



**TOM MYERS**  
**WINEMAKER**

Every 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Tom Myers can be found lighting off an array of fireworks for eager spectators. Observing the colorful display overhead, he admires his handiwork. “Creating fireworks is much like creating wine. It is a marriage of art and science,” explains the amateur pyro-technician. “Like matching bookends, there is a creative side that complements the scientific side, yet it is the use of science that makes the art so appealing.”

A science aficionado, Myers received his Bachelor of Science, followed by his Masters of Science, in Biological Science/Botany from Michigan State University. His interest in winemaking brought him west, to the University of California at Davis, where he received his Masters in Food Science with an Enology/Viticulture focus. “The wide range of science that is incorporated into winemaking – microbiology, chemistry, physics – piqued my interest from the beginning,” explains Myers.

Myers is one of the most highly respected winemakers in California. He has been creating wines in the Paso Robles region since 1978, and has created wines for Castoro Cellars since 1990. Myers began his winemaking career at Estrella River Winery, which was the largest Paso Robles winery for many years and firmly established the AVA as a viable region for winemaking. It was at Estrella that he met and mentored Niels Udsen. Niels went on to create the Castoro Cellars brand and in 1990, Myers joined the Castoro team as Head Winemaker.

Perhaps it is his scientific side that inspires Myers to create technically correct wines, as he does not accept the promotion of style defects as a style statement. Rather, Myers takes pride in the fact that his wines have no glaring defects. “My feeling is that technically correct wines are wondrously complex and varied; defects are not needed to expand the range. There are enough other variables that come into play and provide the randomness that keeps things interesting.”

Just as an artist leaves a signature, Myers feels all of his wines exhibit a distinct fingerprint. “There is a certain clarity in my wines. I like to emphasize fruit characters and I like noticeable imprints of oak in the wine, without overdoing the oak.”

Myers is fully committed to the Castoro Cellars brand and feels that his values mirror the values of Niels and Bimmer Udsen. He shares their love for the outdoors, and often accompanies Niels on backpacking and rock climbing adventures. He shares the Udsens’ desire to utilize sustainable viticulture practices and believes in protecting the land. Myers also feels strongly about offering his wines at an affordable price.

“I want to produce the best wines I possibly can, but in the end, I wouldn’t feel good about making wines that only a small percentage of the population can afford,” says Myers. “We produce honest wines that are an honest value. Our wines allow people to include quality wine in their daily lifestyle, without breaking the bank.”

Supporting the movement to reduce the intimidation factor of wine, Myers contends that the mystique surrounding wine is often misinterpreted as cost or status. “I am disturbed by the consumer who thinks a good bottle of wine is too inexpensive. The mystique of wine should stem from an appreciation of the wine. Consumers should feel empowered to shop for value and boast about it, rather than apologizing for it.”

Castoro Cellars and Tom Myers share a humble and welcoming spirit, avoiding any semblance of elitism. They believe wine should be an integral part of the daily meal, and thus welcome all wine palates, from the most experienced wine drinker to those encountering wine for the first time.

Voted the 2002 Winemaker of the Year by the California Mid-State Fair, Myers takes an active role in the local wine industry. He is a member and past Board Member of the Paso Robles Vintners and Growers Association (PRVGA), an Officer of Paso Watch, and an active mentor to others in the industry. He is also involved in the community and he and his wife have served as hosts to foreign exchange students for many years.

Summing up his career, Myers states, “There are many pursuits more noble than winemaking, but I feel good for having chosen a career of creating a product that is intended to be healthy and enjoyable. The net effect of wine is positive, and so, even after twenty-four harvests, my passion for winemaking remains strong.”