

A woman in a white corset and tutu is playing a violin on a stage. She has silver glitter on her cheek and is looking down at her instrument. The background features golden columns and curtains.

57°

THIS IS NAPA VALLEY





# Town to Country

By Fran Endicott Miller | Photos by Darren Lovecchio

Kelly Carter has never met a stranger. Warm, personable, and self-effacing, the former journalist and connoisseur of the luxe life includes among her pals Hollywood directors, NBA players, San Francisco society mavens, celebrated vintners, and guests of Alpha Omega Winery, where she now serves as its director of communications.

Alpha Omega vintner Michelle Baggett lured Carter from her glamorous life as editor of *Haute Living San Francisco* magazine to an equally glamorous position in the heart of the Napa Valley. Carter's transition—from one who attended and covered events and personalities to one who now seeks that coverage for Alpha Omega, the Rutherford-based, premium producer of Bordeaux varietals—was seamless. This was largely in part to the genuine relationships she has developed not only throughout the San Francisco Bay Area but also throughout the world.

“Unfortunately, journalism changed drastically from what it was, when I decided to become a journalist at the age of nine, to what it is today,” says Carter. “After three very fulfilling decades in the business, I reinvented myself in fabulous Napa Valley. People from all over the world are drawn here. I love introducing visitors to Alpha Omega and my favorite haunts.”

A self-described bon vivant, Carter's previous journalistic endeavors took her to more than 40 countries and territories on six continents. She has interviewed Bill Clinton, Sir Richard Branson, Robin Roberts, Thomas Keller, Kobe Bryant, Giorgio Armani, and countless other celebrities. One particularly successful sit-down led to a now years-long friendship with a well-known television producer whose children consider her part of the family.

“She has a sunny personality that is very engaging,” says Baggett, who along

with her husband Robin founded Alpha Omega in 2006. “When she walks into a room, you instantly take notice of her beautiful presence, her smile, her laughter, her great fashion . . . it is all infectious!”

Carter blazed trails when she became the Los Angeles Lakers' first female beat writer. A published author, she teamed with tennis phenom Venus Williams to co-author the *New York Times* bestseller *Come to Win: Business Leaders, Artists, Doctors, and Other Visionaries on How Sports Can Help You Top Your Profession*. She followed that with *The Dog Lover's Guide to Travel*, a Lowell Thomas Award winner released by National Geographic Books.

Though now well ensconced in her role with Alpha Omega, her keyboard hasn't been completely abandoned. She's currently working on a memoir, *Bellini for One*, which details her two-year Italian adventure, and she continues her involvement with *Haute Living San Francisco* as the magazine's Wine Country ambassador, providing Napa Valley news to its readership. But her day-to-day world is now all about wine, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

“[Carter's] enthusiasm to learn everything about the wine industry is very empowering to so many of our team members,” says Baggett. “An amazing writer of everything luxury, she takes time away from her pen and her cushy office to place her hands in the Napa Valley soil alongside our wine production team harvesting in the vineyards. Now that is inspiring!”

“I've been blessed to have met so many amazing and accomplished people, experience the world in style, and live in incredible places, including L.A., New York, San Francisco, and Italy,” says Carter. “Now, country living suits me because of where I am, spiritually. Wineries make the best neighbors.”

