

About the winemaker:

Denis Hoey is a native of Sacramento, where he grew up in a family that appreciated wines and exposed him to a wide range of quality wines that helped develop his palate. He graduated from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a degree in Business Management in 2004. Soon after that, he met Jeff Emery, owner and winemaker at Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard. Their relationship quickly turned into an Old World apprenticeship for Denis, and he is currently the production manager for SCMV. This experience has been the foundation of Denis' education.

He learned some of his cellar practices from working for Bison Organic Brewery in Berkeley. This work, with a much more perishable product, taught him the importance of giving careful attention to spoilage organisms. His continuing education involves following current trends in winemaking research from U.C. Davis and CSU Fresno. In addition, he has traveled to Italy and France twice to gain a broader perspective about European winemaking techniques and varietal fidelity. He maintains a sharp palate for quality and the nuances of wines by tasting, tasting, and more tasting. He continues to challenge himself to make better wine by learning from what others are doing well--or not so well!

He learned the fundamentals of vineyard management from Rick Anzalone in another apprentice relationship. Rick has thirty years of experience growing grapes in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Denis now manages some of the vineyards from which he sources his Odonata fruit.

Denis made his first wine from the 2005 harvest, and from there built his limited production Odonata Wines to 1,000 cases per year. He blends old world methods with new world technique to make nouveau-style wines. He strives to produce wines that are rich, textured, and balanced, and that respect terroir and varietal character. His success is based on careful attention to detail and the purposeful use of each step in winemaking: grape sources, fermentation technique, pressing regiment, barrel selection, and aging program. The result is clean, focused wines.

Denis is committed to expanding his horizons with respect to grape types and sources, production techniques, and aging programs. There are endless possibilities with respect to winemaking. His openness and commitment is what drives the winery to produce cutting edge wines of top quality.