



*Russian River Valley  
Estate Wines*

**Cecil De Loach**  
Owner/Winemaster

For more than three decades, Cecil De Loach has farmed grapes in the Russian River Valley. He's made wine from his grapes for just as long. While Cecil is one of several Russian River Valley pioneers, few have made such an impact on proving this region's unqualified suitability for producing wines of world-class quality.

It was in the midst of a 16-year career as a San Francisco Fireman that Cecil discovered the Russian River Valley and grape growing. In 1970, he and wife Christine began looking for a vineyard where they could create a second career for themselves outside San Francisco.

They found Louis Barbieri's twenty-four acre vineyard west of Santa Rosa. The vineyard held vines planted in 1905 and 1927, but Barbieri couldn't entice his family to farm the vineyard. He needed a buyer, and Cecil wanted a vineyard. This purchase would be the first of over 900 acres of Russian River Valley vineyards Cecil would farm over the course of the next three decades.

For the first six years, Cecil sold his grapes to the Sonoma County Cooperative Winery in Windsor. At the same time, he took classes in enology and wine chemistry at the University of California at Davis.

In 1975 he made his first wine, an old-vine Zinfandel. De Loach Vineyards would grow to more than 250,000 cases over the years and would prove to be instrumental in introducing the name "Russian River Valley" to wine lovers worldwide. The De Loach Chardonnays, Pinot Noirs and Zinfandels helped put the appellation on the map as one of California's premier growing regions.

In the course of developing De Loach Vineyards, Cecil would build a state-of-the-art winery, build a second full-functioning winery designed exclusively to produce Pinot Noir, help start the careers of a number of now well-known winemakers, and become a leader in the industry, serving as president of The Sonoma County Vintners Co-op, The Sonoma County Winery Co-op, The Sonoma County Wineries Association, and Russian River Wine Road.

Cecil retired from the San Francisco Fire Department in 1982 after a 16-year career. His time as a fireman was as influential in forming his character as nearly any other aspect of his life. He chose the name "Hook & Ladder Winery" for his latest winery project to honor his years on the fire truck.

By 2003, Cecil and family sold the De Loach Vineyards brand, which continues today. Cecil moved on to found Hook & Ladder Winery in 2004. It would be a smaller project that would allow him to showcase the best of his Russian River Valley estate vineyards.

Over the years, Cecil and Christine's family have joined the effort. His oldest grandson, Jason De Loach, is Hook & Ladder's winemaker; son Michael De Loach serves as President and CEO, while grandson Joshua De Loach works on the winery's Sales team. When not directing the progress of Hook & Ladder, Cecil is likely indulging his love of fishing, history books, or cooking for a large group, a talent he perfected during sixteen years of cooking for hungry firemen.





Jason De Loach was introduced to the wine industry in the customary way: physical labor. As a young man at De Loach Vineyards, he eventually worked his way into the cellar. At the age of eighteen he became involved in harvest, crush, and later became Production Coordinator as well.

After cutting his teeth at De Loach, Jason moved up to the title of Cellar Master for Balletto Winery, where he oversaw and operated a significant portion of the winemaking process. In his second out of three and a half years there, he also became the assistant Winemaker and lab technician under well-known Winemaking Consultant Dan Cedarquist. Also during this time, under Winemaker Dan Goldfield, he learned the importance of constantly monitoring oxygen levels, amongst other things, for quality control.

## Jason De Loach Winemaker

Keeping with the tradition of his grandfather, Jason attended viticulture classes, and then took courses in enology from the University of California at Davis. After helping produce a number of gold-medal-winning wines at Balletto, Jason returned to his family roots at Hook & Ladder in 2006.

At Hook & Ladder, Jason began as Cellar Master, and soon became Winemaker. Jason has been producing outstanding wines ever since. Having his pick of the very best fruit from over 400 acres of vineyards farmed by his grandfather, Cecil De Loach, for over 30 years, Jason continues to generate exceptional wines.

