



Jeff Runquist Wines

Jeff Runquist—Winemaker



After eighteen years of producing wines for others, Jeff Runquist launched his own label with the 1995 vintage of the “Z” Zinfandel from the Massoni Ranch in Amador County’s Shenandoah Valley.

After graduating in 1980 from the University of California at Davis with a degree in Fermentation Science, Jeff was the winemaker for Montevina Wines in Amador County, the Napa Valley Cooperative Winery in St. Helena and the J. Lohr Winery in San Jose and Paso Robles. After leaving J. Lohr in 1996 and completing an MBA degree at Santa Clara University, Jeff designed and helped construct McManis Family winery in the small San Joaquin County town of Ripon, where he remains involved in the production of the McManis wines.



In the fall of 2006, Jeff purchased a five acre parcel in Amador County’s Shenandoah Valley. He constructed a small winery and tasting room that opened in May of 2008. In the spring of 2010 a larger production-oriented facility was erected adjacent to the tasting room, and the plan is to finish the 2010 wines in Amador and crush the entire 2011 vintage on site.

All of Jeff’s wines share a similar theme of fresh fruit reflective of the varietal flavors inherent in the grapes. Jeff believes that, as pitching is to baseball, grape growing is to winemaking; the team will go only as far as the grapes will take them. Jeff has selected his grapes from vineyards that provide rich full flavors without loads of astringent tannins. “By keeping the lots small”, Jeff says. “We can treat each vineyard differently with regard to yeast, fermentation, temperature, oak, and how long they stay on the lees. We’ve built as much flexibility as we can into each individual element of the process”.



“We work very hard to produce balanced wines. Wines that will age and become more complex with time, but wines that can be enjoyed in their youth as well.” Personally, Jeff prefers his wines to have youthful zest and vibrant fruit flavors.

Clearly, his style is working. Last year, Jeff was the recipient of the prestigious *André Tchelistcheff Winemaker of the Year Award* from the San Francisco International Wine Competition.

Producers of Vineyard Designated Red Table Wines