



NAT KOMES

General Manager

"This winery has enabled us to touch a lot of lives - our purpose is about wine, but it's also about people, relationships and the joy of what's shared around wine," says Nat Komes, Manager at Flora Springs. He's not just waxing poetic (though he is, notably, a poet, having graduated with a degree in English Literature and published his own volume of poems, called Nighttime Melodies in 1992) - Nat lives his beliefs as well. At home, at the winery, or on the road, it's not uncommon to hear Nat pondering the meaning of it all - wine, art, or life in the Napa Valley - with a customer, fellow staff member, or family over a glass of Flora Springs wine.



Nat has been training for his current role as General Manager at Flora Springs all of his life: his teenage years were full of miscellaneous jobs at the winery, whether on the bottling line, painting the winery, or washing his Uncle Pat Garvey's vineyard truck. "I think my brother Otto and I were Flora Springs' first janitors," he laughs. But it wasn't until his sophomore year in college at the University of the Pacific that Nat realized he wanted a life in the wine business. "I'd always thought Napa was a lonely, rural place growing up, but after moving to Stockton for school I realized just how special this valley is for me," he says. "It was clear that I wanted to continue the tradition that my family started - what a great gift they've given us."

One of Nat's favorite childhood memories is of the Trilogy release party in 1984, the inaugural year for the Meritage blend that has today become a standard bearer for Flora Springs. "A huge crowd of people showed up," he recalls. "Seeing all those people made me realize that what my family had started only six years earlier was something very special," he says.

In addition to his role overseeing wine production and the tasting room, Nat also manages sales for Flora Springs within the state of California. Like his cousin Sean, Nat feels it's important to keep one foot in the marketplace at all times.

Nat credits his dad, John Komes, as a major influence in both business and family life, and relies on his candor, notorious sense of humor and thunderous, arresting laugh for inspiration. "His shoes are big," says Nat. "And they will be hard to fill, but if I am able to continue the Flora Springs tradition long enough to pass on our values and prestige to a fourth generation, then my mission is complete," he adds.

Nat's wife, Anne, is a native of France, and annual visits to her parents' home in Marseilles reiterate the importance of wine in everyday life for them both. Noting the admiration for many of France's 5th, 6th, 7th, and even 8th-generation Chateaux, Nat is disconcerted by many Americans' pre-dominating interests in the new. "I'd like to break that mold and ensure that Flora Springs is a winery that that will be passed from one generation to the next. Consistent, superior quality is what we admire most about older family wineries, and that's what we strive for at Flora Springs," he says.

The Estate

1978 West Zinfandel Lane
St. Helena, CA 94574
(707) 963-5711 - main office
(707) 963-7518 - fax main office
info@florasprings.com

www.florasprings.com

The Room

677 St. Helena Highway/Hwy 29
St. Helena, CA 94574
(707) 967-8032
(866) 967-8032 Toll Free
theroom@florasprings.com



Much of Nat's spare time is spent remodeling his Victorian home or playing with his toddler son, Matthias, and infant daughter, Charlotte. Are Matthias and Charlotte destined to take on the role of vintner as the torch is passed to the fourth generation in a few decades? "I hope so," says Nat. "But that's their choice. If not," he says, pausing for effect, "There's always Phileas." (He is referring to the family dog.) The Komes' sense of humor, it seems, is certain to live on as well.