

Aggies Uncorked Wine Club Newsletter

Dear Aggies Uncorked Members,

We hope you had a wonderful Summer and are settling in to Fall and the upcoming Holidays. As I write this, the campus is abuzz with new students and the Alumni Association's calendar is full of events. We also have exciting news and a major milestone to celebrate in November. Let's first highlight a few stories behind the winemakers that make Fall 2025 feel so special, including:

- All the winemakers in Fall 2025 are graduates of the Viticulture and Enology department. We do not have "V&E degree" as a criteria for Aggies Uncorked winemakers, but it's interesting to see the number of V&E winemakers increasing and we are excited to share them with you.
- UC Davis attracts a truly international wine community, even places you may not think of first when it comes to winemakers. Nori Nakamura, born and raised in Tokyo, is part of this community who came to Davis for the world class education it provides.
- Nils Venge '67 is a legendary winemaker who helped put full bodied and high scoring Napa Valley wines on the map. He also has a legacy of educating young winemakers including his son Kirk, and winemaker at Saddleback Cellars, Lars Bjorkman, both featured in Fall 2025.

Sharing these stories make us proud to announce the following news about our impactful work 5+ years in the making, plus two major events for people who enjoy good wine and with good people.

Student Scholarship 5 years ago CAAA endowed a scholarship for V&E, and the time has come for the first to be award. In fact, proceeds of the wine club funded not one, but two V&E scholarships for students starting Fall 2025. Congrats to Bodhi Williams and Janlucca Gutierrez-Leal. You'll learn more about them in our next newsletter and at the 5th anniversary on Nov. 15.

5th Anniversary Wine Club Celebration. Nov 15th, 2025. We're hosting the Aggies Uncorked 5th Anniversary Celebration, including dozens of featured winemakers and wineries from our 5 year history. We sure hope you can make it we look forward to seeing you there!

Bordeaux and Basque Country. Oct 1st, 2026. Our annual food and wine trip is on the books, and this time we're traveling to southern France and Northern Spain. Don't miss your chance to experience the refined wines of Bordeaux and the soulful experience of Basque region.

Thank you sincerely for your support of Aggies Uncorked and UC Davis's global impact on wine.

Cheers and Go Ags!

Ryan Crosbie

Director, Aggies Uncorked Alumni Wine Club

This NYTimes Cooking recipe was shared by Lars of GRO Wines to pair with his 2022 Chardonnay. It's a Swedish dish great for lunch or late afternoon snack. We modified it for simplicity because it is okay buy Gravlax, and skip the 5 day home made version in the original recipe. Gravlax is slow cured salmon, different from smoked (cold or hot) salmon. If you cannot find Gravlax at your grocer, a cold smoked salmon will suffice. A splendid companion for a delightful Chardonnay!

Gravlax with Herb Butter

Serves 5-6

Cured Gravlax or Cold Smoked Salmon

- 1 pound Gravlax, thinly sliced
- 1 bunch dill, clean and dry and chopped

Herb Butter (makes extra)

- 1 cup unsalted butter (1 stick), left at room temperature for an hour (not hard from the fridge yet not so warm as to be greasy)
- 1 bunch dill (about 4 ounces), clean and dry, fronds removed from stems, fronds finely chopped (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
- 1 medium shallot, peeled and finely minced
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- Mix together the softened butter, dill, shallot and mustard until well blended
- Store leftovers in the fridge for 2-3 days

Sandwich bread

- Pumpernickel loaf, sliced 1/2" thick
- Okay to substitute Dark Rye

Assembly

- Spread the compound butter on bread, then drape sliced gravlax on top
- Serve as open-faced sandwiches and enjoy with a glass of GRO Chardonnay!



Photo copyright New York Times Cooking

Alternate Pairing Ideas

Be sure to check out more winemaker provided and approved recipes on the following pages and in the **Aggies Uncorked Digital Recipe Book**. Visit our website or scan the code to access and read the collection.



GRO WINES

NAPA VALLEY

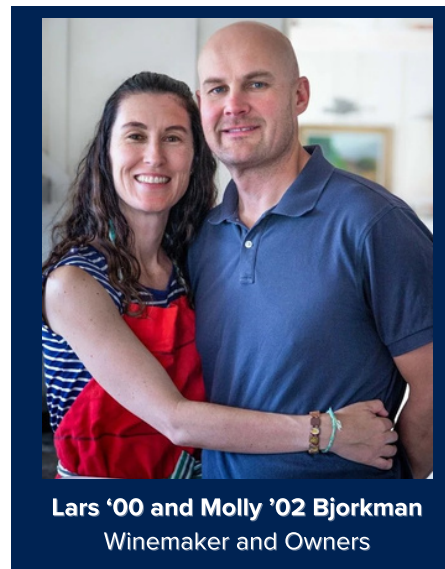
2022 CHARDONNAY, HASPELL VINEYARD, MT VEEDER

Born in Fresno to Swedish immigrants, Lars used his offensive line football skills to get into UC Davis where he planned to pursue medicine, but pivoted to V&E to become a winemaker. He honed his craft at wineries in California and Australia before finding his place at Saddleback Cellars in Oakville where he makes wine with Nils Venge - the first Napa Valley winemaker to receive a 100 points score.

Lars spent his childhood summers outside of Stockholm which had an enormous influence on his palate and flavor development, including the sweet crayfish, woodsy mushrooms, and juicy blueberries that his family gathered and ate. He considers it a natural progression to draw flavors from grapes grown in unique vineyard sites. GRO is a family label with a focus on single vineyard wines that he runs with his wife Molly, '02, a fellow V&E alum and Napa winemaker at Sequoia Grove.

