



# A Return to Love

By Jim Brumm

*Tulocay and Company brings Napa Valley cuisine into the home*

“As far back as I can remember, I’ve always loved to eat!” So begins the saga of Catherine Bergen’s success story in envisioning and creating her own food business, Tulocay and Company.

“Growing up in San Diego we were surrounded by tons of fresh avocados, lemons and oranges. I would eat a whole avocado smeared with mayonnaise and drizzled with fresh Meyer lemon juice. Or fresh grilled chicken, not covered in barbeque sauce, but rather grilled with salt and pepper and served with a delicious salad of mixed greens, green onions, avocado, olive oil and a squeeze of fresh lemon.”

She tells the story of when she was twelve-years-old and her mother gave her money to go to the mall and buy clothes for school.

“I had a big lunch at Orange Julius and returned home with three cookbooks, including one on vegetarian cooking. Not exactly what my mother had in mind, but I loved reading about food and read them cover-to-cover, over and over again. My passion for food is more like an obsession really. I laugh about it, but I will be eating lunch and start to think about what’s for dinner.”

Over the years Bergen worked many jobs: real estate sales, insurance sales, administrative work, bookkeeping, waiting tables, bartending, dog grooming, selling graphics and printing, and even selling stocks as a licensed stock broker.

“But none of these jobs made my heart sing,” she said.

Then, at age 37, she attended a seminar in Los Angeles to hear a lecturer speak on the subject, “Return to Love.”

“The message,” said Catherine, “was do what you love and the money will follow. I drove home and decided right then to make it happen.”

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## TODAY, TOLUCAY'S MADE IN NAPA VALLEY PRODUCTS ARE SOLD INTERNATIONALLY BUT ALL ARE CONCEIVED AND PRODUCED HERE IN THE NAPA VALLEY, AT THEIR PEACEFUL HEADQUARTERS ALONGSIDE THE NAPA RIVER



She moved to the Napa Valley with a vision and a passion for her dream.

“The region’s wine heritage was just beginning to attract some of the nation’s most talented chefs,” said Bergen. “These chefs were beginning to establish destination restaurants with fabulous food to complement Napa Valley’s world-renowned wine. Without a doubt, this was where I belonged.”

Five months later, Tulocay was born.

Her first product was etched glass decanters, with custom designs which were sold to wineries and other businesses. Later she and her team began dipping oils and flavored vinegars.

“We bottled olive oil and vinegar in every combination that you can imagine,” said Bergen. “Before long, we were creating specialty products for leading national companies, such as Crate and Barrel, Marshall Fields, Robert Mondavi Winery, BV and many more.”

Over time Bergen began musing on all of the world-class chefs that have flocked here, who have traveled around the world and then returned to the Napa Valley to tailor their skills to the flavors and style of the valley. It occurred to her that while people can get Napa Valley wines *outside* of the valley, to experience the cuisine of the valley, you pretty much have to visit a restaurant *in* the valley. She began looking at the flavors that typify the region; the flavors that attract people from all over the world, and wondered, what if she could create a line

of premium-quality pantry foods for home chefs that would capture the flavors of the valley at home?

The rest in history. Over the years Bergen and her team have created a line of specialty products under the moniker *Tulocay’s Made in Napa Valley*, for the home pantry — herbed rubs, marinades and glazes, sauces, dipping oils, baking mixes and more, that allow home chefs to capture the flavor and style of Napa Valley cuisine. “Inspired,” said Bergen, “by the rich flavors, creative spirit and casual elegance of cooking and entertaining in the Napa Valley.”

Today, Tulocay’s Made in Napa Valley products are sold internationally but are all conceived and produced here in the valley, at their peaceful

headquarters alongside the Napa River.

Employing over thirty people, Bergen oversees the operations with the help of her ever-present Jack Russell Terrier, Jane, “a fabulous model.” Bergen credits her success to her employees. “I have a great team,” she said. “Without them none of this would be.”

Tulocay’s website (listed at the end of this story) showcases and sells their products and tells more about their operation. But the best part of the website is the amazing recipe section. There are so many great recipes — over one hundred twenty — posted there you could get by without ever buying another cookbook. Each recipe shows how to incorporate one of Tulocay’s products and is accompanied by a beautiful photograph of the dish. If you do nothing else, after reading this story, check out this recipe section. If you love cooking, you *will* be inspired.

*Tulocay’s Made in Napa Valley products are available at several locations in the valley, including COPIA, The American Center for Wine, Food and the Arts, Vallengas Markets, Browns Valley Market and Napa General Store. Upvalley locations include Dean and Deluca in St. Helena and Mondavi Winery. All products can be ordered on their website as well. Call 1-888-NAPAVLY - [www.madeinnapavalley.com](http://www.madeinnapavalley.com).*