

## ampelos cellars background

A love of wine, the Santa Barbara County wine community and serendipity led Rebecca and Peter Work to a piece of property in the heart of the Sta. Rita Hills, which they purchased in 1999 with the idea of someday planting a vineyard. Rebecca and Peter were still toiling long hours in corporate America, spending countless hours on planes and in conferences, but still enjoying the thrill of business. With little time to focus on the vineyard, they still decided to move forward with the project and son Don moved to the valley to spearhead the effort.

The first 15 acres of vines were planted in 2001. Fate intervened a few months later, when Rebecca and Peter landed in JFK airport the morning of September 11, 2001. They decided then and there to get back to the land, spend more time with family and enjoy life to the fullest. Corporate life was left behind. Don's wife Lindsay joined the team, and ampelos cellars was born.

The family spent the next few years learning how to farm winegrapes, under the tutelage and expertise of Jeff Newton and his Coastal Vineyard Care Associates team. Grapes were purchased from neighboring vineyards to get a jump start on honing the craft of winemaking, and the first ampelos cellars wines were released in the Spring of 2005. The first harvest from the ampelos estate vineyard occurred with the 2004 vintage, and both a Pinot Noir and a Syrah were proudly released in 2007.

The name *ampelos* came from the Greek word for vine. In addition to a firm belief that all great wines are made in the vineyard, the word also has family ties to Greece. Rebecca and Peter were married on the small Greek island of Folegandros, and with family members, own a small hotel there. The island culture of wine, food and friends around a table inspired them to bestow Greek characters on special bottlings of their ampelos wine.

A family owned and operated winery, the Works and Schroeders continue to experiment in the vineyard and in the cellar. Ten acres of tightly-spaced vines were added to the original 15-acre vineyard, all of which is now being farmed biodynamically. New blends, co-fermentations and barrel trials continue in the cellar, which is located in Lompoc.

Ampelos cellars currently produces estate bottlings of Pinot Noir, Syrah and Grenache and a proprietary blend called *Syrache*. They also continue to source grapes from vineyard they consider well farmed and craft Viognier and a Rosé of Syrah from the Santa Ynez Valley, as well as a Pinot Noir from nearby Fiddlestix Vineyard.

Ampelos focuses on producing exquisite wines that reflect the terroir of the estate vineyard. They are made by hand from vine to wine in small quantities that reflect the individual characteristic of each varietal and vineyard location. As a result, product is limited. The wine is sold directly from the winery to consumers, specialty wine shops and restaurants.