

Insider: Kelly E. Carter's guide to Napa Valley

By Janelle Bitker | October 27, 2016

After three years of city life — and finding any excuse to visit Napa Valley on the weekends — Kelly E. Carter made her favorite escape her permanent residence.

In 2015, she moved to Rutherford, a tiny town with a population of about 164. Every morning, she wakes up to vineyards right outside her yard and enjoys a two-minute commute to work as the director of communications for Alpha Omega Winery.

“It’s like a dream come true,” she says.

Carter spent decades as a celebrity, sports and luxury lifestyle journalist for publications such as USA Today, People and Haute Living magazine before crossing into the wine world in March. In 2010, she and Venus Williams co-authored “Come to Win: Business Leaders, Artists, Doctors, and Other Visionaries on How Sports Can Help You Top Your Profession,” a New York Times best-seller.

When she’s not busy touting Alpha Omega’s handcrafted wines or commitment to sustainability, she takes advantage of Rutherford’s peace and quiet by working on her memoir, “Bellini for One,” which covers her two years as a freelance travel writer in Italy. Carter fell in love with Italy and always planned to move back, but for the first time, she no longer feels that need — a sentiment that inspired her next book: “Napa Is the New Italy.”

“I call Napa the new Italy because everything revolves around food and wine,” she says. “Napa is my Italy.”

A few favorites

JCB Tasting Salon: Carter recommends sipping a glass of JCB No. 13 bubbly rosé in this luxury tasting room and retail boutique by Jean-Charles Boisset. Afterward, wander next door to Atelier by JCB for an overwhelming selection of cheeses. *6505 Washington St., Yountville; (707) 934-8237. www.jbcollection.com*