

MOTTO



"I LOVE LEARNING AND UNLOCKING ALL THE MYSTERIES THE GRAPES HOLD. THROUGH WINEMAKING, I AM ABLE TO BROADEN MY PALATE AND OPEN MY MIND TO NEW AND DIFFERENT THINGS."

MOTTO WINEMAKER REID KLEI

REID KLEI IS THE WINEMAKER FOR THE NEW MOTTO WINES WHICH ARE PART OF THE STE. MICHELLE WINE ESTATES (SMWE) PORTFOLIO. THESE WINES ARE A COLLECTION OF DISTINCT, DARK, RICH WINES FROM CALIFORNIA THAT DELIVER A DEFINITELY BOLD WINE EXPERIENCE.

KLEI'S SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND AND ENDLESS CURIOSITY LED HIM TO HIS CAREER IN THE WINE INDUSTRY. IN 2005, HE GRADUATED FROM EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY WITH A DEGREE IN BIOLOGY. LOOKING TO USE HIS BIOLOGY DEGREE IN A LABORATORY, KLEI COMPLETED AN INTERNSHIP IN THE LAB AT SNOQUALMIE WINERY IN EASTERN WASHINGTON FOR THE 2005 HARVEST.

AFTER THE HARVEST, HE WORKED IN A FEW OTHER LABORATORIES, BUT QUICKLY FOUND THAT NONE OF THE OTHER JOBS COULD MATCH UP TO WORKING AT A WINERY. WHEN A FULL TIME LAB POSITION OPENED AT SMWE, KLEI JUMPED AT THE OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO THE INDUSTRY. AS HIS TIME THERE PROGRESSED, KLEI FOUND HE WAS INTERESTED IN MORE THAN JUST THE LABORATORY SIDE OF WINEMAKING.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE WINEMAKING TEAM, KLEI FOUND HIS TRUE PASSION FOR THE INDUSTRY. IN 2008, KLEI WAS NAMED ENOLOGIST FOR COLUMBIA CREST OUT OF PATERSON, WASHINGTON, AND IN 2012 HE WAS PROMOTED TO ASSISTANT WINEMAKER. IN 2015, KLEI BEGAN OVERSEEING WINEMAKING FOR MOTTO WINES.

"I AM VERY EXCITED TO BE MAKING THE NEW MOTTO WINES. IT GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT. I HAVE BEEN MAKING WINE IN WASHINGTON FOR MY ENTIRE CAREER SO I CAME INTO THE MOTTO WINES WITH NO PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS OR IDEAS OF HOW CALIFORNIA WINES SHOULD BE MADE."

"I ENTERED IT WITH A BLANK SLATE AND AM REALLY ABLE TO JUST FOCUS ON THE WINES, THEIR CHARACTERISTICS, AND PUT TOGETHER BLENDS AND COMBINATIONS THAT I THINK TASTE WELL TOGETHER. I THINK THIS IS WHAT MAKES MOTTO WINES DIFFERENT AND GIVES THEM A UNIQUE SPIN."

ALTHOUGH HE HAS NOW SETTLED INTO HIS CAREER, THE EXCITEMENT AND WONDER THAT ORIGINALLY LED HIM INTO THE CELLAR IS NOT GONE.

#WHATSYOURMOTTO

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