



BELLA OAKS VINEYARD

Bella Oaks is a new wine estate four decades in the making, a project that combines one of Napa Valley's most historic and revered vineyards with the dedication to cultural heritage projects that characterizes the vision of proprietor and arts advocate Suzanne Deal Booth. The Bella Oaks vineyard is legendary, with a legacy for producing some of Napa Valley's earliest single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignons. Recognizing both its history and untapped potential, Deal Booth, who acquired Bella Oaks in 2010, has at last given this storied vineyard a voice of its own with a team that includes Vineyard Manager David Abreu, Winemaker Nigel Kinsman, and Master Blender Michel Rolland. With a holistic focus on stewardship that includes implementing organic and biodynamic farming practices, Deal Booth is breathing new life into the historic Bella Oaks property as she continues to honor its past. The first vintage of Bella Oaks was 2018. In 2021, Deal Booth acquired a neighboring winery on Manley Lane and is working with noted Thai architect Kulapat Yantrasast on designing a new winery and hospitality space with the aim of breaking ground by the end of 2023.

HISTORY

Viticultural Origins from the 1800s

Situated at the base of the eastern slopes of Mount St. John in the Mayacamas Range, Bella Oaks is located on an alluvial fan with a mix of gravel, loamy clay and sand over ancient volcanics. The property's wine-growing history dates to the late 1800s when the land was owned by non-indigenous settlers and farmers who planted several crops including wine grapes. The property changed hands several times, but in the late 1800s and early 1900s, phylloxera and Prohibition took their toll, and the land was eventually planted primarily to plum trees.

The Barney & Belle Rhodes Era

In 1968 Bella Oaks was acquired by Barney and Belle Rhodes, wine experts, collectors and vineyard pioneers, who in the early 1960s had invested in vineyard properties and developed the land that became Napa Valley's famed Martha's Vineyard. On the advice of their close friend Joe Heitz, an early champion of single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignons, the Rhodes planted 18 acres of Bella Oaks to Cabernet Sauvignon in 1973, a bold move that demonstrated their vision for what would ultimately become the future of the Napa Valley wine industry. For the next 34 years, the Rhodes shared an exclusive partnership with Heitz Cellars, producing the highly acclaimed vineyard-designated Bella Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon, a benchmark in the category. In the 1970s and 80s, the Rhodes' home at Bella Oaks was an epicenter for fine dining, entertaining and social connection, and many credit the couple with helping to create the culture of hospitality that exists in Napa Valley today.

Current Stewardship: the Suzanne Deal Booth Family

In 2010, Deal Booth purchased Bella Oaks from the Rhodes' relative and executor of their estate, Valerie Gargiulo, and her husband, Jeff. Deal Booth had visited Napa Valley often, intrigued with its role in defining America's culture of wine and food. As a steward of cultural heritage projects and Founder of The Friends of Heritage Preservation, she was drawn to Bella Oaks' unique place in Napa Valley's history of wine, food, and society. She determined to revitalize the property and create an estate that represents a seamless confluence of wine, art, community, and culture.

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Similar to the more than seventy cultural heritage projects Deal Booth has supported across five continents, in Bella Oaks she has seized the opportunity to preserve, restore and invigorate, shepherding the past carefully into the future.

THE ESTATE

Vineyard

Upon acquiring the 31-acre Bella Oaks property, Deal Booth immediately set about rehabilitating the 12.5 acres of vines, overseeing a gradual replanting with famed Vineyard Manager David Abreu, who adjusted row orientation, spacing, and drainage and revitalized the soils. From 2011 through 2015 the fruit was sold to neighboring Staglin Family Vineyards, which bottled the wine as its *Booth Bella Oaks* vineyard designate. In 2015, Deal Booth was presented with the opportunity to acquire the Fahrig Ranch, a property contiguous with Bella Oaks, and in mid-2021, she acquired a neighboring jewel-box winery and tasting room on Manley Lane in Rutherford, adjacent to Bella Oaks. Today, the Bella Oaks estate comprises a total of 32.6 acres, with 12.5 acres currently planted and a ten-acre vineyard expansion underway and scheduled for completion by the end of 2021.

