



Garagiste SERIES

[gar-uh-zheest'] noun - A French term used to describe independent, artisan winemakers crafting small batches of wine in garage-type settings and not yet discovered by the mainstream.

Brian Benson Cellars

Owner/Winemaker: Brian Benson

Location: Paso Robles, California

Not many winery owners or winemakers can claim to have made their first Cabernet Sauvignon before the age of 13, but Brian Benson most certainly can. While there were only two bottles made, the experience and the fact that his dad enjoyed the wine was enough to propel Brian Benson into the wine business.



To explain further, Brian Benson comes from a wine related family. His grandfather, John Chavez, planted vineyards in the late 1980's and his father, Norm Benson, followed suit with his own vineyards and winery several years later (he established Dark Star Cellars in 1994 and just recently started Level 3 Wines). Brian grew up spending time in his family's vineyards and had started learning about the winemaking process and business before he was out of elementary school. As a teenager, he worked part time on the weekends learning the ins and outs of the business and in 2000, at the age of eighteen, he became the full time assistant winemaker for his father's winery, Dark Star. Even though Brian was born and raised in Thousand Oaks, CA, most of his family's (and his own) wine related activities took place around the Paso Robles region of the Central Coast.

In 2001, at the age of nineteen, Brian Benson made the decision to make his own wines and Brian Benson Cellars took life as a small commercial winery. The first release occurred two years later with a tiny 147 cases. Today, that number has only grown to around 1,500 cases, a number that Brian has no intention of growing further. "I can control my own destiny at this level and that is incredibly important to me. I focus on finding unique growing sites in Paso Robles where the fruit can be farmed to its true potential. I don't do a great deal after pressing and prefer to let the grapes tell their own story," Brian recently explained. Along the way, Brian became a huge fan of Rhone varietals and decided to focus exclusively on those wine styles for Brian Benson Cellars. He has worked with several important vineyard locations in Paso Robles and continues to seek out exciting new properties for his collection of single varietal and Rhone-style blend wines.

Brian Benson 2013 Rapid Roy

135 cases produced

Paso Robles, California

Many of Brian Benson's wines are named for custom cars and hot rods that he personally builds each year, blending his two passions together. The 2013 Rapid Roy, a blend of 62% Primitivo, 29% Syrah, and 9% Mourvedre, is named after the Jim Croce song, "Rapid Roy (the Stock Car Boy)." On the nose, aromas of dense blueberry and black cherry mix with notes of black pepper, lavender and violets. The palate is a bit reserved, but opens with flavors of blackberries, pepper, dried fennel, bay leaf, and thyme flavors. Aged 20 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2023.



Gold Medal Wine Club Price: \$45.00 / bottle

To order, visit the Wine Store at GoldMedalWineClub.com or call 1-800-266-8888

*2 bottle minimum per wine, per order. Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included. Call for details.

