

SANITÉ

FOR RESTAURANT PROFESSIONALS

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trend
meets
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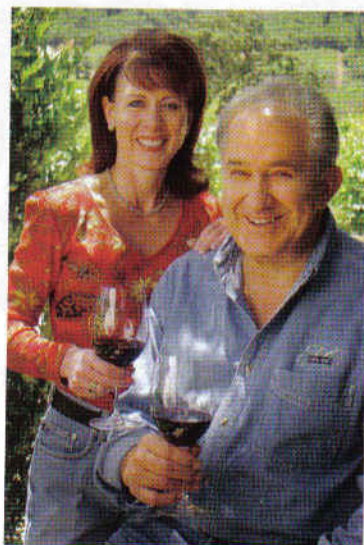
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Kudos
Don and Rhonda Carano have built wine-country masterpieces on dreams, hard work, and a commitment to excellence.

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Ferrari-Carano

Twenty years ago, Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery sold its first wines, but the winemaking dream for Don and Rhonda Carano began in 1979, when the couple bought a 70-acre ranch planted with 30 acres of grapes in Sonoma's Alexander Valley. Their white wines, Fumé Blanc and Chardonnay, brought immediate acclaim, but as the Caranos expanded their vineyard holdings into the Russian River Valley, Dry Creek Valley, and Carneros and purchased mountainside vineyards, the winery's beautifully crafted reds earned equal fame. Today the Caranos own more than 1,500 vineyard acres and produce more than 20 different wines. While Don has concentrated on winegrowing, Rhonda has been busy developing their showcase Dry Creek winery and estate, with its world-class gardens and Enoteca Reserve Tasting Room; their elegant AAA Four-Diamond Vintner's Inn property in the Russian River Valley; and Seasons of the Vineyard, Rhonda's upscale home-furnishings boutique in Healdsburg.

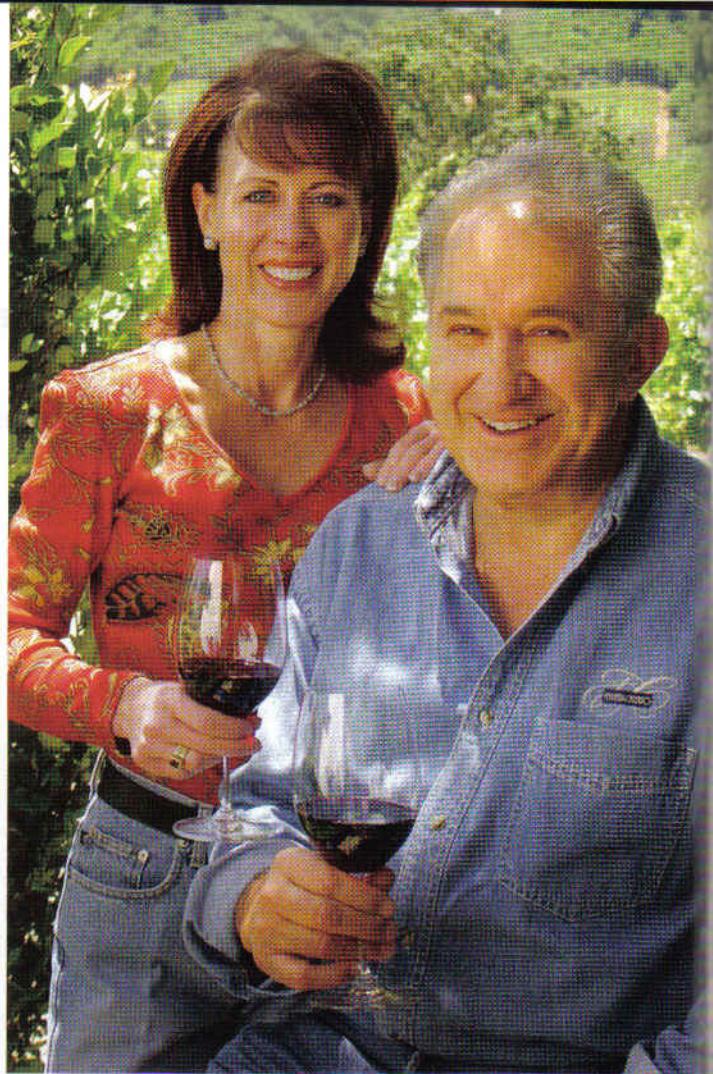
Santé salutes the Caranos' vision and their contribution to the hospitality industry.

What led you to purchase your first vineyard in 1979 in Alexander Valley?

We were looking for a home in the wine country, and the similarities of Alexander Valley to our ancestral Italy were obvious when we visited the area with friends. We did not envision at the time starting a winery; the process evolved with our love for the wine country.

Over the years, what is the most significant change you've seen in northern Sonoma winegrowing? What has remained the same?

The most significant change is how popular the area has become with the increase of visitors, as well as newer, smaller wineries opening up throughout the valley. What has stayed the same is the beauty of our wine country and the people that live here.



Have your ever-expanding business interests encroached on your wine-country lifestyle?

Naturally, because a large corporation does not own us, our responsibilities and the demands on our time have certainly grown. We not only produce wine but have substantial land, which makes us farmers also. We have a passion for wine and all it encompasses, which is part of what wine-country living is all about. We do find time to relax on our terrace to sip a glass of Ferrari-Carano wine with great pride and to "smell the roses."

How do your PreVail wines fit into your expansive wine portfolio?

Our new brand, PreVail, is an extension of all our hard work in cultivating mountain-grown Cabernet Sauvignon. Part of our vision has always been to produce a Bordeaux-style Cabernet Sauvignon, the king of red wines, from our mountain vineyards. We believe that our new wines are wines that will PreVail.

After so many years of success, what motivates you to take on new—and risky—ventures?

We aren't cut out to stand still and bask in our laurels. The excitement and adrenaline rush is still there to live life to the fullest.