

OUR WINEMAKER

Bryan Wilson has had a long and impressive journey making wine for several California and Oregon properties before finding a home as Winemaker at Foris Vineyards in the late fall of 2007. His initial fascination with wine began while living with his parents in Europe as a young teen. Wine became part of family life at the Wilson dinner table and this led to Bryan's growing passion to discover the world of winemaking.



Bryan's Winemaking Journey . . .

- 1980** **Graduated from the University of Oregon, Bachelor of Science, Economics**
- 1980-1984** **Moved to California and became a cellar worker at Chateau Souverain.**
His first winemaking effort involved tending ¼ acre of Zinfandel which was next to the old Ridge Geyserville Zinfandel vineyard, for home winemaking. Bryan knew he had found his calling when his first vintages, a 1981 Zinfandel and 1981 Sauvignon Blanc, each received gold medals at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair Amateur Competition
- 1984-1994** **Met Mike Benziger and began working at the Benziger Family Winery.**
"It was quite a wild ride," becoming winemaker in 1987 with a brand that grew from 3,000 cases to over 200,000 cases over the 10 year period Bryan worked with the Benziger family.
- 1994-1995** **Worked alongside Warren Winiariski as Associate Winemaker at Stag's Leap Cellars.**
Eventually, Bryan recognized that he longed for Oregon and the natural beauty of the landscape he had grown to love while attending college.
- 1995-1998** **Joined Bridgeview Winery as Winemaker in Southern Oregon's Illinois Valley.**
It was upon his return to Oregon in 1995, that Bryan met Ted Gerber while initially working in the Illinois Valley. Thus, began a friendship built upon admiration of Ted's many accomplishments as an Oregon grape growing pioneer.
- 1998-2004** **Silvan Ridge/Hinman Vineyard, Winemaker**
Moving north in 1998, Bryan served as Winemaker at Silvan Ridge/Hinman Vineyards for seven years, working with growers throughout the Willamette, Umpqua and Rogue Valleys.
- 2004-2006** **Del Rio Vineyards, Winemaker**
Bryan moved back to the Rogue Valley to help the newly established Del Rio Vineyards establish their winery.
- 2006** **Founded Cuckoo's Nest Cellars**
Venturing out on his own, Bryan founded his own brand - Cuckoo's Nest Cellars. Needing a winemaking facility for Cuckoo's Nest, Bryan found a home at Foris Vineyards. It was a win/win situation. Ted invited Bryan to make his own wines, while helping Foris at crush during the 2006 and 2007 harvests.
- Fall 2007** **Appointed Winemaker at Foris Vineyards**
Describing his position at Foris Vineyards as "feeling like coming home," Bryan has never felt more comfortable. With a solid family of local growers, the unique attributes of Illinois Valley vineyards, and an extended family of employees, it sounds like ideal conditions for success.