



# GORDON *Estate*

## GORDON ESTATE TEAM BIOS

### *Jeff Gordon ~ Owner & Founder*

A native of Washington State, Jeff Gordon was born in St. John near Spokane, Washington. The son of a farmer, Jeff worked the family dry-land farm where the Gordons grew wheat, barley and peas. Adept behind the wheel of a tractor by the age of ten, Jeff never got the soil out from under his fingernails. As a student in the 1960s, Jeff understood that the life of the American farmer was at a crossroads. Love for the land and the pride in the work were no longer enough. Modern farming required business acumen and scientific know-how. Jeff graduated from Washington State University in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.



Photo by Kim Fetrow

In 1973, Jeff began working for a major Washington State agricultural corporation. However, he was unhappy with the corporate obsession with the bottom line that sacrificed quality for quantity. Inspired by the buzz surrounding the Washington wine industry, Jeff became one of a handful of pioneers forging a new direction for Washington wines. In 1980, Jeff began planting wine grapes on a sagebrush covered slope overlooking the Snake River in Washington's Columbia Valley. Much to the bemusement of local and fellow farmers, Jeff made a bold decision to plant red grape varieties. "We thought red grapes would work. We took a chance. It was the right thing to do."

In addition to founding Gordon Estate, Jeff was also instrumental in the development of Washington State University's Enology and Viticulture program. Jeff proudly served from 2005-2007 as Chairman on the Washington Wine Commission and was the first president of the Washington Association of Wine Grape Growers.

### *Marc Nelson ~ Vineyard & Orchard Manager*

Marc Nelson grew up in the small town of Ephrata, located in central Washington state. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Technology & Management from Washington State University in 1998. He married Katie Gordon in 1999, and they joined the family business in 2002.

Marc finds the correlation with winegrowing and being able to influence the quality of the wine by virtue of what he does in the vineyard very rewarding. Marc understands wine quality begins in the vineyard, and he is determined to deliver the highest quality fruit to the winery. Marc believes in a conservationist approach to the



Photo by Kim Fetrow

winegrowing, "We try to minimize our inputs and minimize cultivation to conserve soil structure and soil microbiology. He is constantly working to hone his sustainable management practices. He works closely with the winemaker's input to fine tune pruning, canopy management, fruit thinning, and water stress for flavour development and focusing varietal character. His diligence and drive is instrumental to the quality of Gordon Estate wines.

## *Wine Boss, Consulting Winemaking Team*



Maintaining an outside perspective is an integral part of the winemaking process at Gordon Estate. Wine Boss is owned by a renowned local Winemaker and provides the winery with a team of winemakers to provide insight and expertise to every program. It is a comradery effort that keeps the wines of superb quality and relevant.

For more information visit their website: [www.wawineboss.com](http://www.wawineboss.com)

## *Victor de la Luz ~ Estate Winemaker*



*Photo by Kim Fetrow*

With over 10 years of experience in winemaking, Victor de la Luz joined the winemaking team at Gordon Estates in 2017. Working with founder and winemaker Jeff Gordon, de la Luz crafts premium wines for the first exclusively estate winery in Washington State. De La Luz started his career in winemaking during the 2007 vintage at the seminal Woodinville producer Matthews Winery. De la Luz continued his career at DiStefano Winery and Barons V., the chance to work with Chateau Rollat drew de la Luz to Walla Walla in 2012. There he worked with Christian Lesommer, the legendary winemaker late of Chateau Latour and Chateau d'Yquem. De la Luz became the assistant winemaker at Walla Walla Faces in 2012 working with famed consulting winemaker Chris Camarda of Andrew Will Winery.