



Joe Donelan, Founder

Joe Donelan, founder of Donelan Family Wines, began his journey of wine discovery in the 1980s, led by an inspired sommelier at Toppers Restaurant on Nantucket. This life-changing education elevated his wine acumen from discerning drinker to master oenophile.

At the time, Donelan was working as a vice president at paper broker A.T. Clayton, but shortly thereafter he succumbed to the seductive call of California's winemaking regions. With a vision for creating superior-quality, terroir-driven Syrah and Rhone-varietals, Joe established relationships with unique Sonoma County vineyards and brought together a production team to found Donelan Family Wines, originally known as Pax Wine Cellars.

As founder, Joe prides himself on seeing the grand possibilities. A masterful mix of creative thinking, endless dedication and precise instinct enable Donelan Family Wines to create acclaimed wines that epitomize the truest expression of Sonoma County terroir.

With his family's name stamped on each bottle and two sons involved in the day-to-day operations of the business, Donelan Family Wines is a family venture for Joe. However, he considers all members of his team and his growing community of loyal fans part of the Donelan Family. Wanting his customers to feel the same sense of connection and acknowledgment, he personally calls all new customers and hand-writes thank you notes for each order, whether it's a single bottle or ten cases.

Joe Donelan is a graduate of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass., where he has served on the Board of Trustees and, in 2000, donated funds to establish The Donelan Office for Community-Based Learning. Additionally, he received a Master of Business Administration from Iona College in New Rochelle, New York. He spends his time between Connecticut and California.

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