



RENEE ARY

Vice President of Winemaking, Napa Valley - Duckhorn Vineyards Winemaker

Renee Ary became the fourth winemaker in the four-decade history of Duckhorn Vineyards in 2014. Her promotion came after 11 years as an integral member of the winemaking team—including roles as assistant and associate winemaker. Like the two acclaimed winemakers before her, Renee spent years working alongside her predecessors, honing her craft, refining her gifted palate and mastering the Duckhorn Vineyards style. Today, with an approach that balances artistry, science and a deep respect for the viticultural side of winemaking, Renee guides the entire Duckhorn Vineyards portfolio, crafting wines that offer structure and sophistication, as well as a deep and purposeful sense of place.

Born and raised on the East Coast, Renee moved to California to attend Saint Mary's College, where she earned a degree in chemistry and art. Fascinated by the intersection between science and an art, winemaking quickly became Renee's passion, career and way of life. She started in the laboratory of Robert Mondavi Winery in Oakville, where she spent four years working closely with winemaking luminaries Genevieve Janssens, Steve Leveque and Richard Sowalsky. While Renee gained this invaluable hands-on experience, she augmented her scholarly understanding of winemaking and viticulture with classes at UC Davis and Napa Valley College.



In August of 2003, Renee joined the Duckhorn Vineyards team under then winemaker, Mark Beringer. From Mark, Renee gained a much deeper knowledge of farming, viticulture and the intricacies of Duckhorn's diverse and storied Estate program. She also refined her blending skills, embracing the intuitive artistry of the blend, and the counterpoint it offered to the more scientific aspects of winemaking. Throughout her first decade at Duckhorn Vineyards, Renee learned every detail of production moving from lab manager to enologist to assistant winemaker to associate winemaker in charge of Duckhorn's Sauvignon Blanc and Monitor Ledge Vineyard wines.

In early 2014, Renee became the fourth name on the short list of Duckhorn Vineyards winemakers that began with Tom Rinaldi in 1978. As winemaker, Renee works in small lots to preserve the rich complexity of the fruit in the Duckhorn winegrowing program. "From our own Estate vineyards to legendary sites like Three Palms, I am incredibly fortunate to work with some of Napa Valley's most exceptional grapes," says Renee. "When you work with fruit of this quality, there is no recipe or formula. My job is to let the vineyards speak and convey the soul of the wine."

"It's important to approach a role like this with humility," adds Renee, "and with the knowledge that I am a part of an ongoing story—that I am contributing to the legacy of a great winery, and building on the work of the talented people who laid the foundation for excellence."

In 2017, Renee's debut 2014 vintage of the revered Three Palms Vineyard Merlot was named "Wine of the Year" by Wine Spectator, on its list of the "Top 100 Wines" in the world.

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