



FESS PARKER WINERY PROFILE

When Fess Parker was cast in the Walt Disney Studio's role of Davy Crockett in the mid 1950's, it caused an international sensation and changed his life forever. So too was the course of the Parker family's history altered by the purchase of 714 acres in the Santa Ynez Valley. Realizing the potential of Santa Barbara County as a premium grape growing region, Fess and his son Eli set out to plant a small vineyard, with the idea of selling the fruit to local producers and seeing how the industry progressed. Fess' daughter Ashley explains what happened next by saying, "Fess is from Texas so he can't do anything small."

The Fess Parker Winery has since grown from an initial planting of 5 1/2 acres of Riesling in 1989 to over 300 acres of their own vineyard plus an additional 200 acres of leased plantings as of 2006. Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Syrah and Viognier are the varietals that form the cornerstones of the production program. In 2005 the winery produced 65,000 cases of ultra-premium wine which was distributed throughout 47 states, Canada and Denmark. Visitation and hospitality are vital elements of the business and the winery's tasting room on the Foxen Canyon Wine Trail is one of the most popular destinations in Santa Barbara County wine country.

Working as a family has always been of particular importance to the Parkers. It gives Fess and his wife of 46 years, Marcy, great pleasure to see their children and grandchildren working together in the business. Eli was named President and Director of Winemaking in 1996 after initially overseeing the first vineyard plantings and construction of the winery. Eli's innate talent for winemaking was augmented with enology and viticultural classes at U.C. Davis supplemented by five years of "hands on" experience in the cellar. Daughter Ashley Parker joined the family business after graduating in 1986 from Bates College and living and working on the East Coast. After running the office, pouring in the first tasting room (barrel room) and representing the winery at consumer and trade events, Ashley was named Vice President and became Eli's partner in the winery in 1998. She continues to work on the public relations, sales and marketing teams with her husband, Vice President and General Manager, Tim Snider. In 2005 the 3rd generation of Parker offspring began to influence the style and direction of the winery. Kristopher Parker, Eli's eldest son, joined the family business as the Direct Sales Manager, and his wife Michellene, came on board as an Assistant Marketing Manager. Both graduated with honors from Santa Clara University in 2005.

The presence of Fess and Marcy as the founding visionaries of the Fess Parker Winery is an enduring and important one. They are extremely active on the public relations, hospitality and vineyard side of the business in addition to operating Fess Parker's Wine Country Inn & Spa in Los Olivos. Providing upscale accommodations as well as award winning wines has made the Parker family's dream of a world-class wine country experience in Santa Barbara County into a reality.