

Martin Ray

VINEYARDS & WINERY



**LESLIE
MEAD RENAUD**
WINEMAKER

ABOUT LESLIE

Former SCUBA diving instructor, US Forest Service employee and urban forester, Leslie Mead Renaud's path to becoming Winemaker at Martin Ray is far from boring. The daughter of a Navy officer, Leslie was born in Virginia, but lived in Honolulu from the age of ten. After graduating high school and spending time as a diving instructor, she returned to the mainland to pursue a degree. Upon graduating from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resources, she worked for the Forest Service in Oregon, hooting for spotted owls in the forests of Mt. Hood. Her career took a sharp turn when she realized her interests aligned with the balance of the wine industry: a combination of science and art. Leslie's first position in the industry was as a Lab Technician at Ironstone Vineyards. She gained experience working in wineries all over Northern California, including Sonoma county, Napa Valley, and the Santa Cruz Mountains. In 2005 she joined Talley vineyards in San Luis Obispo, working her way from Enologist, to Assistant Winemaker, and then to Head Winemaker. From there, she was hired by the Foley Wine Group, and prior to joining the team at Martin Ray Winery, she was Director of Winemaking for Foley's Roth Estate.

FAVORITE BEVERAGE (AFTER WINE)

Chai tea, water, or gin

MOST MEMORABLE WINE EXPERIENCE

Leslie recalls visiting the famed Louis Jadot Winery in Burgundy, France with her chardonnay-hating husband while on their honeymoon. She fondly remembers learning that while her husband hates Chardonnay, he LOVES Grand Cru White Burgundy. The rarer, and more expensive, the better!

FAVORITE VARIETAL

Pinot Noir is her desert island wine. It pairs with everything and she finds it the most fun grape to experiment with, as it shows immense differences from site to site. Her fascination with the grape led her to be a member of the Board of Directors for the World of Pinot Noir, a weekend-long seminar focused on highlighting Pinot Noir wines from around the world. She's been involved with the organization for over a decade.