariba’s resume is impressive: CEO to three businesses, founder of the California Childrens Foundation, and published author are just some of the highlights of Fariba’s career. What Fariba considers chief among her accomplishments is her work reforming social services for early childhood care and education and her involvement in the Proposition 10 “First Five” Early Childhood Cigarette Tax. Her early child care and education efforts were fueled by her own experience seeking homecare for her children and becoming greatly disappointed by the lack of requirements for health and safety of children (only nine units of early childhood education credits are required to provide care for children, from newborns to twelve years of age).

Moreover, her outspoken nature is reflected in her clear political stances, and she’s an open book when it comes to her policies and where she feels

her efforts would be most beneficial for California.

For starters, Fariba intends to apply a tax structure similar to the tobacco tax to firearm manufacturers, taxing each firearm purchase and using the proceeds to fund the California prison system. This would allow taxpayer money to be allocated to other areas. She supports the requirement for firearm owners to purchase liability insurance for victims, and would encourage churches and religious organizations to become more involved in their communities, having them choose to either pay taxes or financially support their community parks and recreation centers. Fariba believes in keeping federal taxes in California and doing away with the Federal

Reserve Bank since the Federal Reserve Bank is a privately-owned entity run by outside businesses. Women’s reproductive rights also hold an important place among her planned initiatives. “Government and religious entities have no place in determining what women can and cannot do with their bodies. Birth control is every woman’s right,” she says. Among Fariba’s agenda is her dedication to holding public servants accountable, and believing that they should receive health insurance coverage identical to their constituents. Fariba explains her view on political sponsorship: “Politicians should reveal their sponsors’ identities openly—like NASCAR drivers and their cars, sponsor names should be worn on the clothing of every politician, and [posted] on their websites in order to inform the public more honestly about their affiliations and their agenda.”

Fariba’s unique personal experience and insightful observations have clearly motivated her ability to advocate for change with the help of sheer willpower and application of common sense. Taking stock of all her endeavors and accomplishments reflects that

she has constructed her life around her belief that one person can, indeed, make a difference.





# Spanish Cuisine: A Love Story

by Victor Vargas

In recent years, Spanish restaurants have become highly sought-after places to eat at and be seen-in around San Francisco. While the trend is influenced by Chef Jose Andres' triumphant arrival—25 years ago to subsequent success which continues to this day in the United States—it is impossible to ignore the one name that keeps popping-up in association with these local restaurants. That name is Chef Ryan McIlwraith. This charming and talented Chef was at the helm at Coqueta and is currently running the show at both Barcino and Bellota. Amongst these, Bellota

stands out for its mouth-watering cuisine paired with a lively bar scene and a remarkable open layout that brings out the socialite in even the most reclusive types. During the Holidays, I caught-up with Chef McIlwraith on one of several visits to the restaurant. I peppered him with questions about his past in French Cuisine, his current reign over Spanish restaurants and his favorite dishes on the Bellota menu. Among his responses, he introduced me to my current favorite dish, Fabada Austuriana.

## The Conversation

**Victor Vargas:** In the last few years, you've become a specialist in Spanish Cuisine. What inspired you to take this direction?

**Ryan McIlwraith:** I had done a gourmet small-plate restaurant in Manhattan about 12 years ago called Maze by Gordon Ramsay. I really enjoyed that style of eating, as it allowed you to try smaller bites of more dishes. I travelled to Spain on a food tour in 2011 and fell in love with the Spanish flavors. I also found it interesting that there were so many iconic Spanish tapas that no one had heard of in America at that point.

**Victor Vargas:** What is the most surprising aspect of specializing in this type of cuisine?

**Ryan McIlwraith:** I think what is most surprising is that a lot of people in America still don't know about Spanish food. I get questions such as 'Do you serve tacos?' or 'What is a paella?' on a regular basis. It is a lot of fun to answer people's questions and broaden their outlook on what Spanish food entails.

**Victor Vargas:** You spent quite a few years working with French Cuisine. Do any French techniques show up in your current cooking style?

**Ryan McIlwraith:** I use a lot of different techniques in my Spanish cooking that aren't always based in Spain. The precision and purity of flavor in French cooking is a huge influence on my style. Although I enjoy questioning and reinventing the "old school" rules of cooking, my palate is still a combination of my experiences and past. When approaching a classic Spanish dish, I think about how can I keep the integrity of this dish and emphasize the freshness of the ingredients and presentation.

