

Louis Lucas

Louis Lucas is one of California's premier grape growers and is a legendary pioneer of the California Central Coast wine region. Prior to co-founding Lucas & Lewellen Vineyards with Royce Lewellen, Louis supplied premium wine grapes to many of the most famous wineries in Napa and Sonoma. Best known as an innovator and master at utilizing a variety of growing practices and techniques, Louis' vast knowledge and viticulture experience span over 40 years.

Grandson of Croatian immigrants, Louis is originally from the Central Valley where his father was also a leading grape grower. Louis graduated from Notre Dame University with a degree in Finance and Business Economics. He returned to California to join the family's wine and table grape business, in search of a place to grow premium varietal wine grapes. He became one of the first commercial wine grape growers in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. During this time he developed Tepupsquet Vineyards in Paso Robles (now Cambria) and developed for Edna Valley Vineyards its River Bench Vineyard in Santa Maria.

Louis studied the great vineyards of the world by touring the wine regions of France, Italy, Spain and Germany. He learned from these trips some of his theories on grape growing, leaf exposure to the sun, manipulation of canopy and the importance to limiting vine stress. His travels confirmed that specific techniques are essential for growing quality grapes, including going against conventional wisdom by planting more vines per acre and adapting trellis systems to fit specific varieties. Louis has continued to innovate viticulture practices, including developing his own unique trellis systems.

In 1996 Louis joined forces with retired Judge Royce Lewellen and founded Lucas & Lewellen Vineyards. They acquired and developed several premium properties in three principal wine grape growing regions of Santa Barbara County (the Santa Maria Valley, the Los Alamos Valley and the Santa Ynez Valley) allowing access to three distinct climates unique to Santa Barbara's coast. The estate encompasses 380 acres, 24 varieties of grapes and three major wine labels. The Solvang, California winery has two tasting rooms and a state of the art production facility.

Never too far away from his vines, Louis and his wife Jill live in Solvang, California, overlooking the beautiful Valley View Vineyard where visiting grandchildren romp through the vines.

