

Heitz Cellar

Brittany Sherwood Winemaker



Growing up in Long Beach, Brittany Sherwood was fascinated with biology and living organisms—an interest that ultimately led to her enrollment in the pre-med program at UC Davis. While taking “Introduction to Winemaking” to fulfill a course requirement, she discovered that the class opened up a whole new world of what living organisms could be. “I saw how winemaking is an amazing blend of science and art. Plus I realized there is this whole other side to life, with food, wine and travel.”

Brittany quickly shifted her major to Viticulture and Enology. She took advantage of a work-study program in Europe, using her time there to gather invaluable experience in the wine regions of France, Germany, Switzerland and Spain. When she came back to the States, she interned in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

Brittany joined Heitz Cellar to work the 2012 vintage. “I felt profoundly lucky to be able to be part of this Napa Valley legacy,” she says. Following the harvest, Brittany traveled to Australia's Barossa region to expand her knowledge and when she returned in June 2013, Heitz welcomed her as an official member of the team.

As Heitz Cellar's Winemaker, Brittany works closely with vineyard management, from poring over thinning schedules in summer to choosing smaller picks between blocks at harvest: “There is a lot of collaboration so that at the end of the day we are making the best decisions possible.” She oversees and manages the production and laboratory team to ensure quality every step of the way from crush and fermentation to the wines' extensive aging and determining when they are ready for bottling. “All my travel allowed me to work with many different winemakers and to see how they managed quality control and analysis in different kinds of facilities,” she notes. “I was able to bring that breadth of knowledge back to Heitz with me.”

Brittany's approach to winemaking is one of minimal intervention that highlights each vineyard's unique qualities as well as vintage expression. “I want to craft wines that are respectful of both the site and the vintage and that showcase these qualities in a fresh, age-worthy, classic style,” she explains.

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Under the Lawrence family's leadership, Brittany is excited to carry the winery's traditions forward. "At Heitz Cellar, I have gained a profound appreciation of a classic style of winemaking and deep respect for this winery's history," she explains, while also welcoming the opportunity this moment presents. "The transition between winemakers should be seamless but can also allow for a fresh perspective and a personal touch."

Brittany lives in Napa with her husband Tom. Their perfect day away from work involves hiking or any kind of outdoor activity, and they enjoy traveling the world together.

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