**Victor Vargas:** What is the most unexpected aspect of cooking in front of your guests, as is the case with your open kitchen at Bellota?

**Ryan McIlwraith:** I think it teaches a lot of our cooks how to work clean and organized. You can't hide anything when the guest is only a couple of feet away. Additionally, the interaction that the chefs get with the guests is so much fun for both sides.

**Victor Vargas:** Which are your favorite dishes on the Bellota menu?

**Ryan McIlwraith:** The Fabada Asturiana is one of my favorites. We took one of my favorite classic Spanish dishes and added some new elements that really appeal to a lot of guests. The old-world dish of braised fabada beans, chorizo and jamon is made unique and more complex with the addition of charred cabbage, fermented cabbage, and grilled octopus.





**Victor Vargas: What makes Jamon Iberico de Bellota so special?**

Ryan McIlwraith: Jamon iberico de Bellota is special because of the Iberian hog itself and how that hog lives. The Iberico pig is a smaller hog with a dense muscle structure. The time the hog spends in the Dehesa forest eating acorns makes the flavor of the Jamon unlike any other cured pork product.

**Victor Vargas: What is your ideal pairing of food and wine or cocktails?**

Ryan McIlwraith: The Fabada and an Amontillado sherry together are such a great natural pairing. The brightness of the sherry helps to cut through the fat in the dish. The richness of the sherry can also stand up to the big flavors of the dish. Our sommelier Michael Goss turned me onto a little trick as well—if you drizzle a little of the sherry right into your stew, it adds a salty/sweet element that really brings the dish up a notch.



**Victor Vargas: Is trying the paella a must?**

Ryan McIlwraith: When we were developing the concept and menu for Bellota I really wanted our paellas to be the backbone of the menu. I wanted to be known as a “rice house” that focused on this dish, and I wanted people to treat the paella in the same way they treat pizza in America. It is a versatile, large format dish that we offer in several different styles that could be part of a larger meal or make up the whole meal itself. I knew that providing this many paella options wasn’t something that everyone else in town could offer, because our kitchen was designed specifically for that purpose. Paella takes a good amount of space to cook, so we dedicated half of the kitchen to the paella preparation. We also came up with our signature dividida paella pan, to make the commitment to one whole paella a little less daunting. We had a local metal worker weld a food-grade stainless steel wall down the middle of the pan, allowing us to cook two different paellas in the same pan without any crossover. This is a unique signature of our restaurant that can’t be found elsewhere.

**Victor Vargas: Which is your favorite way to finish a meal?**

Ryan McIlwraith: My favorite way to end a meal at Bellota is to move to the bar area and enjoy a good gin-tonic. My gin of choice is the Gin Mare with heavy citrus notes, but there is a gin for everyone’s palate. The live music and the alcohol work as a fabulous digestif to soak up the beautiful surroundings.



**Victor Vargas: What do you like most about working in San Francisco?**

Ryan McIlwraith: The local craftsmen, artisans, and farmers make the Bay Area a special place to cook and eat. Not only is the seasonal produce some of the best in the world, it seems that locals are just as educated about the produce as the chefs. They wait for Dungeness crab or black Jonathon apple season and expect those ingredients to be highlighted in restaurants when they are at their best.

*For more information visit: [www.bellotasf.com](http://www.bellotasf.com)*

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# The Intimate World of Mobile Art