On the rare occasions when Jason is not overseeing the winery, you can find him at home on the family's Los Amigos Ranch in Healdsburg with his wife, Nicole, and their German Shepard, Aspen. In the off-season, Jason will most likely be flying either real airplanes, or the models he builds at home, surfing, or training for his third degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do.





Born in San Francisco and raised in Sonoma County, Hook & Ladder Winery principal Michael De Loach grew up in the wine business: he started working in the vineyard at age 11, and in the cellar at 15. After college, De Loach worked as Vice President of Sales and Marketing at the fledgling De Loach Vineyards, and completed courses of study in winemaking at the Napa Valley School of Cellaring, as well as the University of California at Davis Agricultural Extension. He served as President of De Loach Vineyards from 2001 to 2004.

## Michael De Loach

De Loach has appeared throughout the country on radio, television and speaking engagements, and has been written about in *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Denver Business Journal*, *The San Diego Tribune*, *The Austin Chronicle*, *Philadelphia Magazine*, *The Wine Spectator*, *Wine and Spirits*, *Wines and Vines*, *Cheers*, and *The Wine Enthusiast*. He is the host of "Wine Country Live," a live nationally syndicated radio show, and lives in Palmyra, Pennsylvania.

## Joshua De Loach

Joshua De Loach first started working for his family at De Loach Vineyards repairing must pumps and maintaining work vehicles. After his time with cars and equipment, Joshua moved on to help out the international importing department at De Loach, but soon found one of his passions in high school: cooking.

While working in many upscale restaurants and catering at countless exclusive locations, Joshua also attended the Santa Rosa Junior College and California State University at Monterey Bay. Six years later, he was offered the opportunity to once again work for his family, but this time for their new company, Hook & Ladder Winery

Joshua, in addition to serving as Hook & Ladder's Resident Chef, is the Winery's Public Relations Director, writing articles, creating tech sheets, and updating our website. Most recently, he also contributes his talents to the Local and National Sales team. When he is not making and selling wine, or cooking, Josh can be found on his family's Los Amigos ranch in Healdsburg, playing guitar or drums, riding his bike, or hanging out with his cousins.





## Jaime Schilling

Jaime Schilling, the newest addition to the Hook & Ladder team, manages National Sales for the winery. Jaime, originally from Phoenix, Arizona, has been involved with the wine industry for the past several years, assisting her father, an artist and vintner, with various aspects of his start-up winery business.

Jaime moved to Sonoma County's wine country in 2008 after returning to the U.S. from a 15-month post-MBA consulting project in West Africa. The goal of this project was to develop Nigeria's emerging tourism industry; one of Jaime's major accomplishments was to partner with local hotel and restaurant associations to strengthen the industry's culture of hospitality and customer service.

Jaime holds an MBA from the renowned Thunderbird School of Global Management (where she was Vice President of the student-run Wine Club), as well as undergraduate degrees in Communication and French. When she is not selling wine, Jaime enjoys reading, renting foreign films, and exploring beautiful Sonoma County.

## Kate Mann

Kate Mann, a driving force behind Hook & Ladder's Sales & Marketing efforts, carries out multiple critical functions for the Hook & Ladder team. As our Marketing Specialist, she generates marketing collateral and press releases, coordinates a wide range of tastings and events, and works to build brand awareness through traditional and social media outlets. As our Sales Coordinator, Kate serves as the liaison between our nationwide network of brokers and distributors and our sales team, coordinating schedules and travel, and maintaining local and national account lists.

Kate's exposure to the food and beverage industry began at an early age, as she was born and raised in Marin County among a family of chefs. She earned a degree in Communication Studies from California State University, Sacramento, with emphases in Marketing & International Relations, where she was a National Champion debater and student body leader. After moving to Sonoma County, Kate served for two years as a Marketing Coordinator with Hyatt Hotels before joining the Hook & Ladder team. In her spare time, she can be found coaching volleyball, or putting her photography skills to use in the vineyards.





