



AMPELOS CELLARS

Peter and Rebecca Work share a serious commitment to the environment and operate their small Santa Rita Hills winery under sustainable, organic and biodynamic certification - the first in the county, if not the entire country.



On the morning of September 11, 2001, Peter Work was scheduled to be in a meeting at the World Trade Center. A last minute cancellation and near miss with tragedy caused him and wife Rebecca to reevaluate things and question whether they should do something more meaningful with their lives.

Peter and Rebecca both had successful careers in the corporate world, with their names atop such companies as Walt Disney, World Com, and Price Waterhouse - which is where they met. Peter is from Denmark and earned his degree from Princeton before working as an Information Technology Consultant for PW. Alaska-native Rebecca was looking for the big city life and found her way into many consulting firms in Los Angeles where she eventually became a CIO. The pair loved getting away to wine country on the weekends and even purchased some property in the Santa Rita Hills of Santa Barbara County, on which they planned to someday live out their dream life of growing vineyards and making their own wines. That cancelled meeting on September 11th and the long, tiresome journey back to Los Angeles, made the Works realize that *someday* was today!

Barbara, and was working his way up as a winemaker for many of the county's small up-and-coming wineries," Rebecca Work recently explained. "He agreed to help us get the vineyard underway so we could start carrying out our dream."

It was 2001 and the Works planted their first 15-acre vineyard to mostly Pinot Noir and Syrah, with a little Viognier intended for blending. The vineyard is situated on an 82-acre site ideally located in an east-west Santa Rita Hills valley opening to the Pacific Ocean, allowing cool morning mists and evening breezes - perfect for their Pinot Noir. The vineyard has since expanded to 25 acres and includes small amounts of Grenache and Pinot Gris.

In 2002, Peter and Rebecca decided to leave their corporate jobs behind and move to their Santa Rita Hills property to completely invest themselves in the project at hand.

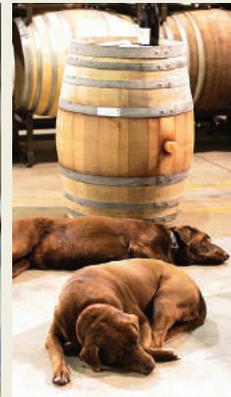
"We spent the first four years learning how to farm the land, prune the vines, coax them onto the trellis, nurture the soil, and prepare for the first harvest. To get a jump start on learning the new trade, we purchased a ton of Pinot Noir and two tons of Syrah and started to make our own wine, with help from our son Don," Rebecca explained.

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The Ampelos Vineyard is planted to five varietals on 25 acres in Santa Rita Hills; Pinot Noir grapes ripen on the vine; Each bottle is hand-dipped in wax for a stunning presentation; Rebecca and Peter Work show off grapes from their first harvest.

"Our son, Don Schroeder, had fallen in love with the wine country of Santa



Ampelos Vineyard is situated in Santa Barbara County's picturesque Santa Rita Hills appellation; Peter Work tests the sugar level of his grapes before harvest; Barrel sampling; the Works' dogs take a nap in the barrel room; Ampelos Vineyard's conditions are perfectly suited to growing cool climate Pinot Noir.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD



Ampelos is the first vineyard in Santa Barbara County, and one of the first in the United States to be certified sustainable, organic, and biodynamic. Their commitment to the environment and incredible focus on vineyard management has

resulted in premium quality fruit year after year, that is considered among the best in the region.

The first wines from Peter and Rebecca came in 2004 and they named their winery Ampelos Cellars. *Ampelos* is Greek for “vine” and was chosen for the winery because they believe that “all great wines start in the vineyard.” The Works also have close ties to Greece after being married on the small Greek island of Folegandros. They fell so much in love with it that they even created a small Bed and Breakfast there called Ampelos Resort. The Greek connection is also seen in the wine portfolio at Ampelos Cellars, with each wine named after a letter from the Greek alphabet (rho, lambda, epsilon, etc.). Each letter has its own unique meaning and connection to the wine it has been associated with.

Ampelos Cellars is also unique in that it became the first vineyard in Santa Barbara County, and one of the first in the country, to be certified sustainable, organic and biodynamic.

“My husband Peter and I follow the Amish proverb that says ‘We did not inherit this land from our parents, it’s on loan to us from our kids,’” Rebecca stated. “It’s important to us to keep raising the bar in our vineyard and to do the best we possibly can do. Plus, we live on the property, so we didn’t want to spray any nasty stuff.”

Peter and Rebecca Work truly share a commitment to the environment, and the improvement they’ve observed in the fruit since obtaining their certifications makes it impossible to deny that there really is something to making wine alongside the cosmos. Plus, with a collection of 90+ ratings from Wine Spectator, it’s safe to say they’re doing something right.

Ampelos Cellars currently offers nine wines in their small portfolio (just 3,500 cases are produced overall). The wines can be sampled and purchased in their tasting room located in downtown Lompoc, a quaint town just outside of Santa Ynez.

“We’re very pleased with where we are right now. We have no intention to grow beyond where we are and we’ll keep our primary focus on vineyard management in the coming years,” Rebecca informs us.