By Andrea Stuart

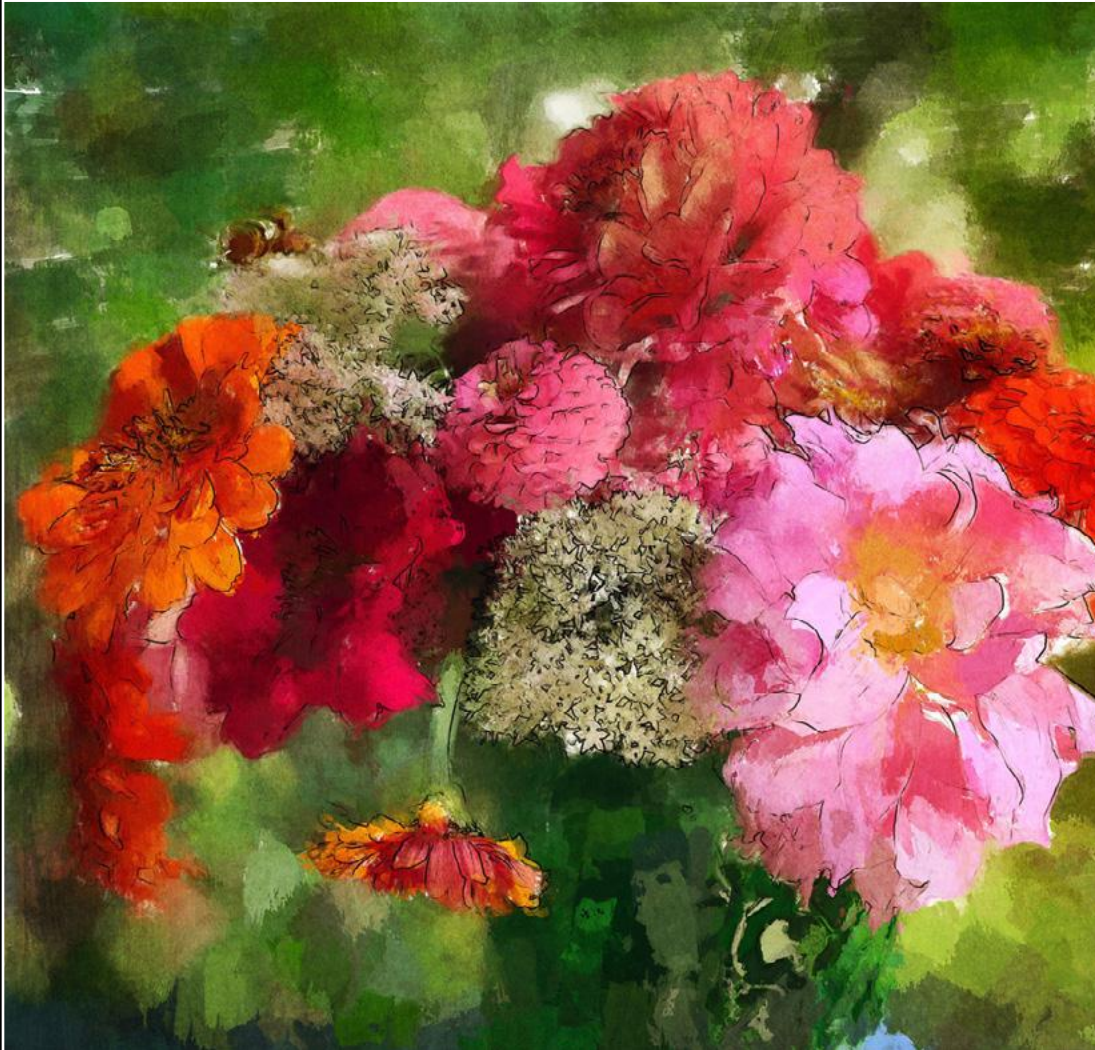
Art is the window to a man's soul. Without it, he would never be able to see beyond his immediate world; nor could the world see the man within. - Lady Bird Johnson

For Cecilia "Celie" Placzek, mobile art—visual art created using a mobile device—allows her to step outside of the proverbial box and dig into the dreamy world of spontaneous art. Inspired by the unpredictable nature of her method, Placzek is excited about her transition to the iPhone. "For decades I've used traditional cameras, starting with a Kodak Brownie with rolls of film, to using my Canon 5D and mirrorless Olympus Mark III," says Placzek. "I'm intrigued by exploring motion, design, color, textures, and different qualities of light while photographing people, landscapes, wildlife, and close-up work."

Placzek leaves any plans at the door and attacks each project with abandon. Beginning with an iPhone image, she sometimes allows the original photograph to speak for itself. Other times, she manipulates the image until it scarcely resembles the original. "It's about the tactile sensation of manipulating an image on a touch screen . . . how it lets me feel an intimacy with my work," Placzek explains of her process. She likens it to molding a piece of clay.

Creating mobile art also allows Placzek to easily share her work with other mobile artists. As such, her community is global, reaching from the United States to Turkey, Russia, Japan, Holland and many places in-between. She appreciates the ability to receive feedback from other artists and credits the global community—a place where strangers build relationships that would otherwise not be possible—for encouraging her to be creative. "Technology has really flung the window wide open, offering this platform for mobile artists."

