

SMITH STORY

W I N E C E L L A R S

2018 Press Kit

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ABOUT SMITH STORY WINE CELLARS



Smith Story Wine Cellars crafts wines that are made with respect for the land, kindness for the grower, and love from the winemaker. Each vineyard Smith Story works with is family-owned as a central tenet; the founders believe firmly that the integrity of the vines can only be ensured by grape growers who safeguard the land for the next generation. The resulting wines have heart and soul. They show restraint, balance and the integrity of the grape. Eric and Ali's winemaking philosophy is to utilize classic, old world techniques and let the grapes - and sense of place where they are grown - speak for themselves.

In 2013, Eric Story and Ali Smith Story co-founded Russian River Valley-based Smith Story Wine Cellars out of a desire to make the kind of wine that “wine people” drink. Both came from wine industry backgrounds, and their palates remain well attuned to both the sublime and the delicious – at every price. They dreamed of starting a wine project that could produce wines that were both attractive and approachable...but that wouldn't require a savant to enjoy them.

Working on a wine-industry budget, the duo tapped into the support of their extensive networks, successfully launching Smith Story Wine Cellars on Kickstarter in 2014.



Their campaign was called “Farmers First,” and the very first American winery to be crowdfunded was born. Today the winery produces over 4,000 cases annually and has been called “one of California’s top emerging wineries.”

The wines begin with the land, places that are special to Eric and Ali in Northern California, from twelve family owned vineyards throughout Sonoma Valley, Sonoma Coast, Russian River Valley, Knights Valley, Pine Mountain, Anderson Valley and the Rheingau region of Germany. As the vineyard program grows, so will their story. Their belief is to respect what the land offers, while shepherding in the cellar and ultimately delivering beautiful expressions of each varietal in every bottle.

2018 marks the fifth harvest year for Smith Story Wine Cellars. Together Ali and Eric share (in Ali’s words) an “authentic sense of purpose,” and today they bring a combined 30+ years of wine industry experience to manage their dream.

Smith Story has two tasting rooms: In Philo, Anderson Valley on CA 128 & in Windsor, in the Russian River Valley, at Grand Cru Custom Crush.

Follow their journey on Instagram [@smithstorywines](https://www.instagram.com/smithstorywines) and their “[Chapters](#)” blog.



ALI SMITH STORY + ERIC STORY
Co-Founders & Vintners



Smith Story Wine Cellars is the tale of true love.

Bay Area-born Eric Story fell into the wine industry by accident; he only meant to work at K&L Wine Merchants as a temporary gig to save up money for a trip to Europe. He realized he had been bit by the bug while exploring Europe's wine regions and - connecting the dots he had picked up along the way - he found himself back at K&L, where he threw himself into everything wine and soon earned his lauded industry reputation as one of the nation's top German, Loire, Alsace, Austrian and Greek wine buyers.

In 2003, Ali turned her hobby into a career and left corporate America for a buying position with K&L. During this time and the years following, her friendship with Eric generated a spark, and deepened with time while discovering wines abroad and with visits to the Anderson Valley.



Alison "Ali" Smith Story is a California transplant from her native Fort Worth, Texas. A Baylor University graduate, Ali also spent many years in Dallas and Austin, initially working in sports marketing for the Dallas Stars and the Texas Rangers, and eventually giving rise to the "TexaCali Ali" moniker, blog and brand - well known within the wine industry. In 2005, Ali founded her eponymous sales and marketing firm TexaCali Wine Co. Her company became well regarded for helping family owned wineries optimize distribution management solutions, as well as sales and marketing strategy for the important Texas wine market.

In May of 2013, Eric and Alison eloped on the Big Island of Hawaii to say 'I Do,' shortly thereafter conceiving Smith Story Wine Cellars on the very same trip. Both the couple and the winery celebrate their 5th anniversary in May 2018.

Ali and Eric are also the founders of Socks for Sandwich, a non-profit organization inspired by the family Goldendoodle, Lord Sandwich. Socks for Sandwich donates new socks to the needy and also to families in times of crisis.

After calling Marin County their home for many years, the Storys made the move to wine country in 2017 and now live in the Russian River Valley.

