

MASON

Winemaker Randy Mason: A Perfect Match for Sauvignon Blanc



On rare occasions, serendipitous events conspire to put a winemaker on a certain path. For Randy Mason, the year was 1978. He had six harvests behind him at Chappellet in Napa, along with a degree in fermentation science from the world-renowned viticulture and enology program at the University of California, Davis. A chance tasting sparked his interest in Sauvignon Blanc, and he simply fell in love with it. The next four decades would see Randy become a pioneer of California Sauvignon Blanc and one of the world's foremost producers of the varietal.

"I became enthralled with the tremendous range of flavors that can be developed in the vineyard with Sauvignon Blanc, depending on the rootstock you use, the trellising, how much leafing you do and when you pick the fruit," said Randy. "The way a Sauvignon Blanc can go from a light and fruity style to a beautiful dinner wine to a more dramatic profile has always intrigued me, particularly because those stylistic differences happen more in the vineyard than in the cellar."

In 1993, Randy and his wife, Megan, launched Mason Cellars in Oakville. For nearly 25 years, their eponymous label has combined his life-long passion for crafting Sauvignon Blanc and her decades of expertise in marketing to bring classically styled Napa Valley wines to dinner tables around the country. In 2004, they created a second label, Pomelo, featuring a collection of expressive wines from the North Coast. Their Three Pears label followed in 2008 with a refreshing Pinot Grigio.

Prior to launching Mason Cellars, Randy worked as a vineyard manager for Chappellet and spent 14 years as head winemaker at Lakespring Winery, which bordered Yountville and Napa Valley. In 1993, Randy helped develop the newly minted custom crush facility, Napa Wine Company, simultaneously creating Mason Cellars. He released his first Sauvignon Blanc under the Mason Cellars label in 1996 to wide acclaim.

Today, Mason Cellars, Pomelo and Three Pears are part of the family-owned Napa Valley winery Trinchero Family Estates. Randy continues to craft his award-winning Mason Cellars Sauvignon Blanc and Merlot, Pomelo Sauvignon Blanc and Rosé, and Three Pears Pinot Grigio. And, after all these years, he still walks the vineyard rows in search of just the right flavor.