

## A Journey From Southborough to California Vineyard

By Chris Bergeron

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Laura Barrett's long journey to a vineyard in northern California began in her high school chemistry class, with later stops backpacking in Australia and picking grapes in New Zealand.

Along the way, the Southborough native had a brief collegiate fling with tequila, but never abandoned her fascination with the science and art of transforming grapes into sparkling wines.

"I was always interested in chemistry that explains the process of how things are made," said Barrett, who works as winemaker for the 6,000-acre Casey Flat Ranch in the Blue Ridge Range of the Vaca Mountains.

She credits her education at Algonquin Regional High School and, in particular, Advanced Placement chemistry with teacher Lorraine Zanini for "sparking an interest in science" that blossomed into undergraduate and graduate degrees that led to her dream job directing the ranch's 24-acre vineyard.

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Bin at 91 Main St., Marlborough.

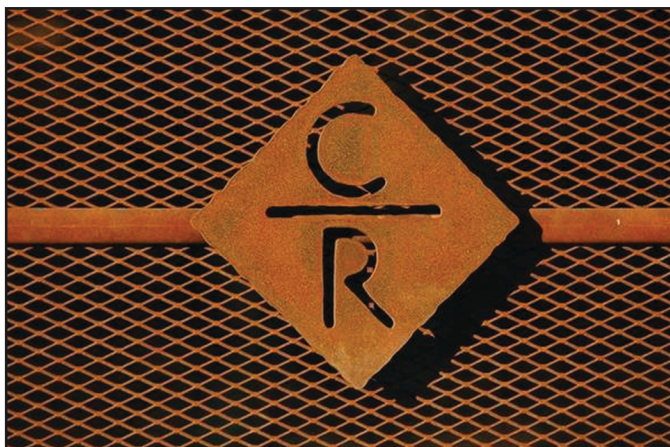
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She expects to offer four wines during an "informal presentation" with visitors.

Rick Lombardi, Vin Bin's founding owner, said he met Barrett this spring at a trade event for Ruby wine distributors in Cape Cod and invited her to present samples and sign bottles in the coming event.

Though she might sip a glass or two, Zanini plans to stop by The Vin Bin to reconnect with the "inquisitive, meticulous problem solver and caring young girl" who shone in her chemistry class almost 20 years ago.

"I'm ecstatic to hear about Laura's success. It doesn't surprise me," said the Hopkinton resident who now chairs Algonquin's chemistry department. "She wanted to learn chemistry not just to get a passing grade but to truly understand its depths."



The logo of the Casey Flat Ranch in Tiburon, Calif.



Southborough native Laura Barrett is the winemaker at Casey Flat Ranch in Tiburon, Calif.