

Pahlmeyer

Jayson Pahlmeyer

Nearly four decades ago, Jayson Pahlmeyer embarked on a daring journey, arriving in Napa Valley with a bold dream and shoeboxes filled with smuggled Bordeaux vine cuttings. A trial lawyer by profession, Jayson, captivated by the allure of First Growth Bordeaux, was driven by a singular ambition: to create a Napa Valley wine that could stand shoulder to shoulder with Bordeaux's finest. "All I wanted to do was to create my own 'California Mouton' – a rich, powerful Napa Valley Bordeaux blend, a wine that would drop wine lovers to their knees," he explains.

With a bit of ingenuity, Jayson and his accomplice and friend, John Caldwell, surreptitiously planted his "suitcase" clones on John's Coombsville property in 1981. The exceptional quality of fruit in Caldwell Vineyard soon caught local attention, and by 1986, storied Napa Valley winemaker Randy Dunn – agreeing to make Jayson's first wine in exchange for access to his fruit – crafted the debut Proprietary Red. Comprising five of the red Bordeaux varieties that Jayson had planted, the wine garnered 94 points from Robert M. Parker, Jr. upon its release and launched Pahlmeyer's reputation for excellence.

In the late 90s, Jayson looked to the rugged mountaintops to establish his own vineyard. "My closest advisors, Helen Turley and John Wetlaufer, told me, 'If you want to be a first-growth, you have to have your own vineyards,'" says Jayson Pahlmeyer. "I found this property in Atlas Peak, in the eastern hills of Napa Valley – an incredible parcel with views of the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco skyline.

After John analyzed the soil and David Abreu studied the terrain, Helen Turley spoke for all of them when she declared the site "paradisiacal." Rocky and desolate with low vigor and good drainage, it was perfect for growing intense, expressive Bordeaux varietals. Jayson hired David Abreu to develop it, and Helen and Erin Green, Helen's protégé and longtime Pahlmeyer winemaker, selected the clones, which included those smuggled from Bordeaux.

Today, Pahlmeyer wines are crafted through a steadfast commitment to the principles of site, discipline, and high quality of First Growth Bordeaux coupled with the signature richness, power, and depth of Napa Valley. Pahlmeyer wines are built on a foundation of extraordinary mountain vineyard sites and confident, discerning viticulture choices that demand maximum flavor intensity.

