



Chris Louton *Winemaker*

Chris oversees production of St. Francis Winery's Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc as well as several unique red blends. His goal is to create wines that are approachable, yet compelling, and always a true expression of Sonoma County.

Chris brings cutting edge knowledge and hands-on experience to his role as Winemaker. He joined St. Francis in 2013 after nearly seven years as part of the winemaking team at Beringer Vineyards, where he focused on the luxury tier of wines and helped craft award-winning Cabernet Sauvignons and other Bordeaux varietals. Working at Beringer, Chris became a devoted fan of Cabernet Sauvignon from unique terroirs and has a special appreciation for Sonoma County's diverse appellations.

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"The wines from Sonoma express themselves differently than the wines from Napa," he says. "They have their own unique brightness and great intensity. Sonoma is a spectacular place to make Cabernet."

In addition to Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc, Chris creates robust red blends and has championed the cause for rich, expressive Merlot.

"I'm so proud to continue the St. Francis tradition of growing and producing Merlot from Sonoma Valley. It's a reflection of our founder's commitment to plant the right varietals in the right area, resulting in wines with character and depth that have a sense of place."

Making world-class wines wasn't the career Chris originally planned for himself. He was studying biology at UC Davis with the intention of becoming a veterinarian when he took a winemaking class his senior year. That class hooked him, and instead of applying to vet school after graduation, he went back to UC Davis to study enology and took a job as a harvest intern at Schramsberg Vineyards. Four years later, Chris left Schramsberg as Assistant Winemaker, having built their Cabernet Sauvignon program. He'll tell you that "I didn't choose Cabernet, Cabernet chose me!"

Chris was awarded North Bay Business Journal's 40 Under Forty, recognizing his leadership, talent and community involvement.



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