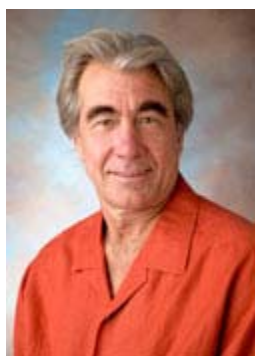


Casidy Ward & Lynn Hofacket
Proprietors, Hidden Ridge Vineyard

Entrepreneurs, Oklahoma natives, and husband and wife team of 20 years, Lynn Hofacket and Casidy Ward will be the first to tell you that they never expected to be vintners. Even when they purchased the remote and wild property that would become the Hidden Ridge Vineyard in 1991, becoming grape farmers was not what first came to mind, nor was it the second, or even the third.

Lynn comes across as a down-to-earth, practical man, with a no-BS personality and a sharp sense of humor—often directed at local politics or the powers-that-be in the winemaking world. He does not, under even the wildest of assumptions, seem insane. But pay a visit to his vineyard, and the slopes he dared to farm, and it becomes clear: this man is crazy. Taste his and Casidy's wines back on flat ground, however, and *crazy genius* comes closer to mind.



Lynn grew up in southwest Oklahoma on his family's wheat and cattle ranch, where he gained hands-on experience in farming, learning everything from agricultural practices to handling and repairing heavy equipment. He was working in real estate when he met Casidy in Oklahoma City. The two married a few years later.



Casidy was born in Enid, Oklahoma. She credits her parents, entrepreneurs in the natural gas industry, for instilling her with the persevering spirit and inquisitive nature that led her to become an entrepreneur as well. She played tennis competitively in high school and the first year of college, and studied Political Science and Petroleum Engineering at the University of Oklahoma. After moving west in 1989, she returned to school, earning her MBA in International Business and Marketing at the Thunderbird School of Global Management.

Both Casidy and Lynn's natural curiosity and enterprising spirit led them to explore the rugged Mayacamas mountain property's many possibilities before deciding to grow Cabernet Sauvignon. They also share an industrious work ethic and dogged determination to do their due diligence and to see things through to fruition. For Lynn, this meant taking classes in viticulture at Santa Rosa Junior College in the early 1990s, reading everything he could about the area's geologic history, about rootstocks, clones and trellis systems, and reaching out to every mountain vineyard owner, developer, and contractor who was willing to speak with him. Then, in 1995, he began the arduous six-year process of clearing the 55 acres

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for vineyards by himself, designing and developing the terraces with a tractor he modified on his own, and planting rootstock grafted to Cabernet Sauvignon.

While Lynn was working in the soon-to-be vineyard, Casidy turned to the full-time administrative requirements of installing a mountain vineyard. She began making cold calls to a short list of the top Cabernet Sauvignon winemakers in the region. Some were so intrigued by the couple's description of the vineyard's location they had to come see it for themselves—whether it was famed vineyard owner Herb Lamb (who owns Napa Ag Supply, and took it upon himself to personally deliver vineyard supplies to Hidden Ridge just to see it with his own eyes) or winemaker Marco DiGiulio, who was so taken with the site, he stayed in touch with Casidy and Lynn and became winemaker for Hidden Ridge Vineyard in 2001. He now shares winemaking duties with Timothy Milos.

When not at the vineyard, Casidy and Lynn live outside of Phoenix, AZ in a dramatic, contemporary home designed by Alfred Newman Beadle. Lynn keeps close contact with a local vineyard manager in Santa Rosa who looks after the vineyard, and winemakers Marco DiGiulio and Timothy Milos make regular visits to the vineyard as well. Lynn and Casidy are present in the crucial weeks leading up to harvest, for which they are active participants, assisting crews with everything from picking the grapes to delivering them to the winery in all-terrain vehicles. Even while entertaining a group of guests at the vineyard a few weeks before harvest, Casidy disappeared among the vines for a moment, pruning shears in hand, to address an unruly vine. They are both avid tennis players, and enjoy traveling together.