Tasting notes: The Haspel Vineyard is a unique site in the southern hills of Napa Valley. It's cool marine influence, multiple sun exposures, and intense light from the higher elevation result in a layered and delicate wine with a perfume of tropical aromas and white flowers, a creamy texture and a lingering, crisp finish.

Food pairing: Of course, we had to ask Lars for a Swedish food pairing. He suggested a personal favorite: a gravlax and herb butter open face sandwich, a fun and delicious alternative to roasted salmon filet.



Lars '00 and Molly '02 Bjorkman
Winemaker and Owners



Nori Nakamura '04
Owner and Winemaker

NORIA WINES

BERKELEY, CA

2022 PINOT NOIR, BROSSEAU VINEYARD, CHALONE

Originally from Tokyo, Nori first learned about fine wine at his uncle's Italian restaurant. He wanted to break into the industry and knew that UC Davis was the place. After earning his V&E degree, Nori climbed the winemaking ladder at Artesa, Jamieson Ranch and Larson Family Winery. He then leveraged his expertise and contacts to start his own brand, NORIA, in 2010. Nori exported some of his limited production wines to Japan and built a niche selling to Japanese restaurants in the Bay Area.

Many people credit NORIA for shattering the myth that wine only goes with Western food. "Japanese cuisine is an exquisite art that encompasses a realm of sophistication, grace, and alluring nuances" says Nori. To achieve his "California Terroir: Japanese Craftsmanship" style, Nori sources grapes from top vineyards, including Brosseau in the remote hills of Chalone AVA, renowned for its rich limestone and granite soils.

Tasting Notes: This Pinot Noir from Brosseau showcases the pure aromas of raspberry, pomegranate, dark cherry, and lavender as well as the elegant bouquets of cedar, white pepper, and anise. The entry is smooth and a layer of intense red berries seamlessly intertwined with vibrant acidity. Fine, concentrated tannins highlight the minerality and complexity on the palate. Distinctive and intrigued.

Food pairing: To ideally pair this driven Pinot Noir, Nori recommends charcoal grilled wagyu beef which will complement the pomegranate, minerality, cedar, and white pepper notes of the wine.

📍 Nori and his business partner recently opened a tasting room on Gilman St. in Berkeley! Visit them Th-Sun.

AGGIES UNCORKED ALUMNI III

2022 NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The Alumni Wine Series is a full circle of wine education and experience for alumni and students. Alumni III marks the third year we've produced an exclusive wine during the Art & Science of Blending Wine, hosted by Patrick Saboe '02 of the Wine Foundry in Napa Valley. This one-of-a-kind event gives alumni and their friends the opportunity to experience the fun (and challenges) of competing as winemaking teams to craft a winning wine. Plus, a portion of all proceeds from Aggies Uncorked wine club supports scholarships for V&E students. The winning blend from Table 5 in March 2025, pictured, is

90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot and 2% Malbec. Patrick then recreates the blend from his barrel collection before bottling exclusively for Aggies Uncorked. This year was especially unique thanks to the repeat victory of Ayanna and Jeffrey, who were also on the winning team of Alumni II!

Tasting Notes: Alumni III is a 2022 Napa Valley Cabernet blend sourced from premier vineyards in the fertile valley floor and rugged mountains. This wine delights with enticing aromas of dark berries, baking spices, a rich and savory mouthfeel, and smooth tannins. Allow 1 hour to decant. Can age for 10+ years.

Food Pairing: A truly content match with your family's favorite holiday roast. Or, stretch your culinary skills with Saveur's Juniper Berry Crusted Rack of Venison with Mostarda. Cheers and thanks for your support!



Winning team: Daniel Ferrick, Carol Marshall, Cindy Clayton '76, Robert Runyan '87, Ayanna McGee, Jeffrey Noma '10



Kirk Venge '98
Owner and Winemaker

VENGE VINEYARDS

2023 SCOUT'S HONOR RED BLEND

Members will recall Kirk from Spring 2025 when we featured a rosé from a client of his, Eleven Eleven. This season we see Kirk's own wines from Venge Vineyards. Kirk grew up in Napa Valley winemaking alongside his father, Nils Venge, a legendary figure in the industry. By age four, Kirk was working the land, cultivating a connection to farming that would shape his future. Kirk earned his degree in V&E and blended his practical upbringing with scientific training. Today, he leads Venge Vineyards, Croix Estate and consults for more than two dozen wineries through his KV Wines portfolio. Scout's Honor, named for a beloved winery dog named Scout, stands out as a drink-now wine in his lineup of age-worthy Cabernets. It starts a base of old-vine Zinfandel and is built upon with old-vine Charbono, dry-farmed Petite Sirah, and finished with mountain Syrah. Grapes come from storied vineyards, with vines averaging over 70 y/o.

Tasting Notes: Scout's Honor is ready to consume upon release and the 2023 vintage takes full advantage of the near perfect growing season. Full-bodied, concentrated, and gorgeous, with a balance of smooth tannins and jammy, ripe black fruits, sweet currants, pepper spice, and mouthwatering deliciousness.

Food Pairing: Kirk insists he's not a chef, but we questioned that when he shared his recipe for a grilled pork tenderloin to pair with Scout's Honor. Visit our Digital Recipe book for complete prep and cooking instructions.

NAPA VALLEY