In 2017, Deal Booth came to the realization that her iconic Bella Oaks Vineyard deserved to have its own voice and identity. Having become intimately familiar with the land, she determined to do everything in her power to bring it to its highest potential. Deal Booth hired Nigel Kinsman, a highly respected winemaker who had worked with many historic vineyards during his career. She also brought in Michel Rolland, perhaps the wine world's best-known blending consultant. Over the next two years, Deal Booth oversaw the conversion of the vineyard to organic farming, and Bella Oaks was certified by the CCOF in 2019. With a vision of creating a vibrant and holistic ecosystem on the estate, she also hired consultant Jeff Lawson to implement biodynamic principles and practices throughout the property.

Art & Home

As one of the world's leading advocates for arts and culture, Suzanne Deal Booth is a passionate philanthropist, advisor, and collector. Her vision for Bella Oaks reflects her commitment to the preservation and protection of cultural heritage and the visual arts; to visit the home and estate she has created is to experience a vibrant and diverse collection of interestingly juxtaposed works of art surrounded by the natural beauty of spectacular gardens, olive orchards and meticulously tended vines. Among the beautifully spaced outdoor works are Yayoi Kusama's *Where the Lights in My Heart Go*, Max Ernst's *Le Genie de La Bastille*, and an untitled site-specific work by Robert Irwin. Adjacent to the home is a meditation labyrinth inspired by Chartres Cathedral which also inspired the primary design element on the Bella Oaks wine label.

THE TEAM

At Bella Oaks, Suzanne Deal Booth is joined by a team of unparalleled winegrowing professionals. David Abreu is the vineyard manager for Bella Oaks and has been an advisor to Deal Booth since she purchased the property in 2010. A third generation Napa Valley native, Abreu is known as one of the most rigorous vineyard managers in Napa Valley.

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Winemaker Nigel Kinsman's career spans the most revered wine regions of his native Australia as well as Tuscany and Napa Valley. He has worked with some of Napa Valley's most historic wine estates, including Eisele Vineyard (originally Araujo Estate) with Bart and Daphne Araujo.

Michel Rolland is a highly respected wine consultant and master blender who has worked with Suzanne Deal Booth at Bella Oaks since 2016. A native of Bordeaux, Rolland is known to have one of the world's most exacting and discriminating palates.

Jeff Dawson has worked as a biodynamic consultant with some of Napa Valley's premiere vineyards including Araujo Estate, Quintessa Vineyards, Rudd Vineyards, Napa Valley Reserve, Accendo Cellars, Dalla Valle and Brand Napa Valley.

WINE AND WINEMAKING

Bella Oaks Vineyard produces one wine, the Bella Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon. The premier release from the 2018 vintage is a blend of estate-grown Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot.

With a philosophy grounded in minimalist winemaking, Winemaker Nigel Kinsman's goal is to create a wine that is honest, transparent, and fully expressive of the Bella Oaks Vineyard. "I'm here to help the site shine. The place and the vintage tell the story; I try to leave as little imprint as possible."

Bella Oaks' lineage can be traced back to the era of the great *Heitz Cellars Bella Oaks* vineyard-designated Cabernets, but under Suzanne Deal Booth and her team's management, the wines carry the precision, freshness, concentration and texture that come with a renewed commitment to farming and winemaking at the highest level. "Bella Oaks absolutely has a distinct signature; I haven't worked with another vineyard like it," says Kinsman.

ABOUT BELLA OAKS VINEYARD

Bella Oaks combines one of Napa Valley's most historic and revered vineyards with the dedication to cultural heritage projects that characterizes the vision of proprietor and arts advocate Suzanne Deal Booth. The Bella Oaks vineyard is legendary, with a legacy for producing some of Napa Valley's earliest single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignons. Since acquiring the property in 2010, Deal Booth has breathed new life into this storied property with a focus on stewardship that includes organic and biodynamic farming practices and a thoughtful emphasis on biodiversity. Her holistic vision for Bella Oaks is to bring the land to its highest potential by giving voice to the estate through its own wine as well as the seamless integration of art, community, and culture. For more information, please visit www.bellaoaks.com.

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