



BLAIR FOX
Head Winemaker

Few could have been surprised when Blair found his calling as a winemaker. The signs of a life filled with starters and lees were there from adolescence. At an early age, Blair played with home brewery kits and experimented in high school chemistry classes with grape fermentation. Cultivated by wine buff parents who took him on family trips to vineyards and wineries around the world, it was always a natural turn to winemaking.

Yet it could also have been very different. Blair enrolled at UC Davis as a premed student with little intention of devoting himself to wines. Whether by providence or intuition, Blair's decision placed him within wine-spitting distance of a world-class viticulture and enology department. Blair signed up for viticulture lessons initially between lectures on molecular biology and anatomy. But sure enough, it wasn't long before he switched the operating room for the tasting room.

Following his graduation in 1999 with a combined degree in viticulture and enology, Blair pursued his passion with stints at Sunstone Winery in the Santa Ynez Valley (1999-2001), and at Haselgrove Winery – a custom-crush winery in McLaren Vale, Australia (2003). Blair eventually found his way back his hometown of Santa Barbara, where he joined the Fess Parker winemaking team as Associate Winemaker after initially consulting for the 2002 harvest.

While Blair approaches winemaking with a rigor and dedication befitting his early scientific education, he also has a historian's regard for tradition. His fascination with older vines blossomed during his extensive travels through France's Rhône Valley. At Fess Parker, he has overseen the cultivation of Rhône varieties like Syrah and Viognier to great acclaim.

With Blair's appointment as Head Winemaker in May of 2005, he has been able to devote even greater attention to these storied grapes. Not content with emulating the great wines of regions like the Côte-Rôtie, Blair's wines proudly express the very unique *terroir* of the Fess Parker vineyards. Taking the stylistic direction set by Director of Winemaking Eli Parker, Blair continues to raise the standard for Fess Parker's award-winning wines.