

Our Story

Our Beginning

When Raymond T. Duncan first visited the Napa Valley in the late 1960s, he was taken by the region's rugged beauty. He was also wise enough to understand the potential of the fledgling wine industry. In the 1970's, he began to buy land in both Napa and Alexander Valleys with the goal of planting vineyards. But with his home and business in Colorado and no viticulture expertise of his own, Ray approached Justin Meyer, whom he'd met through mutual friends, and asked him to plant and manage the vineyards. Then working at Christian Brothers, Justin agreed with one condition: in addition to managing the vineyards, he wanted to create a winery that would forever raise the standards of California wine. The year was 1972, and Silver Oak Cellars began.

Ray and Justin had a bold and unconventional vision for their winery. Rather than producing six or seven varietals, they would devote all their resources to producing a single wine – Cabernet Sauvignon. What's more, their wine would be a new style of Cabernet Sauvignon, rich and complex, deliciously drinkable from the day it was released, yet worthy of cellaring for years to come. To achieve this end, they committed to an extensive aging program of approximately 25 months in American oak barrels, and 15–20 months of cellaring in bottle.

Two Estates

In 1972, Silver Oak's Alexander Valley vineyards produced the harvest that would become the winery's first vintage of Cabernet Sauvignon. That same year, Ray purchased an old dairy farm in Oakville, and he and Justin began planting Silver Oak's first Napa Valley vineyard. Seven years later, they harvested the grapes for their first Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. Since that time, Silver Oak has produced two wines each vintage, a Napa Valley and an Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. Eventually, true to their original vision, Ray and Justin built two wineries, each devoted to producing just one wine. In 1981, on the site of the old dairy farm in Oakville, they broke ground on their Napa Valley winery, and in 1992 they purchased and renovated the beautiful Tudor-style estate in Geyserville that is home to the Alexander Valley Cabernet.

Several Vineyards – Two Wines

Over time, Silver Oak continued to acquire vineyard land, including the Red Tail and Miraval Vineyards in Alexander Valley and the Soda Canyon Ranch and Jump Rock in Napa Valley. The winery also developed close relationships with longtime growers in both appellations. The result is that both the Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and the Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon are blends, made from grapes grown in both wineries' estate vineyards as well as growers' vineyards in both regions. The two wines have always been separate and distinct, consistently representing the very best of their respective appellations.

Passing the Torch

After selecting Daniel Baron to succeed him as winemaker in 1994, Justin sold his share of Silver Oak to the Duncan family in 2001. The family continues to carry Ray and Justin's vision forward, with Ray's son Tim serving as Executive Vice President managing sales and marketing strategy, and his son David serving as the winery's President and CEO, overseeing production and operations. In 2006, when a fire devastated Bonny's Chai, which had been the physical and emotional anchor of the Oakville property, the Duncan family took the opportunity to start fresh, this time using their 35 years of experience to build the ideal winery for producing Silver Oak's Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The new winery was open for harvest in 2008. More than anything, it is a symbol of the tradition of excellence and continuous improvement established by Silver Oak's founders many years ago.

Tiffany Frazier



Southwest Regional Manager

At Silver Oak/Twoomey since: 2014

When Tiffany Frazier was offered her position at Silver Oak and Twomey, she had to take a deep breath. "It was true elation and one of the best moments of my life." Afterward as she was sitting outside by the winery garden, she still had to pinch herself. "Knowing that I was going to be part of this historic winery and family – the feeling was indescribable."

At Silver Oak and Twomey Tiffany manages both on and off premise accounts in the southwestern states, working with distributors to maintain the brands' integrity and showcase the wines. With experience in the wine industry that stretches back fourteen years, Tiffany is particularly grateful to work for a family-owned winery. "The entire workforce is a beautiful family...everyone is valued and respected. The positive energy and true happiness is palpable as soon as you walk through the historic doors of the winery."