

Winemaker | Ondine Chattan

Looking back, I acknowledge that I never dreamed I would become a winemaker. But happily and unexpectedly through serendipity and an introductory lecture on Viticulture, I was enlightened and once I comprehended the magnitude of the discovery, I felt I had been initiated into a secret society and I became filled with a purpose and wonderment that set me off and running down the most amazing path.

After graduating from Cal Poly I took my first production role with Cline Cellars in Carneros, working for the entrepreneurial Cline brothers. I plunged into a winemaking sea of 100+ year old vines, Zinfandel, Carignane, Mourvedre, and other Rhone blenders long before they hit the mainstream. I loved the maverick mindset and the scrappy start - up experience. My passion for the 'fringe' varieties and outlying viticultural regions was sparked and fanned. I learned so much in those years, especially enough to know that I had a lot yet to learn, so I left Cline to pursue a graduate degree in winemaking.

At CSU Fresno I had the great fortune to be taken under the wing of the incomparable Dr. Vincent Petrucci who generously made many industry introductions and helped open doors to research opportunities. The experience cemented my winemaking love affair and I grew restless to settle in and apply my learnings, to focus again on a specific property and story. This led me to Ridge Vineyards.

During my tenure at the illustrious Ridge Winery I was able to work with amazing fruit from the Santa Cruz Mountains, Sonoma, Napa, Paso Robles, and Contra Costa. I learned about native yeast fermentations and pre - industrial winemaking in a facility that boasted a state-of-the-art laboratory and world - renowned winemaker. It was humbling and amazing to work and learn there, but my soul always belonged to Sonoma County and after a couple of years, and marriage to my college sweetheart, I left to join Geyser Peak Winery and we settled into our 'forever' home in Healdsburg.

Joining the Geyser Peak Winemaking team was the most pivotal and rewarding step I had taken in my career. A Sonoma County institution with a stable of brands and a downright joyful ambience, I was given an extensive runway to refine, enhance, and create. It was a magical time and I gained experience with fruit from all over California as well as a tight focus on Sonoma County's most desirable vineyards. The luxury of working with specific sites for many years in a row enlightened and inspired me. The historic brand was my identity and second love for 18 years until it changed hands and focus, prompting me to renew my intent and seek out authenticity once more.

Over the years I had enjoyed my business dealings with the captivating Dennis Hill, the founding winemaker of Cannonball wines. When he presented the opportunity to work with him, I was thrilled at the prospect. The easy approachability of his wines coupled with his unbridled enthusiasm for Sonoma County set a stage that was familiar and inspiring. Share A Splash wine co. unites my experience and ambition in making wines that are inclusive and welcoming. I have brought some of my favorite grape growers into our winery family and expanded our sourcing relationships with an eye on always refining style and quality. My intent is to continue producing wines in the style that put these brands on the map and to always over - deliver in their quality to our consumers.