

# *mud city* Weekender

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PHOTO BY EILEEN MILLER

**CHEERS!** Tim Carl (center) celebrates food, friends, and his new winery, at James Beard House New Year's Eve

**Town ready  
with menu of  
services, ideas**

**Knights  
Bridge offers  
first releases**

**Places to go,  
things to see,  
stuff to do...**

**Winery list  
& map of  
our best**



(L-R), Tom Costin, Tim Carl, Kenny Jarvis, Jim Bailey and Essel Bailey, Knights Bridge Winery, (all are partners at the winery except Kenny Jarvis) after the New Year's Eve Dinner at The James Beard House, 167 W 12 th St, NY, NY.

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# Knights Bridge Winery

TIM CARL ACHIEVES HIS LIFE'S PASSION WITH NEWEST CALISTOGA WINERY

olecular genetics, poetry, haute cuisine,

**By Liza Gershman**

Mud City Weekender

**M**usic, and wine mingle together to create an unexpected singular vision. They are the foundation of a man, the things that make him who he is; a lust for soil, a tie to family history, and an attachment to Knight's Valley define him.

For Tim Carl, a true polymath and founder of Knight's Bridge winery – who has had achieved ultimate success in not one, but three careers – the vineyard is his most earnest passion.

"It is about growing great fruit, making great wine, making wine for the future," he reveals. "I always wanted to come back to this. This is what I will do for the rest of my life."

Carl, with the help of friends and the support of his family, purchased the property four years ago and has been exploring

it since. "I am happy to be home," Carl says, as he looks over the beautiful expanse of hills which cradle his property.

Knights Bridge produces wine from six different Vineyard Designates and makes only 200 coveted cases a year. "We are local. This is our life-passion and the culmination of many generations of farming," Carl muses. The wine is produced in St. Helena and Carl, who lives on his Calistoga vineyard, has no plans to build a winery on his property.

Winemaker Jeff Ames, who makes wine for Tor and for Rudias and now Knights Bridge, "is fantastic," Carl remarks. "He gets out of the way of the fruit. We try to step aside and let the wine show [the property]," smiles Carl, proudly.

Is it who we are underneath that defines us, or what we do?

Carl likes layers, and he sees an intellectual value in their application like in a complex wine or a Rothko painting. Both exemplify artistic endeavors that can initially appear simple, when presenting the

first aroma or final color; but with further inspection, like Carl himself, each reveals a truth that exists from an amalgamation of experience and vision. The painting reveals texture, brush pressure and a palette of wild hues to create a singular result. The wine, when flushed out in the crevasses of the mouth reveals cherry, blackberry, tobacco and more; and Carl reveals himself to be a man of incredible talent which has led to his singular vision: to live in Napa Valley and produce great fruit.

A veritable renaissance man, Carl brings every one of his past lives to his vineyard. He grew up in St. Helena and began his first career cooking and sous-chefing at restaurants like the Haight Street Bar and Grill. In order to pay for school, Carl enlisted in the Navy, where he served two years and then came home to marry his high-school sweetheart, Lynn Monroe Carl. Inspired by innovative cuisine, Carl worked inside the kitchens of some of the world's finest chefs. Under the

leadership of Masa Cubiachi at the renowned Auberge du Soleil, for Gary Danko at Chateau Soverain, and for John Ash, Carl perfected his creative skills and won an award for his innovation with bread.

After years in the cutthroat world of fine cuisine, Carl returned to school and studied molecular genetics at the University of Oregon, and then receiving his PhD in genetics from the University of Colorado, Boulder. True Renaissance men fulfill their intellectual passion through continued learning, and Carl's path lead him to post doctoral study at Harvard University, where he was offered a teaching position in molecular genetics and clinical research on cranial-facial Development. This career path made him a sought-after scientist, and he was offered a position with McKinsey and Company consultation on clinical research with for-

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eign governments. Though the position required long hours and often sent him to Asia, he always dreamed of returning to his life in the Napa Valley.

