

SABLE RIDGE

VINEYARDS

SABLE RIDGE VINEYARDS' FOUNDERS

CHUCK BARR

Chuck Barr is an escapee from corporate America. After a twenty-three year career in sales and marketing at IBM, he left behind New York, sales quotas, too much travelling and contract negotiations to finally make his home in Sonoma Valley, where he would found Sable Ridge Vineyards in fairly quick order.

Chuck grew up in upstate New York. Soon after graduation from high school he joined the Air Force and spent four years serving as an air traffic controller, including a tour of duty in Vietnam. After discharge in 1966, Chuck studied Economics and Finance at Ithaca College, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. In 1970, directly after graduation, he joined IBM and began a career in sales and marketing that would take him from New York to Texas, Washington, D.C., Missouri and back to New York as he continued to move up the company ladder.

An interest in wine developed early. Experimentation with wines led to more passionate collecting, which led to joining wine clubs, and eventually took him to California, specifically to Sonoma Valley. Between 1980 and 1993, when he retired from executive management at IBM, Chuck would visit Sonoma Valley two to four times a year, always coming back to the Glen Ellen/Kenwood area where he had made numerous friends. When retirement came, he headed straight for Sonoma Valley.

By 1994 Chuck was studying viticulture and enology at the Napa extension of the University of California, eventually earning his equivalency degree in Viticulture with a minor in Enology. His first wine was made in 1993 from grapes taken from the famed Beltane Ranch. The next year, he made Zinfandel from the Pagani Ranch. Chuck and Mary Ann Costello founded Sable Ridge Vineyards in 1995. It was a natural step. The first Sable Ridge Vineyards wine was released in 1996.

MARY ANN COSTELLO

Getting in to the wine business was a natural step for Mary Ann Costello. She was surrounded by food and wine at an early age at her parents' restaurant in Greenport, New York. During her successful twenty-four year career at IBM, Mary Ann had the opportunity to work with New York State wineries, an experience that helped pique her interest in fine wines. Her interests in wine intensified to the point that by 1993, when she retired as an executive at IBM, there was no hesitation in picking up and moving to Sonoma Valley.

Mary Ann had visited the Valley on countless occasions over the years. She fell in love with the countryside, the people and, of course, the wines. In 1995 she and Chuck Barr founded Sable Ridge Vineyards. Mary Ann was instrumental in the financials, marketing and sales of the wines, as she continues to be today.

Currently Mary Ann lives in Naples, Florida where she works as a consultant and lead facilitator helping large, global sales organizations build world class collaborative client-focused teams.