



MARKHAM
NAPA VALLEY
VINEYARDS

Kimberlee Nicholls
Winemaker

Over a career spanning almost 30 years, Kimberlee Nicholls has earned a reputation as one of Napa Valley’s most respected winemakers. With a gifted palate, and three decades of Napa Valley winemaking knowledge and experience, Kim crafts wines of character and complexity from Markham’s 350 acres of certified sustainable estate vineyards in Yountville, Oak Knoll and Calistoga.

From this prized fruit, Kim continues Markham’s unapologetic fascination with Merlot, its flagship varietal, and dedication to exceptional Bordeaux blends. Markham was one of the first wineries in Napa Valley to grow and specialize in Merlot, long recognized for its structure and vineyard-inspired sophistication. Each Markham Merlot, along with its acclaimed Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay, is a nuanced expression of the region’s character and nurtured with respect for yesterday’s successes and a passion for tomorrow’s discoveries.



She spearheaded a shift from “reserve” to estate wines, driving focus on the importance of sourcing and sustainability as major contributors to quality. In the 2000s, Kimberlee initiated a full review of the winery’s packaging and recycling efforts as part of the winery’s commitment to deliver excellence beyond just the wine inside the bottle. Lightweight glass, USA-manufactured paper, corks and capsules closed the circle in the long-held Markham ethos of respecting the environment to produce better wines. Today, sustainability is woven into the fabric of Markham and considered at every touchpoint, from soil to fruit and cellar to glass.

“I’m proud that we have developed a preferred provider network for sourcing our supplies locally as much as possible. Those suppliers become an extension of the Markham team being vested in our common interest while keeping an eye on sustainability,” she says.

Kim supports her community including the Napa Valley Vintners Napa Green Land and Napa Green Winery initiatives, and by collaborating with and mentoring her team and fellow female winemakers, especially through the last several seasons of devastating wildfires. She also finds inspiration in her love of pairing great food and wine. An accomplished cook and baker, Kim enjoys hosting small dinner parties for family and friends with the goal of creating wonderful memories that showcase the relationship between lovingly prepared food and artfully made wines.

After earning a degree in biology from Willamette University in 1989, Kim’s fascination with the science of winemaking led her to the lab at Napa Valley’s Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars, where she honed her craft before joining Markham Vineyards in 1993. After four years of hands-on experience in the vineyards and in the winery, she was promoted to associate winemaker in 1997 and then to winemaker in 2001. In the two decades

since, Kim's artistry, innovative spirit and encyclopedic knowledge of winegrowing and winemaking have helped Markham Vineyards to earn countless accolades, and an enduring place as one of Napa Valley's great wineries. In 2020, Kimberlee celebrated her 29th harvest at Markham Vineyards.

###