



PATZ & HALL

**James Hall  
Founder, Winemaker**

For two decades, founder and winemaker James Hall has guided the Patz & Hall winemaking program, instilling it with his own boldness, imagination and trademark perfectionism. Combining a belief in great viticulture, traditional winemaking practices, and the judicious use of innovative techniques, James has earned a reputation for crafting dramatic benchmark Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs that balance vibrant power with vineyard-inspired depth and sophistication.

The son of an English professor, who was also a wine enthusiast, James developed an early appreciation for fine wine during travels with his family to Europe in the late 1960s. While studying liberal arts at the University of California, Santa Cruz, James met Anne Moses, and together the two began exploring their shared interest in wine. Though not part of his curriculum, James started studying winemaking textbooks in his spare time. Inspired, he transferred to the University of California, Davis, to study viticulture and enology. Eager to experience the hands-on work of winemaking, James took his first winery job at Felton-Empire in 1981, where he was able to learn from renowned winemakers Leo McCloskey and Patrick Mahaney. "Leo was the scientist, obsessed with unraveling the mysteries of wine, Pat was the craftsman, meticulously working with the raw materials. It was a remarkable experience learning these complementary approaches."

In 1983, James joined Napa Valley's Flora Springs Winery and Vineyards as assistant winemaker. There, he spent four years developing his expertise crafting barrel-fermented, small-lot Chardonnays. While at Flora Springs, James struck up a close friendship with sales manager Donald Patz, and the two soon discovered that they shared a similar philosophical approach to wine and winemaking. In the spring of 1988, while working as the winemaker and estate manager for Honig Winery, James teamed up with Donald and Heather Patz, and Anne Moses to make and release Patz & Hall's inaugural Napa Valley Chardonnay.

As Patz & Hall's winemaker for nearly 20 years, James has built lasting relationships with such renowned growers as Larry Hyde, Charlie and Bud Chenoweth, Gary Pisoni and Lee Martinelli to create an acclaimed portfolio of single-vineyard wines. At the same time, he has designed and implemented cutting-edge equipment and procedures, including a custom punch-over device, in an effort to constantly enhance quality. A master of his craft, and a widely respected veteran winemaker, James is regularly asked to speak about artisan winemaking.