

# RICH HOWELL

HEAD WINEMAKER & CO-OWNER AT BENT CREEK WINERY

## WHO HAS INFLUENCED YOU THE MOST AS A WINEMAKER?

My old friend Thomas Coyne was a strong influence. I knew him before he turned pro and was an enthusiastic customer of his winery when he opened in Livermore. His style of balanced, flavorful wines set the standard for my early personal attempts, and he was very helpful to me and many other beginning winemakers in Livermore.

## WHAT IS YOUR WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY?

At Bent Creek, we try to stay true to two principles. First, since we are a Livermore winery, we focus on Livermore grapes. Nearly all of our production is from grapes grown in the Livermore Valley. Second, we try to keep to traditional, classic methods of production. We ferment in open vessels. We avoid excessive additives, and we only age in oak barrels chosen to provide a balance between the fruit of the grape and the additional flavor of the barrel.

## WHAT WINE VARIETAL DO YOU THINK IS UNDERRATED?

Syrah. Syrah makes a soft, flavorful wine that pairs with many foods and tastes well on its own. When made in the European style, Syrah stand equal to the other classic European grape varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon.

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE VARIETAL OF WINE?

Petite Sirah. For a good full bodied-wine with flavor at the beginning, middle, and end of the taste, it is hard to beat a good Petite Sirah.

## WHO WOULD YOU WANT TO SHARE A BOTTLE OF WINE WITH, LIVING OR NOT? AND WHY?

The playwright Tom Stoppard. The breadth of his work and the sublime detail of his understanding in his plays shows that it could be a very exciting conversation.

## WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE GROWING UP?

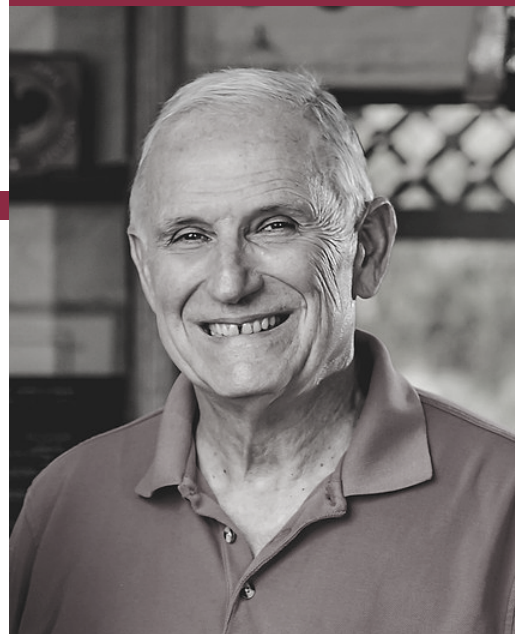
What I became. A physicist with a connection to the land. I was lucky and it worked out pretty well.

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PLACE IN THE WORLD YOU'VE VISITED?

Nepal. We hiked the monasteries and visited camps used by climbing expeditions. Heavy snows prevented us from visiting the really high sites, but the mountains were beautiful and the people were exceptional.

## WHAT BRINGS YOU THE GREATEST JOY?

Practicing Jujitsu and Tai Chi. I have a school in Livermore, and practicing and teaching the martial arts gives me great satisfaction.



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- Rich Howell,  
Bent Creek Winery



PROUD MEMBER OF THE  
LIVERMORE VALLEY  
WINEGROWERS  
ASSOCIATION

# BENT CREEK WINERY

GOOD TIMES START AT THE END OF THE ROAD

Bent Creek crafts small lots of complex wines made from our own grapes and other Livermore Valley vineyards. Visit our tasting room to enjoy delectable wines, serene vineyard settings and awesome views of the hills of Livermore Valley. We are nestled in a small valley off of Greenville Road warmed by the afternoons sun and refreshed by cool evening breezes.

## HISTORY

Nestled in the rolling hills southeast of Livermore, Bent Creek is ideally situated. Tucked against an oak-dotted ridge and surrounded by vineyard, the winery enjoys spectacular views of the valley.

When Pat and Tom Heineman purchased the property in 1980, opening a winery was not in their plans. They wanted to own some land "out in the country". They chose the location for its beauty and feeling of serenity. As educators in the Livermore school district they met the couple who would later become their partners in the winery, Carol and Rich Howell. Pat and Carol were fellow elementary school principals in Livermore. Tom was the director of curriculum and technology for the district. Rich was a physicist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The two couples shared many common interests including the enjoyment of good wine.

During the 1990's when Wente Winery planted vineyards adjacent to the Heineman's property, Pat and Tom were impressed with their beauty. By 1997, with Wente's assistance, they planted a Syrah vineyard on their land. The vineyard thrived and now produces high quality grapes.

After tasting the wine made by other winemakers from their grapes, the four friends considered the possibility of opening a small winery. They took enology classes at UC Davis together, and established Bent Creek Winery in 2002. Although they have divided some of the winery responsibilities, they all work together on every aspect of wine production from caring for the vines, to pressing the grapes to greeting visitors in the tasting room. Their goal is to craft small lots of complex wine primarily from the grapes grown in the Heineman's vineyard and other Livermore Valley vineyards.

Bent Creek Winery is the result of four friends' interest in wines, wine growing and wine making. We believe that we can offer visitors to our winery a unique experience. Visitors can enjoy quality wines in a serene vineyard setting.



## TASTING ROOM

5455 Greenville Road  
Livermore, California 94550  
925.455.6320

[www.bentcreekwinery.com](http://www.bentcreekwinery.com)  
[winery@bentcreekwinery.com](mailto:winery@bentcreekwinery.com)

### Tasting Room Hours

Friday-Sunday  
12:00p - 4:30p



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