

JOSEPH PHELPS

V I N E Y A R D S

Justin Ennis

Winemaker, Sonoma Coast

With a winemaking career in Sonoma County that spans over two decades, Justin Ennis has deep experience working with both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and counts Pinot Noir among his favorite varieties. “I love the delicacy of the grape; it has a feminine, fruit-forward character but it’s also very complex. The flavor, texture and style are always dynamic.”

A native of Sonoma, Justin got his start in the wine industry at an early age, helping his grandparents crush grapes and make wine from the vineyard they owned in Dry Creek Valley. But it wasn’t until he took a job as a harvest intern at Hartford Court Winery in the Russian River Valley at the age of 18 that he became interested in pursuing a career in winemaking. “I was offered a full time job after harvest and I never looked back. I loved the responsibility and it exposed me to so many different people.”

Justin spent the next four years in roles of increasing responsibility at Hartford Court, and also spent a harvest in Mendoza, Argentina where he helped start a new winery. He then served as Cellarmaster at Williams Selyem Winery in Healdsburg from 1998 to 2006, and in spring of 2006 worked the New Zealand harvest at Villa Maria Estates. In 2007 Justin joined Joseph Phelps Vineyards as Cellarmaster in Freestone. He was promoted to Assistant Winemaker in 2011 and Winemaker in 2014, and is now responsible for all day-to-day winery activities at the Freestone estate, working in all aspects of our Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir and Chardonnay production.

At Freestone, Justin appreciates the estate model embraced by Joseph Phelps Vineyards as it gives the winery complete control over grape quality and allows him to spend valuable time in the estate’s Pastoral and Quarter Moon Vineyards. “Joseph Phelps is steadfast about maintaining and improving quality, and that’s important to me. I also appreciate the fact that it’s a team effort here, it’s not about one individual.”