



JOHN SKINNER

The son of a Canadian Forces fighter pilot, John was born in 1958 on a Manitoba military base. "I moved 20 times by the time I was 20," he says. He was working his way through college with a job in a lumber mill when he noted that a friend who had become a stock broker was much more prosperous. So he left university and embarked on a career in the brokerage industry.

John was a stockbroker in Vancouver for more than 25 years, during which time he became an avid wine enthusiast. John and his wife Trish dreamed of having their own vineyard after spending time exploring wineries in the South of France with their family.

In 2004, recognizing that the quality of wines in this region was improving dramatically and driven by both his passion for wine and his desire to create a legacy business for his family, he purchased the land in south Penticton known locally as "The Blackhawk."

Perched high on a bench on the east side of Skaha Lake south of Penticton, backing up against the famed climbing bluffs. Once an apricot farm, it had been fallow for 17 years. He planted in 2005 and 2006 and now has roughly 25 acres under vine, all of it Bordeaux reds or Syrah except for a block of Chardonnay. On the advice of consultants, he has planted multiple clones of every variety, giving his winemaker good blending options.

John was confident that this terroir and its site influences presented "a unique opportunity to create exceptional wines" and that he had "both the opportunity and the obligation to do this property justice."

John and Trish's vision was and remains to grow exceptional grapes in their estate vineyard to produce ultra-premium wines that reflect the perfect marriage of new world fruit and old world processes, employing the best modern technologies and expertise, while respecting old world traditions.

Most satisfying of all is that the whole family is involved. Trish handles the entire back office of this fast growing enterprise; daughter Lauren just received her MBA in Bordeaux with a focus on luxury brand management, food, and wine; and son Riley just spent the summer working for the winery in Vancouver while finishing his degree at UVIC.