

Dominic Orsini
Winery Chef
Silver Oak Cellars

Since taking the helm as Winery Chef at Napa Valley's renowned Silver Oak Cellars in 2008, Dominic Orsini has transformed what it means to be a winery chef. With a philosophy centered on creating cuisine designed to enhance the enjoyment of wine, Dominic has expanded the approach by creating a style of cooking that embraces not just the wine, but also the wine country experience as a whole, focusing on the sense of place that is so central to the crafting of fine wine.



As Silver Oak's first Winery Chef, Dominic takes inspiration and ingredients from the seasons as well as the winery's vineyards, cellars and gardens. He uses vine cuttings to smoke meats, cover crops to make pesto, leftover grape lees to make *vincotto*, Cabernet to make *pâte de fruit*, and barrel staves to fuel his wood-burning oven. Almost all of the produce he uses, including olives, herbs, fruits and vegetables, is grown in Silver Oak's organic gardens. What he can't use fresh he dries, cans or otherwise preserves. He grows heritage corn for his own polenta and grinds his own flour. The starter he uses for breads and pizza dough was created from 20-year old Cabernet vines on the winery property. With endless curiosity and enthusiasm for capturing both time and place in his menus, Dominic has pushed the boundaries of what it means to cook locally-grown food according to the season.

As part of his full-time duties leading the culinary program at Silver Oak, Dominic orchestrates the dining experience at the winery's popular, twice-yearly Release Day celebrations, leading chefs from local restaurants such as Harvest Table, Morimoto, La Toque, TORC, Goose & Gander, and Farmstead in the design of custom food pairings around Silver Oak's distinctive Cabernets.

Dominic is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and a Level I Sommelier who honed his culinary skills at fine restaurants in New York and Napa Valley. His journey at Silver Oak is chronicled in his new book, *The Silver Oak Cookbook: Life in a Cabernet Kitchen*, published by Rizzoli in the fall of 2016.

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