*To see more of Celie Placzek's work, visit [celieplaczek.com](http://celieplaczek.com).*





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# Casa Madrona

Nestled on a hillside in beautiful Sausalito, Casa Madrona Hotel & Spa offers boutique experiences by combing contemporary design with casual sophistication and bayside charm. After a series of enhancements since 2012, the property will be complete in spring 2018. Over the past five years, the property has re-imagined its meeting spaces, hillside cottages, guestrooms, and The Mansion by weaving in modern luxuries, enhanced design, and cutting-edge technology while staying true to the history and charm of the property. Final updates will include a spa and fitness space and arrival experience, including a façade, brand-new lobby, and reception social spaces. Additionally, Casa Madrona will debut a new wellness concept, which will include enhanced health club facilities and a full-fledged wellness program. Guests can also look forward to staying in Casa Wellness Guestrooms, which will be outfitted with amenities designed to promote a healthy mind and body.

Located just north of San Francisco across the Golden Gate Bridge, Casa Madrona Hotel & Spa provides easy access to Napa and Sonoma wine countries, downtown San Francisco, and national park scenery. The Mansion at Casa Madrona, the property's signature luxury residence, features 11 guestrooms, including the standout 5,000-square-foot Alexandrite Suite and a 1,700-square-foot Junto meeting and event space. Built in 1885 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, The Mansion has been re-imagined by a world-renowned design team, including Taal Safdie and Ricardo Rabines of Safdie Rabines Architects, Christopher O'Connor Design, and TruexCullins Architecture + Interior Design. The result is a seamless integration of sophisticated style and timeless Victorian accents.

From intimate weddings, corporate meetings, and retreats, to private escapes, Casa Madrona provides an unparalleled luxury experience with all the amenities of a full-service hotel and the charm of a historic retreat.





# Finding Friuli

By Katherine Matuszak | Photos by Darren Lovecchio

An hour's drive outside of Venice you'll find Friuli, a small wine region tucked away from the tourist crowds. Its old family wineries had been creating varietals previously unavailable to the United States. But in 2017, Friuli Italian Wines changed that.

The Friuli team is Alex Corazza, his wife, Emily, and business partner Patrick Corazza (no relation). Many stars had to align to bring them together.

Alex was raised in Friuli. After his father died, when Alex was six years old, he looked up to his grandfather, a business owner and furniture builder. He went to work at his grandfather's company after high school. "I sold furniture my whole life, basically," Alex reflects.

Seven years ago, he met Patrick Corazza, who studied cars and worked for a car dealer in Milan. Like Alex, he'd lost his father at a young age and spent most of his life in his father's profession. The two became very close.

Alex's wife, Emily, grew up stateside, in Los Gatos, and traveled to Italy as part of a study-abroad program. Although she planned to live in the country for only six months, she remained there for nearly ten years. After graduating, she found work and met Alex; they have been together for five years.

Just before his passing, Alex's grandfather sold his furniture business, leaving Alex at a crossroads in terms of his future. "I decided to do something completely different," he says. Alex, his wife, and Patrick decided on a new direction they could take together. They moved to California and now import wine from Friuli to the United States. Alex serves as chief executive officer, Emily is president, and Patrick is founder and sommelier. After eight successful months, they now plan to expand the business toward southern California.

The products pictured in this issue of 65° are available for purchase through Friuli's e-commerce storefront at [friulitalianwines.com](http://friulitalianwines.com).





# How One Italophile Mixes Business with Pleasure

By Kelley Lefmann | Photos by Darren Lovecchio

Don't be fooled by the tiny tasting room tucked away in a historic-looking building in downtown Los Gatos. Its proprietor, Paula Barbarito Levitt, looms larger than life. In true Italian fashion, the owner of Girasole Imports is an Italian wine curator who leaves most of her clients with an offered hug over a handshake.

A descendant of Italy's Calabria region, Levitt has a history steeped in as many colorful notes as the wines she selects. She holds a master's degree in learning disabilities and spent much of her early career consulting and fundraising for a local nonprofit, the Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley. Not content to stop there, Levitt went on to attend Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, where she studied French cooking. She developed a passion for food, having studied her mother's cookbooks as a child and then studying with Florentine chef Giuliano Bugialli and French chef Jacques Pépin as an adult.