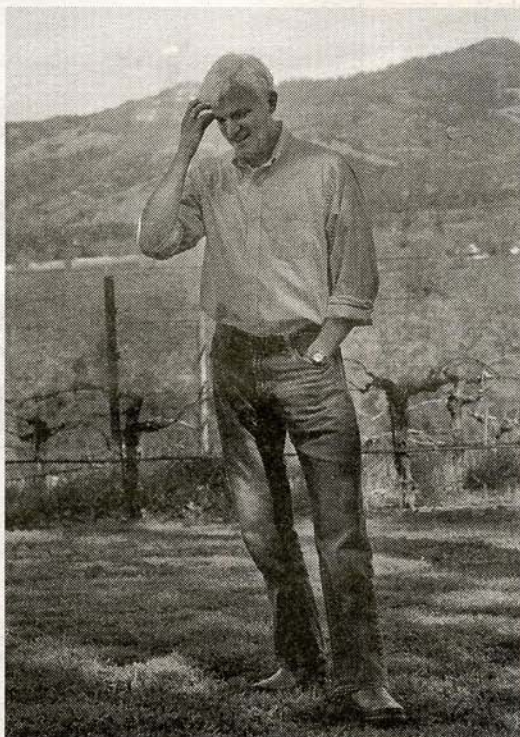
"I am a sixth generation grower," Carl proudly asserts. "My wife is a fourth generation grower and Knight's Valley produces the best Cab[ernet] in California."

Carl's curiosity has led him to the increasingly popular practice of biodynamic farming in his vineyard, and he is moving towards an all-organic production as well.

"The point is to do something that is forever. We are committed to doing this for the long haul from both a historic and environmental standpoint. I don't want to live in a place with chemicals everywhere, or ingest them. We want to preserve anything that is holistic, even the way we treat employees is a new model. A holistic approach to the vineyard, winemaking, the way we approach people, it is what we believe."

Passionate about philanthropy, this past New Year's Carl resurrected his chef hat, and created a dinner to accompany his wine for the fundraiser at the James Beard House, a non-profit whose mission is "to celebrate, preserve, and nurture America's culinary heritage and diversity in order to elevate the appreciation of our culinary excellence."

"It was a great way to show both sides of food and wine...how our wine had come from a certain place and how it could marry with food," Carl



**Chef, scientist, winery owner – Tim Carl released the first vintage of his Knights Bridge wines at a New Year's fundraiser at the James Beard House in New York.**

PHOTO BY LIZA GERSHMAN

explains.

This amalgamation of multiple lives is what separates Carl from hundreds of wine enthusiasts throughout the world. His singular vision is one that has combined the fruits of multiple passions and culminates into something very complex inside each and every bottle of wine.

"We are constantly evolving, recreating," says Carl whose fearless pursuit of knowledge is greatly undervalued in a society that tries to homogenize. Lust for life, courage, "it is all a journey," says Carl, who's success is certainly not without the constant support of his wife, and his deep love for his family.

The winery makes three wines, off-site, often with fewer than 100 cases of each type, with both estate and nonestate offerings. The 2006 estate sauvignon

blanc (\$35) is from 12-year-old vines from Knights Valley, 100 cases produced. Three different chardonnays are available: Sleepy Hollow from the Santa Lucia Highlands (\$65) Chardonnay; Alder Springs Chardonnay sourced from Mendocino County (\$65); and their estate Knights Bridge Vineyards (\$45) Chardonnay.

The winery's cabernet includes Dr. Crane Cabernet Sauvignon (\$110) from Beckstoffer's St. Helena vineyard; Knights Bridge Estate Cabernet (\$95) and Beckstoffer To Kalon Cabernet (\$110).

Knights Bridge wines can be purchased in the Napa/Sonoma county area at St. Helena Wine Shop, V Wine Sellers, Back Room Wines, 34 North Wine Merchant, Martini House, Cyrus, and soon to be available at Solage.