



ADAM CAMPBELL

Following harvest in 1989 at the family's Elk Cove Vineyards and his high school graduation, Adam decided to take a gap year before college.

He traveled through Europe and visited with some of the many wine families that the Campbells had met over the years. Still unsure about a career, he returned to study political science at Lewis & Clark College.

Parents Pat and Joe Campbell planted their first 10 acres of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay when Adam was just 4.

"I always say that the Campbell kids were Elk Cove's first workforce, and that's why we all ran away from home as soon as we were able," says Adam.

On a serious note, Adam says: "My brothers and sisters like wine, and the property we grew up on. But the people who are successful truly love wine and the chance to make something creative.

"If you don't have that passion, it just seems like a lot of work. For me, it's not work at all. When I'm on the tractor or forklift, I'm constantly thinking about everything you can do to push the envelope on quality."

In 1994, after he spent his junior year abroad, he decided to come back home. He took over running the vineyards, with his mom managing sales and his dad doing the winemaking. Over the next five years, a natural transition into winemaking followed.

"When you put all your love into the vineyard, you start wanting more input into the final product," says Adam. "In 1997, I began to work with my dad on the winemaking. After I took over in 1999, he's really never said anything other than 'Good job, son.' He realized he had to step away."

Elk Cove is transitioning to 100% estate grown wines from its 350 acres of vineyard. The Pike Road label blends purchased Willamette Valley grapes with fruit from the estate's young wines.

"My parents get to do the fun stuff now," says Adam. "We had a great wine club dinner recently, and they got to meet the customers, have a nice dinner and get thanked by 100 people who love what they started here."

GROWING UP IN THE VINEYARD

BY PAUL GREGUTT PHOTOS BY TY MILFORD

Five second-generation Oregon winemakers share what it's been like to make a career in the family vineyard.

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