"I was teaching regional Italian and French cooking in my home on Monday evenings while my husband traveled for work," she explains. "When my daughter went to college, I began blogging about food." Levitt then infused family stories into the recipes on her blog, [LaBellaSorella.com](http://LaBellaSorella.com).

Simultaneously, her wine business evolved. "Opening our home, enjoying various wines paired with all kinds of food, talking about them, and developing specific knowledge about wine was just what we did," she explains. "Wine is made to be consumed with food, and friends." When her family began taking annual summer trips to Italy, she started meeting with regional wine producers, and "the vines" for a new business were planted. The business is known today as Girasole Imports—girasole is Italian for sunflower, a plant seen throughout the Italian countryside. Levitt carefully researches each wine and producer before adding to her portfolio. Together with a team of trusted sommeliers, she evaluates not only the flavor but also the relationship with the producer.

"I'm not just selling wine, I'm selling the traditions of a family; a microculture of an area," Levitt proclaims. "I have to respect every bottle in this regard." This is why Levitt claims to not favor a particular wine. "They're all my favorite. I've watched (my producers') children grow— they're like family."

Part of her work involves travel, visiting producers at their vineyard. That is where the real stories emerge. "My sales are strong, not just because of the quality of the wine, but the rich history and the personal element that I can share with customers," she notes.

Whether enjoying a Barbera with a grilled flank steak, or a Super Tuscan with a traditional Bistecca Fiorentina, Levitt believes there is always something new to learn. "I recommend doing some tasting. Find a reliable resource, get some education, and try wines you wouldn't normally taste," she advises. For example, what began as an experiment in a Trentino-based sparkling Chardonnay has grown into a high-demand label. "I will always sell a lot of [it]," she says. "Just try things on—you will learn what you like and discover some colorful history around the wine's origins at the same time. The experience is what it's all about," she says.

Levitt's daughter, who graduates this year from New York University with a major in media communications and cultures and a minor from the Stern School of Business, has an excellent palate for wine. "She'll save her money for a dinner in New York with Barolo and truffles! She checks in on us, asks what we're eating, and then recommends a wine pairing," beams Levitt. "Food and wine are in our blood."

***To learn more, visit [GirasoleImports.com](http://GirasoleImports.com) or [LaBellaSorella.com](http://LaBellaSorella.com).***



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# Be the Tipping Point

Katherine Matuszak | Photos by Drew Altizer

The Bay Area is often equated with high rent prices and expensive food. What some may not realize is how serious a problem this is for many Bay Area families. One in ten local families live at or below the poverty line, making \$24,300 or less per year. This means even basic essentials, like food or rent, are five times more difficult for these families.

Daniel Lurie, the founder and CEO of the non-profit Tipping Point Community, started the organization to break the cycle of poverty. “We do that by identifying and investing in the most effective organizations and promoting policies that are proven to move people out of poverty: a nurturing early childhood, strong education, safe and secure housing, and gainful employment,” says Lurie.

Tipping Point is modeled after the Robin Hood Foundation in New York, where Lurie began working just before September 11, 2001. He was humbled by their unparalleled relief efforts and support for families; providing them with resources, and giving donors an effective and tangible way to help. Two years later, he moved back home to California for graduate school, and looked at applying the Robin Hood philosophy to his own neighborhood.





When they began work in 2005, Tipping Point had only four board members and 100 donors. Today, Tipping Point has 45 people on their staff finding, funding, and partnering with the most effective groups fighting poverty on a local level. “Our board covers all of our operating expenses, so 100% of every donation given to Tipping Point goes to where it’s needed most,” Lurie reports. To date, they have raised more than \$150 million to support their work. Last year, they helped 23,000 people begin a path out of poverty.

Tipping Point considers clear goals crucial toward making a difference. When asked what’s down the pipeline for the new year and beyond, Lurie responds without hesitation. “Right now our biggest challenge is also our biggest opportunity,” he says.

Lurie states that there are 2,100 people with mental or physical disabilities who have been living on the streets for a year or more in San Francisco. “We’re aiming to cut chronic homelessness in half by 2022,” he says. “That’s a big goal, and we’re working hand-in-hand with the City of San Francisco to address it. We’re going to need everyone to be our partners in this endeavor.”

We are all part of one community, and we all share a common thread.

*For more information, visit [tippingpoint.org](https://tippingpoint.org).*

