



Winemaker Aaron Pott

AARON POTT WINEMAKER, SEVEN STONES WINERY

At age ten, Aaron Pott made the deliberate decision to become a winemaker. It was on the heels of a trip to Europe with his parents, when a French waiter told him, “Milk is for babies” and offered him a watered down red wine instead. His curiosity piqued, Pott began conducting fermentation experiments in his parent’s garage, making creative use of yeast and grape juice concentrate.

In the 30 years since, Pott’s interest in winemaking has evolved from preoccupation to a penchant for highly individualized fine wines that showcase terroir over technique. His handiwork has been associated with acclaimed labels from California’s Napa Valley to France’s Bordeaux region.

From the outset of his career, Pott sought excellence—both in terms of his education and early work experience. He is an alumnus of the University of California at Davis’ top-ranked department Viticulture & Enology. During his four years at U.C. Davis, Pott worked part-time at the Robert Mondavi Winery, the Napa Valley’s most innovative winery at the time.

Upon graduation, he took a position at Newton Vineyards, acclaimed for its Bordeaux-inspired wines. As assistant winemaker to the venerated John Kongsgaard, he had the opportunity to craft merlot and chardonnay wines in the signature Newton style—unfiltered, naturally-fermented and barrel aged. While there, Pott met Michel Rolland. An internationally acclaimed wine consultant, Rolland successfully lobbied on Pott’s behalf for a position as head winemaker at Château Troplong Mondot, now a Premier Grand Cru Classé in Saint-Emilion, France. Pott left Château Troplong Mondot after a year to become head winemaker at Château La Tour Figeac, a Grand Cru Classé located in Saint-Emilion. He spent five years there and in the process earned a degree in Viticulture from the Université de Bourgogne in Dijon, France.

A seasoned winemaker, Pott returned to the United States after six years, becoming head winemaker in charge of international brands for Beringer Wine Estates of the Napa Valley. Pott oversaw day-to-day production of its French, Italian and South American labels. In this capacity, he worked alongside such esteemed French wine consultants as Jean-Louis Mandrau, formerly of Château Latour, and André Porcheret, one of Burgundy’s most revered winemakers. In 2001, his duties were expanded to include winemaker at St. Clement in St. Helena.

In 2004, he accepted a position as winemaker and general manager at award-winning Quintessa Estate in the Napa Valley, where he proceeded to make complex wines styled after Bordeaux's famed Medoc region.

In 2007, Pott teamed up with his wife Clare to create Pott Wine, a Napa Valley label, produced in part, from the couple's 76-acre vineyard property on Mt. Veeder. He continues to consult to a limited number of Napa Valley producers, among them Quintessa Estate, Bello Family Vineyards, Fisher Vineyards, and Blackbird Vineyards.

It was in 2007 that Aaron joined the team at Seven Stones Winery in St. Helena. "I am thrilled at the unique opportunity to consult for Seven Stones. The vineyard has a variety of complex soil types, leading to wines with intense depth, breadth, and complexity. Our viticulture is vine-by-vine, and in winemaking, no detail is too small to be overlooked. I think this estate has the capability of producing one of Napa's most expressive wines." ###