



## Karen Francis DeGolia, Owner Limerick Lane Cellars

Karen Francis DeGolia was a part of Limerick Lane in the early 90s when the vineyards were brought back to life and first harvested for the newly created Limerick Lane Cellars.

Engaged to the founder, farmer, and winemaker Tom Collins, Karen spent many hours on the ranch and was a partner to him as the winery building and bottle-shaped pool were completed in 1993. Sadly Tom, the heartbeat of Limerick Lane, passed away unexpectedly, and Karen moved away and pursued her business career. With an economics degree from Dartmouth, a Harvard MBA, and a sense of adventure, she moved to Detroit, where she made a name for herself as one of the youngest female leaders in the automotive industry. A marketer at heart, she became the General Manager of the Oldsmobile division of GM and then a VP at Ford Motor Company. After many years in Michigan, she returned to the Bay Area.

Karen came back to Limerick Lane in 2002 and lived at the winery, worked harvest, poured in the tasting room, and worked markets with distributors thinking that the time might be right to return to the magical place that held so many memories. But in 2004, another great career opportunity, as CEO of an advertising agency, jumped up and pulled her to San Francisco. This time though, she held on to the captivating old vines on the Lane by buying the famed Ricci vineyard just next door to the original Limerick Lane property. For years, Karen spent time in her vineyard and Healdsburg as a grower in the wine industry and as a Board member for Copia, The American Center for Food, Wine, and the Arts. On one particularly special trip to her vineyard in 2021, Karen and her husband, Rick, stopped up the street to see the hilltop views from the esteemed Cypress Ridge Vineyards on Limerick Lane. The gravitational pull was strong, and they bought the 12-acre parcel of zinfandel and petite sirah, which gave them even more reason to spend time in Healdsburg.

Fast forward a year later, and a fateful lunch with a girlfriend up the street on Limerick Lane would soon change several paths. Jake Bilbro, her neighbor and the previous winery owner had moved to Idaho before the pandemic and decided to stay there with his family. Finding a new owner for Limerick Lane became a priority. Karen learned about this, and the rest is history. Almost 30 years after she had first walked amongst the vines, swam in the pool, and held her breath on late-night punch downs, Karen was back as the owner of Limerick Lane Cellars. With the addition of her vineyard properties, Limerick Lane is now a 53-acre estate solidifying its position as one of the most iconic vineyard locations in the Russian River Valley. Karen is thrilled to help grow the business and share the elegant Limerick Lane wines uniquely crafted here on the Lane. Karen, her husband Rick, and their family all share a love and appreciation of the earth, gardening, growing fruits and vegetables, and cooking together.

Destiny, fate, kismet...an incredible journey has finally come full circle with more chapters to be written!

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