



**Herman Zopf's West End "Wine Gardens"**  
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A November 1878 edition of the Marin Journal newspaper ran the following advertisement: "Zopf's Wine Gardens: Beautiful flower gardens with rustic harbors and retreats, a delightful resort." The winery, tavern and restaurant had been established the previous decade by Herman Zopf, a native of German-speaking Prussia. Mr. Zopf sailed from his homeland in 1859 to Dona Francisca in Brazil where he grew coffee, tea and tobacco. A few years later he arrived in San Francisco and took up residence in San Rafael. Newspaper articles from the era put that date about 1864 while other resources mention 1867 and 1869.

Zopf purchased ten acres of land in San Rafael near today's intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> and H streets and opened a restaurant and tavern just a short distance from the North Pacific Coast Railroad's West End depot. His establishment was originally called San Rafael Gardens, but the name was changed to Zopf's Wine Gardens and the resort soon became a popular destination for diners and wine lovers. Herman married another immigrant from Prussia in 1872, named Philopena. The Zopf's hosted many balls and dances at their "retreat" and in late 1878, newspaper ads announced that every Sunday evening there would be "Zitta Concerts": calm, quiet, offerings of music for the patrons of his restaurant and tavern. Zopf also planted a vineyard on the hill behind his resort and was known for producing "excellent Claret wine", joining the Pacheco family of Ignacio and later, Jean Escalle of Larkspur, as early Marin vintners. Bottles of wine were sold for between 25 – 37 cents and dinners were less than \$1.

Philopena died in October of 1889 at the age of 55 and Herman put the property on the market the following month. The new owners, a Mdm. Marie Debord and Henri Eché kept the name and expanded the operation to include a hotel and a bowling alley. However, the couple did not have great success in managing the property. In 1898 a fire destroyed the entire hillside vineyard and almost consumed the resort. Three years later, Mr. Eché was taken into custody after attacking and injuring a number of his guests with a pair of scissors before trying to commit suicide. The wine garden eventually passed to Joseph and Elizabeth Coppa who moved their popular Coppa's Grove restaurant from San Anselmo to San Rafael.

Meanwhile, Herman Zopf had purchased a tract of land in the Sunnyside neighborhood of San Anselmo, moved there, and opened a store. He also made a large number of real estate purchases and sales including one to James Tunstead in the Sunnyside neighborhood. Herman moved back to San Rafael where he is listed in the 1905 San Rafael Business Directory as a partner in the Rhine and Moselle Fire Insurance Company. Herman Zopf died at the age of 70 from heart failure in 1907 and is buried at Mt. Tamalpais Cemetery. He left his entire estate, worth almost \$100,000, to his sisters, Rosina and Fredericke, living in Germany.

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