

The. Passion Players

Ever wish you could do what you love full-time? These three courageous women did, and they made their wishes come true. Let them be your guides.

By KRISTINA GRISH





Linda Lindsay, 47
CEO of Stone Wolf Vineyards
McMinnville, Oregon

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I started going to a friend’s vineyard more than twenty years ago to help tend the vines. It was a nice getaway because the views were so beautiful. I remember thinking, “Where can I find a piece of land like this?” When my friend retired in 1996, my husband and I bought the vineyard and called it “Lindsay.” We built a home there a year later. There are no roads: just an eighty-mile view to the Cascade Mountain Range, surrounded by timberland. Two years later, we purchased another large vineyard, which became Stone Wolf.

Before starting the wine business, I worked in residential and rural equestrian-property real estate and development. I still have my license, but I really began spending all my time at the vineyard when I moved here from Portland, Oregon. I was fully submerged in it. I felt such a sense of accomplishment after a hard day’s work; I could walk onto my balcony and think, Aaah...

At first, we did all the work on the vineyards ourselves, but now we have crews to help us. As the business got bigger, all the sales, marketing and running of the farms got to be too much to handle alone. The Stone Wolf brand is distributed in twenty states and is our most successful. Most of our sales are through grocery chains and wine stores and we do about 10 percent of sales in restaurants.

Stone Wolf is considered an ultra-premium wine and is popular because it complements, but doesn’t overpower, most foods. It also doesn’t need to rest before being consumed. During the first few years, an experienced winemaker taught us a great deal about how to refine our palates, but figuring out what it takes to make a good wine is largely intuitive. Good cooks don’t always follow recipes to the letter, and neither do good winemakers.

There’s a lot of romanticism involved in winemaking. I feel so lucky that I’m able to share it with others. I have two step-children and six grandkids, and the farm is a very special place for us all. Everyone loves to help with the family business.

Foolproof Food-and-Wine Pairings for Any Occasion

“I always tell folks in the tasting room to drink what they like and not what other people tell them to like,” Lindsay says. “Don’t be afraid to try something new.” But if you want to start by playing it safe, here are some suggestions:

- Cabernet Sauvignon pairs well with robust beef.
- Pinot Blanc complements oysters and shellfish.
- Pinot Noir and salmon work well together.
- Chardonnay or Pinot Gris go beautifully with chicken and summer salads.