



Russ Raney has now handed the reins over to Erin Nuccio, left. In August 2010 Erin and his wife Jordan purchased Evesham Wood Winery and have vowed to continue the tradition of winemaking and philosophy. Russ will continue to provide input, as required having moved just down the road.

The wines have always been priced fairly, avoiding publicity, and sacrificing bucks for quality in marginal grape growing years. Almost twenty years since Russ and his family moved outside Salem, Oregon to make wine, he quietly continues to oversee the making of great wines, reflecting his interest in terroir and his inspiration, the wines of France.



Evesham Wood Winery

Original owners Russ and Mary Raney named the vineyard and winery after their honeymoon destination: England's Vale of Evesham, an idyllic fruit-growing region by the Cotswold Hills. Their house and subterranean winery overlooked Evesham Woods' 12-acre vineyard, which is situated on an eastern slope of the Eola Hills, four miles northwest of Salem and within view of the Willamette River.

Russ Raney was first introduced to winemaking while studying at Freiburg University (Germany), where he visited nearby vineyards in Baden and Alsace. A few years later in 1977, he earned a degree from the State Technical School of Viticulture and Enology in Bad Kreunach, Germany. Upon returning to the U.S., he worked as wine retailer and wholesaler in St. Louis for five years before he and Mary moved to Oregon in 1983 in search of a site capable of yielding great Pinot noir. Mary studied at St. Louis University and Southern Illinois University, graduating with a degree in horticulture. She managed the winery office and provided a much appreciated different perspective in blending and bottling decisions. The property has since been purchased by Erin Nuccio and his wife, Jordan. Erin has the same philosophy as Russ and will continue the winemaking traditions.

Of his winemaking philosophy, Russ said:

"We don't manipulate our winemaking methods to produce a 'sameness' in quality from year to year, or attempt to compete with the large producers by making our wines appeal to a larger audience. Like any quality-conscious winery, we will try by natural means to maximise quality and flavour intensity of our wines in the 'lesser' vintages, but only if it doesn't mean having to alter our basic wine style, and always giving preference to decisions made in the vineyard rather than the cellar."

The results have been some of Oregon's very best Pinot noirs, say wine critics. It is difficult to not feel the same excitement Russ felt about his Eola Hills vineyard when sipping his product. He is convinced the site is destined to be among the world's best for Pinot noir cultivation.

