



AMICI

John Harris
Proprietor

Never idle, John Harris leads an adventurous life. Prior to establishing Amici Cellars, his business career spanned more than three decades and dozens of countries with posts in Bolivia, Argentina, Canada, Singapore and Australia.

A Texas native, he attended The University of Texas, never intending a desk job. A post-college walk-about through Europe eventually led to settling in South America to make his way in mining. But on a return trip home, he changed tack to developing technologies in the oil and gas industry. After two successful stints with Houston-based companies, California called with a start-up opportunity in Silicon Valley. Risky, perhaps, but John has never shied from risk taking ventures.

Long, adrenaline-fueled weeks in start-up mode gave way to John's weekend retreats more reminiscent of his rural roots – Napa Valley. Through his travels, John's immersion in culture and community was largely influenced by his interest in food and wine. He had started a conscientious collection of old-world Bordeaux, Burgundies and Champagne, and soon began collecting Northern California's new world wines. At home in Menlo Park, CA, he opened his doors and entertained, sharing his love of cooking and wine with colleagues and friends, including Bob and Celia Shepard. Along the way, these three kindred spirits' frequent visits to Napa Valley grew more serious with purpose and passion to produce a wine of their own – Amici Cellars.

Purchasing a home in St. Helena was just the beginning for John. Never one to do something halfway, he relocated to Bordeaux for two years study in the D.U.A.D Programme at the Université de Bordeaux, where fewer than 42 people are accepted each year. There, he gained valuable knowledge and relationships, while also adding vintages to his collection.

Returning to Napa, John became an active member in the community and even more active at Amici Cellars, guiding the winery from its early small production success to today's profitable portfolio of premier wines.

With his dedication to Amici Cellars being tantamount to the winery's success, downtime is an oxymoron, but John still makes every effort to entertain, cooking with ingredients grown in his garden, is a voracious reader, and enjoys any activity in the great outdoors, especially with his two sons.



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Bob Shepard Proprietor

Bob Shepard has a laser-like focus and attention to detail that can be disarming. You're just as likely to see him walking the aisles of a nearby wine merchant discussing shelf placement, as you are to see him at a restaurant pouring Amici Cellars wines for clients. He's made a career out of building relationships.

A Bay Area native, Bob graduated from San Jose State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics, where he was also a member of the university's Division One golf team. A college internship in finance provided an early introduction to wine through regular business dinners. Intrigued, Bob applied the same practice and precision used in honing his golf game towards a more disciplined study of wine.

Post-graduation, he began his career in real estate investment and finance, eventually settling in Woodside, CA, with his wife Celia and their three children. He continued his exploration of wine through practical study; a wine class with Master of Wine Peter Marks and more informal, but regular tastings with friends and neighbors like John Harris.

It was Bob's more spiritual study of wine, frequent trips with Celia, their children and friends, to the world's famous wine growing regions in Italy and France, where their vision of starting a winery crystallized. These travels further illuminated the importance of geography, terroir and winemaking techniques as the foundation, with the resulting wines informing the very fabric of culture, community and cuisine.

With a shared belief that great wines begin in the vineyard, Amici Cellars was established with their Cabernet Sauvignon, a blend of Napa Valley grapes from premier vineyards sources. Pleased with the inaugural vintage, Bob, a dedicated salesman, borrowed from the playbook of the legendary Robert Mondavi and began to spend time on the road, "shaking hands with people."

Indefatigable, Bob and John still spend half the year meeting with customers, crossing the country, racking up hundreds of thousands of airline miles. When it comes to their winemaking philosophy, on par isn't good enough. They challenge the Amici Cellars team to bottle the best wines, year-over-year, no matter the price point; a commitment to quality that translates in an ever-growing number of fans.

Bob proudly credits Celia and their daughters for his success. As a family-owned business it's truly a team effort that requires sacrifice; without their support and understanding it simply wouldn't be possible. Despite his long hours and extended trips, Bob makes a point of being present for the girls' activities and occasionally still manages to squeeze in a round of golf.



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**Celia McCormick Shepard
Proprietor**

Celia Shepard is unflappable. Taking an enormous leap of faith into the wine industry takes patience and perseverance, two qualities that Celia has in spades.

A Bay Area native, Celia graduated summa cum laude from Santa Clara University, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. Working her way through college at a local restaurant fostered an early interest in food and wine, with a job posting abroad offering more hands-on experience.

After testing the waters at several Bay Area start-ups, she landed her dream job as an international sales manager at a pre-IPO web development software company, her home base of London serving as a springboard for worldwide business travel and weekend excursions where she seized every opportunity for wine exploration.

After six adventure-filled years abroad, Celia returned home to San Francisco to lead the company's Asia market; her long-distance friendship with Bob Shepard ultimately growing to a commitment of marriage, family and community that included like-minded world travelers and wine aficionados, most especially John Harris.

Striking out on her own in 1997, Celia founded a successful business consulting firm counseling small software companies on international business development, sales and marketing. Her weeks filled with high tech channel marketing, Celia relished weekend retreats to Napa Valley, her connection with the land and farmers were far from the flash of Silicon Valley. She saw in the wine industry an opportunity to reclaim that more organic, down-to-earth soulfulness that every person strives towards, and certainly every parent wishes for their family.

With Amici Cellars, Celia saw an opportunity for a different kind of start-up, but a familiar environment that felt like home – working with a small group of people who really believe in what they're doing, who are passionate, energetic – an environment that Celia, Bob and John thrive in. As Bob and John focused on bringing Amici Cellars to market, Celia shifted gears to marketing an agricultural product – wine – navigating the challenging compliance issues that vary from state-to-state, county-to-county.

With Amici Cellars' rapid growth, Celia has never missed a beat balancing national expansion and building necessary infrastructure, while simultaneously and effortlessly juggling family life at home with Bob and their three daughters.