## Hook & Ladder FACTS

FOUNDED  
2003

LOCATION  
Russian River Valley Appellation  
Sonoma County

VINEYARDS  
Los Amigos Ranch - 143 Acres  
Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese,  
Merlot, Petite Sirah, Cabernet Franc

The Piner Creek Ranch - 130 Acres  
Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Merlot,  
Syrah, Mourvedre, Grenache

The Olivet Ranch - 37 Acres  
Zinfandel and Chardonnay

The Gambogi Ranch - 25 Acres  
Old Vine Zinfandel

The Saitone Ranch - 35 Acres  
Old Vine Zinfandel and Carignane

The Beliz Ranch - 20 Acres  
Pinot Noir and Chardonnay

Henze Ranch - 9 Acres  
Pinot Noir

Severson Ranch - 8 Acres  
Gewurztraminer

Simeone Ranch - 6 Acres  
Pinot Noir

### PERSONNEL

Owners: Cecil & Christine De Loach  
Winemaker: Jason De Loach  
President: Michael De Loach  
National Sales: Jaime Schilling  
Sales/Chef/Website: Joshua De Loach  
Marketing: Kate Mann  
Finance: Jeff Cummings

### WINES

Total Production: 30,000 cases annually  
Chardonnay  
Gewurztraminer  
White Zinfandel  
Pinot Noir  
Zinfandel  
Merlot  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
"Station Ten" Zinfandel Blend  
"The Tillerman" Cabernet Blend  
"The Tillerman White" table wine  
Port

### SALES & DISTRIBUTION

AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, GA, IL,  
KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MT, NE,  
NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI,  
SC, SD, TN, TX, VA, VI, VT, WI  
Direct to consumer sales where  
permitted

### CONTACT

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## A Fireman's Ethic of "Never Quit" Defines Hook & Ladder

A hook and ladder fire truck is a fire engine equipped with extension ladders and hooked poles. It was also the main form of transportation Cecil De Loach utilized during his sixteen years as a member of the San Francisco Fire Department. Cecil, however, lived a double life. While fighting fires and rescuing San Franciscans, Cecil was also helping establish the Russian River Valley as one of California's most famed grape growing regions. The name of his new winery is a tribute to his days on the engine and a showcase of the 400 acres of Russian River Valley vineyards he farms.

"As a fireman and rescue worker, you never have the option to quit or sit back and watch," explains Cecil. "I took this attitude with me from the firehouse to the vineyards, and into the winery."

This attitude and approach to making wine has produced results. Hook & Ladder is a continuation of Cecil's three-decade-long mission to produce the best wine the Russian River Valley has to offer. After building his De Loach Vineyards into one of California's best-known wineries and using it to put Russian River Valley Wines on the world map, he sold the brand and winery in 2003. His new Hook & Ladder Winery continues that same mission.

Based on over 400 acres of vineyards, Hook & Ladder Winery seeks to showcase the appellation's diversity and the different varietals that thrive here. From the family's estate vineyards come Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, White Zinfandel, Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, and two red blends: "The Tillerman," a Cabernet Sauvignon blend, and "Station Ten," a Zinfandel blend: two more tributes to Cecil's time as a fireman.

Hook & Ladder is a family project. With his wife Christine, Cecil works alongside son Michael, the winery's President and CEO, and his grandson, Josh, who serves as the winery's Chef and works on the Sales team. Hook & Ladder's winemaker, Jason De Loach, produces award-winning wines under the tutelage of his Grandfather, Cecil.

Cecil bought his first vineyard in 1969, and continued to seek out and plant vineyards until the winemaking pioneer owned over 900 acres of grapes. His experienced reaches into every corner of the Russian River appellation. The 400 acres now cultivated by the family and used in the Hook and Ladder wines are as diverse in character as the appellation, allowing the production of a number of different varietals of quality wines under the Hook and Ladder label.

"Hook & Ladder can and does showcase the diversity of this amazing growing region as well as any winery today," says Cecil. "And while the Russian River Valley will always produce world-class Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, if you choose your vineyards carefully, you'll find vineyards planted with simply beautiful Zinfandel, Cabernet, Gewurztraminer and Sangiovese. Hook & Ladder plans to show off this diversity with every wine we make."