How refreshing to see a winery with such grounded ambition, embracing life in a wonderfully healthy and happy way. Cheers!

Ampelos is currently planted to 25 acres of mostly Pinot Noir and Syrah, with smaller amounts of Viognier, Grenache, and Pinot Gris. The vineyard lies towards the eastern edge of the Santa Rita Hills appellation and finds much of its climatic influences from the nearby Pacific Ocean. Mornings of ocean fog and breezes in the afternoon make this a cool climate spot and one of the most exciting areas in the world for growing Pinot Noir.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Peter and Rebecca Work share the duties of 'winemaker' at Ampelos Cellars and believe that experimentation with new and old winemaking methods will lead to continual improvement in the cellar with complex and intriguing wines. Their philosophy seems to be paying off, because their wines are topping the charts and continue to bring in 90+ ratings from major competitions and top periodicals.

Ampelos Cellars currently produces nine different wines, with two thirds of the grapes sourced from their own estate vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills, and the remainder sourced from some of their favorite vineyard sites in the region. Peter and Rebecca focus on producing exquisite wines that reflect the individual characteristic of each varietal and vineyard location, and are excited about how far they have come in such a short period.

The Works agree that one of the best things about being winemakers is their opportunity to meet and share their love for wine with others. Their passion and enthusiasm is truly contagious, and is a testament to their genuine spirit.

AMPELOS CELLARS 2006 'LAMBDA' PINOT NOIR

Ampelos Cellars' 2006 'Lambda' Pinot Noir comes from the winery's estate vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills appellation of Santa Barbara County. Light garnet in color, this Pinot shows vivid black cherry aromas with hints of baking spice and faint oak. Bountiful red fruit flavors of cherries and raspberries dominate on the palate with underlying notes of cola, exotic spice, gingerbread and warm earthiness. Soft, smooth, and elegant framed by fine tannins and a good grip of acidity. This Pinot was given the name Lambda (a cosmological constant) because it will be produced each year and it reveals the magnitude of the vineyard.

Cases Produced: 1,059 Alcohol: 14.4%
pH Balance: 3.63 Barrel Aging: 18 months



92 POINTS
- *Wine Spectator*

91 POINTS
- *Wine Enthusiast*

90 POINTS
- *Burghound*

90 POINTS
- *Steven Tanzer*

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Couscous and Feta-Stuffed Bell Peppers

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| vegetable oil cooking spray | 1/2 tsp. fennel seeds |
| 1 1/4 cups chicken or vegetable broth | 1/2 tsp. dried oregano |
| 2/3 cup couscous | 1/2 tsp. salt |
| 4 extra large red bell peppers | 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved |
| 2 tsp. EVOO | 15 oz canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed |
| 1/2 cup chopped onion | 4 oz crumbled feta cheese |
| 6 oz zucchini, quartered lengthwise and sliced thinly across | 3 Tbs. tomato paste |
| 6 oz yellow squash, quartered lengthwise, and sliced thinly across | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and coat a small baking dish with cooking spray. In medium saucepan, bring the broth to a boil, add the couscous, cover, and remove from heat. Set aside. Cut the stems and top 1/2 inch off the bell peppers and scoop out the seeds and white membrane. Place peppers upright in a baking dish and roast them for 15 minutes or until they soften, then remove from oven and set aside.

In a nonstick skillet, heat the EVOO, add the onion, zucchini, yellow squash, fennel seeds, oregano, and salt. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until vegetables are softened. Remove skillet from heat, and stir in tomatoes, chickpeas, and tomato paste. With a fork, scrape the couscous into the skillet and toss with the vegetables. Stir in the feta cheese. Fill the peppers with couscous/vegetable mixture. Place on the coated baking dish, and bake for 15 minutes. Serve immediately.



Gnocchi with Blue Cheese Sauce and Pancetta

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| 1 (16 oz) package vacuum-packed gnocchi (such as Vigo) | 100 g fresh grated parmesan |
| 2 Tbs. olive oil | freshly ground pepper |
| 200 mL double cream | 2 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced |
| 180 g blue cheese (preferably gorgonzola) | thinly sliced pancetta |

Cook gnocchi according to package directions, omitting salt and fat. Drain in a colander over a bowl and set aside. Heat a frying pan and add a dash of clarified butter. Gently fry the gnocchi until they are a pale golden color, season if desired. Add the cream to a saucepan and bring to a simmer over low heat. Add your chopped blue cheese, a pinch of black pepper, a pour of olive oil, and the Parmesan. Turn off the heat and mix ingredients. Put some olive oil into another saucepan along with the chopped pancetta and place over medium heat. When the pancetta has colored and started to crisp, lower the heat and add the sliced garlic, sweating gently until the garlic becomes translucent. Place the gnocchi onto your plate, scatter the pancetta and garlic on top, add the blue cheese sauce, dust with the grated Parmesan and drizzle some olive oil on top. Enjoy!

Find these recipes and all of your favorites online at GoldMedalWineClub.com/recipes.

We have a delicious collection of recipes to pair with your favorite Gold Medal wines!



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