



**“We just want to be available to those who take the trouble to find us!”** *Part Ten tells the story of Napa Valley based Dieter Tede from Berlin.*



[www.hoppercreek.com](http://www.hoppercreek.com)

#### PERSONAL BACKGROUND

I was born in Krefeld, Germany in 1933. However, I would consider Berlin, where we moved in 1936, my hometown, because that is where I grew up. In 1949 our suburb of Berlin became the GDR (German Democratic Republic). Toward the end of 1950, my father decided that he did not want to spend the rest of his life under a totalitarian regime. Thus we moved to West-Berlin, where I finished school and obtained my “Abitur”

(High School Graduation) in 1951. I then left Berlin for Hamburg to attend business school and take on an apprenticeship in the wholesale and import/export business. At the age of 21, I decided to go to Mexico by ship to study Spanish in Guadalajara. On my way home, I came to visit San Francisco. I liked the city so much that I decided to look for a job in the Yellow Pages and found a one-year traineeship as a shipping



*Vintner, Dieter Tede*

clerk for Winchester Agencies, Inc. While in San Francisco, I met a young entrepreneur of another San Francisco firm, Marine Chartering Co., who needed a company representative in Lima, Peru. This was a good fit because of my Spanish skills and I ended up spending three years in Peru, returning to San Francisco in 1959. I continued to work at Marine Chartering Co. where I eventually became shareholder and manager of several shipping ventures. Working my way up within the company, I became President in 1989 and continued

to work until I retired in 1998. I have been married to an American lady from Montana for almost 50 years. Our three now grown children all live in the Bay Area and are also investors in the winery.

### Why America

I did not plan on leaving Germany, where I had many opportunities waiting for me, but I was interested in seeing the world before settling down. Once in the U.S. I had the chance to become involved in shipping (ocean transportation), a profes-

sion I held in high regards since my studies in Hamburg. Of course the California weather also played an important role!

### Cultural Surprises

Mainly I was surprised how quickly I adapted to the free enterprise system in the U.S. Plus everyone was extremely open, friendly and hospitable. I was welcomed with open arms, even though it had only been eleven years since the end of World War II.

### Biggest Challenge

The biggest challenge in such a transition is to reestablish yourself in a new society. This requires an understanding and acceptance of differences, modification of some of your traditions, and integrating the lifestyle you were brought up and the American lifestyle. For me at first it was a struggle to understand the value of quantity over quality in America, and of course there are differences in conducting business.

### Greatest Inspiration

My supportive friends and family and some of the great acquaintances I have met along the way.

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## FAST FACTS HOPPER CREEK VINEYARD AND WINERY

<b>Name of President:</b>	Dieter Tede (Founder & Owner)
<b>Hometown:</b>	Berlin, Germany
<b>Age of President/Partners:</b>	75
<b>Location:</b>	Yountville, Napa Valley, California
<b>Year Founded in the U.S.:</b>	1996
<b>Business Activity:</b>	Wine Industry / Wine Making
<b>Number of employees:</b>	4
<b>Revenue:</b>	\$200,000 – \$300,000

## BUSINESS BACKGROUND

Even while being fully engaged in the shipping business, I began to invest in and learn about the wine business, a natural endeavor living in California. Further, I felt I had a "genetic" connection to wines through my great grandfather Johann William Tede, who was a wine and beer merchant in the city of Schwerin, and owned the firm Tede and Schlie. In 1982 I purchased an interest in Audubon Cellars Inc. in Berkeley, and in 1996 I bought a vineyard and winery from Edmond Maudiere and associates and named it after the bordering Hopper Creek.



## Reason for Starting Business

My interest in wine had become more than just a hobby. I wanted to do something worthwhile during retirement and have an additional source of income. It is also nice to always meet new people who stop by the winery to taste some of our wines and chat about the area.

## Source of Start Up Capital

I only used personal capital that I had saved during my years of working in the shipping industry.

## Biggest Obstacle

One of the biggest obstacles in the wine industry is that every state still has its own licensing laws, which date back to the Prohibition days. This makes it difficult to ship across state lines because of all the paperwork that has to be dealt with.

## Future Goals

I would like to make a good quality wine that gets some name and brand recognition. We want to further establish our customer base so that about 50% of our sales come from re-orders by existing customers. However, I have no ambition to create a company with nationwide in-store sales. We just want to be available to those who take the trouble to find us and our wine and decide to come back later. We do not do any advertising, so it is mainly word-of-mouth that leads people to Hopper Creek Vineyards and Winery. **GAT**

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