

TED LINDSAY FOUNDATION

Wine Tasting

Welcoming Karen Francis DeGolia

Owner, Limerick Lane Cellars | Healdsburg, California



We are delighted to welcome **Karen Francis DeGolia** back to Michigan for this special evening—a return that is both professional and deeply personal.

Karen is the owner of **Limerick Lane Cellars**, a historic 53-acre estate vineyard tucked into the northeastern corner of Sonoma County's Russian River Valley. Planted more than a century ago, Limerick Lane is revered for its old-vine Zinfandel and Rhône varietals, grown at a rare

intersection of soil, elevation, fog, wind, and light. It is a place where vines have evolved over generations to thrive in perfect balance with their environment.

But Limerick Lane's story is inseparable from Karen's own.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, the vineyard was restored and shaped by brothers Tom and Michael Collins. Tom Collins—Karen's fiancé at the time—was instrumental in preserving the estate's old vines and establishing its early reputation for exceptional Zinfandel. Karen worked alongside him during those formative years, deeply connected to both the land and the vision. When Tom passed away unexpectedly in the early 1990s, Karen's life—and the winery's path—changed course.

In 1996, Karen moved to **Birmingham, Michigan**, joining General Motors, where she led the Chevrolet Venture minivan business before becoming the youngest woman ever named General Manager of the Oldsmobile division. She later joined Ford Motor Company as a Vice President, overseeing global export operations and corporate venture investments. During her eight years in Michigan, Karen built lasting friendships and ties that remain meaningful to her today.

Nearly three decades after leaving Sonoma, destiny intervened. Following a fateful lunch in 2021, Karen learned that **Limerick Lane Cellars itself was for sale**. Almost thirty years after she first walked those vines, swam in the estate pool, and stayed up through the night during harvest punch-downs, Karen came home—this time as the winery's owner.

Under her stewardship, Limerick Lane has remained intentionally “**hands off, eyes on.**” The estate does not chase trends or conform to expectations. Located at the end of a dead-end road in the beautiful Russian River Valley, Limerick Lane produces wines—especially Zinfandel and Syrah—that defy category while earning extraordinary critical acclaim. The wines are powerful yet fresh, expressive yet precise, with a clarity of place that cannot be manufactured.

Working closely with winemaker Chris Pittenger, Karen continues a philosophy rooted in trust: let the vines, soil, fog, wind, and time speak—with the lightest possible human hand. The result is a portfolio of wines that are deeply grounded, strikingly vibrant, and unmistakably authentic.

The Ted Lindsay dinner is not just a wine tasting—it is a homecoming, a continuation of a story interrupted and beautifully restored. We are honored to welcome Karen back to Michigan and to share the wines of Limerick Lane with you this evening.

