

# BRION WISE VINTNERS

BRION WISE

FOUNDER & OWNER



BRION WISE, VINTNER, ON HIS ESTATE ON MOON MOUNTAIN, SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

You have to have a belief system to do anything of consequence and it's a belief system you have to stay with. My whole process from the beginning has been to create a quality Cabernet Sauvignon, a wine of the world, and I'm a firm believer that this has a lot to do with the vineyard.

Growing up, while I would be out with my family doing the grafting in the orchards, there was a sleigh with a fire on it to keep the grafting wax hot. I was pulling that sleigh at five years old. I fell in love with the different flavors of not just apples but particular clones of apples.

As a young man, with a chemical engineering degree getting started in the oil business, it was the prospecting and wildcatting that made the most sense to me. I found I liked the grit, and the fact that you had to be on your game. Everyone you worked with had to be on their game. Your word was your bond.

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I came to wine when I was traveling internationally after I started my own oil company at the age of 26. I was dining with people like Mikhail Gorbachev. I traveled all over—Europe, Russia, Australia, and South America. I grew cotton in Australia, developed a titanium bicycle chain, ended up opening a restaurant and then a wine bar in Boulder, Colorado.

When I came out to California in 1993, I knew I was looking for land for vineyards, and I knew I didn't want anything already planted or set up. I need to be involved in a thing from the beginning. Our first release for B. Wise Vineyards was in 2005 once the grapes were established and producing well. The BRION Cabernet Sauvignon was first harvested in 2009 and was the best of my best; I could hold it up to what I had found in my travels.

Each time I have sought out wines that have something particular going on, it always comes out that if there's an epiphany, it's the fact that there's something special about the vineyard. I'm always looking for that rare intersection of the work of singular people with a site capable of delivering grapes of the highest caliber.

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“Working with Brion Wise, I see that he has a passion for detail, but he's not rigid about it. It's like a hand-built stone wall—it can be beautiful and the texture gives the character. That attitude leaves room for things to be a bit eclectic yet very detailed; something special comes out of it. What he's looking for with his wines is to have the best expression of the sites. He's not so much looking for power of concentration. He is looking for finesse and texture. And that's why he came to get me. He does his research, and in that I go along with him. We understand each other. He extends me a certain amount of freedom on researching what I want to do and on my style. But he is at *every single* checkpoint.” —Julien Fayard, *Winemaker*

In 2023, Brion Wise purchased a property in the Pritchard Hill area of the Napa Valley, which put his name into the *Robb Report* and *Forbes*. Properties in this area don't change hands very often. The Pritchard Hill area is known by experienced wine people as having some of the most enviable terroir and producing wines that are some of the most sought-after, not only in the Napa Valley, but amongst all the wines of the world.

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## BRION WISE :: MILESTONES

“...inveterate founder of companies and developer of systems...” —*Robb Report*, May 2021

- 1960s: Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering, *Washington State University*
- 1970s: Founded an oil company at the age of 26
- 1990s: Founded Trios restaurant and Trios wine bar, Boulder, Colorado
- 2000: Purchased former cattle ranch in what was to become the Moon Mountain District in Sonoma, California; developed and planted B. Wise Vineyards from the ground up
- 2005: Released first B. Wise Vineyards vintages
- 2009: First vintage of BRION Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Moon Mountain District
- 2012: Hired Master Cooper Ramiro Herrera to develop a dedicated in-house cooperage, supplying custom barrels for Brion Wise Vintners wine and spirits projects
- 2018: Released first BRION vintages (2014) as a stand-alone project with four Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignons from Moon Mountain District (Sonoma Valley), and Sleeping Lady Vineyard, Caldwell Vineyard, and Oakville Ranch (Napa Valley); these wines are the work of winemakers Massimo Monticelli, Mark Herold, and Julien Fayard
- 2020: Opened dedicated BRION gravity-flow cellar and hospitality venue after four years of restoration and renovation of an 1876 bank barn on the Sleeping Lady Vineyard property in Yountville
- 2020: Founded Constable Whiskey, Wise Caldwell Spirits, in partnership with John Caldwell
- 2020: Purchased Amapola Creek Winery
- 2023: Purchased Mark Herold Wines
- 2023: Inaugural release of Brion Wise Champagne, *Méthode Champenoise*
- 2023: Purchased a vineyard property in the Pritchard Hill area of the Napa Valley, to be developed as the home estate of BRION
- 2025: Release of inaugural vintages of Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from Upper Range Vineyard

## CONTACT

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