KATY WILSON
Consulting Winemaker



Not a lot of people know what they are going to do at 18 years old, but Smith Story's consulting winemaker Katy Wilson did. In her first class at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, Agricultural Business 101, the professor listed off the careers one can have post-graduation; becoming a winemaker stood out in particular. Wine is agriculture and chemistry, social and innovative. As a winemaker, one is creative and scientific. It was a perfect fit and Katy has never looked back.

Katy grew up on a walnut farm, to when she learned how to drive a tractor before a car, after Cal Poly, she traveled back and forth from the Northern & Southern Hemisphere for harvests before settling for a time at Flowers Vineyard & Winery, where she worked her way from harvest enologist to assistant winemaker. It was during this time that Katy fell in love with the Sonoma Coast and truly developed a passion for making Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

In 2013, wine writer Jon Bonné named her as a "Winemaker to Watch," and outside of consulting for Smith Story, Katy is the owner and winemaker of LaRue Wines, and consults on several projects, including Anaba Wines, Banshee Wines, Claypool Cellars and Reeve Wines.



SMITH STORY GROWERS & VINES

Through diligence and dedication, Smith Story sources exclusively from family-owned vineyards with growers who embody their commitment to sustainability and quality wine. Ali and Eric have forged a personal connection with each unique vineyard to bring together passion, commitment and sustainability through each individual wine.

Single Vineyard Wines & Vines

Pickberry Vineyard, Sonoma Mountain

Owners: Cris & Lorna Strotz

Description: Ali and Eric have loved wines from the Pickberry Vineyard on Sonoma Mountain for many years. It is a very special site, exuding the boldness of hillside Cabernet Sauvignon with the elegance and vibrancy that comes from a slightly cooler region. Vineyard owners Cris and Lorna have spent years working the land. The combination of vines that are over 20 years old, volcanic soils, and cool nights make a wine that is very complex with ripe, yet vibrant flavors.

Smith Story wines from this vineyard: Smith Story Pickberry Vineyard Merlot, Smith Story Pickberry Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon.

Thorn Ridge Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Owner: The Klopp Family

Description: Located in the hills beyond Sebastopol, Thorn Ridge was planted in 1995. It is essentially dry farmed, as water is scarce on this steep eastward sloping hillside. The vineyard has silty, Goldridge soils and has a significant maritime influence. Meticulously farmed by owner Ted Klopp, it sits in the most recent extension of the Russian River Valley AVA and can be called either Russian River Valley or Sonoma Coast.

Smith Story wines from this vineyard: Smith Story Thorn Ridge Vineyard Pinot Noir

Helluva Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Helluva Vineyard, Anderson Valley AVA

Owner: Dennis Hall

Description: The ranch affectionately called Helluva (because it is a helluva ranch!) is just northwest of Boonville. Defined by warm days, cold nights and a true presence of the heart of the Anderson Valley, Helluva Vineyard is tucked up against the waterfall of forest, which flows down along the western edge of the valley. It experiences mornings and afternoons which are sun drenched and warm which leads into cooler evenings and the typical cold nights thanks the creek bed which ushers the cold forest air down through the vineyard on a nightly basis. Wines from this vineyard reflect their terrain.

Smith Story wines from this vineyard: Smith Story Helluva Vineyard Pinot Noir

Nash Mill Vineyard, Anderson Valley

Owners: Mark Wentworth

Description: This vineyard was first planted by a good friend of Ali & Eric's, Jim Barr, in 2003 - Eric also had some ownership and planted 6 rows of riesling. The Nash Mill Vineyard sold a few years later and was converted over to 100% Pinot Noir. The vineyard yields clones 667, 115 & Pommard.

Smith Story wines from this vineyard: Smith Story Nash Mill Vineyard Pinot Noir

Dutton Ranch, Russian River Valley

Owners: Dutton Family (Gail, Steve & Joe Dutton)

Description: The Dutton family is one of the founding farming families of Sonoma County, dating back to the 1880s, when Warren Dutton first farmed prunes, later farming apples and other fruits before planting wine grapes in the mid 1960s. The hillsides of Dutton Ranch are located in the heart of Green Valley - the coolest and foggiest part of the Russian River Valley. Ideal Goldridge soils and a mix of elite clones produce complex and aromatically driven wines.

Smith Story wines from this vineyard: Smith Story Dutton Ranch Chardonnay



ERIC STORY SELECTIONS

Eric Story Selections is the import division of Smith Story Wine Cellars, specializing in high quality European wines that retail for \$20 or less. To date, Eric Story Selections bottles a Riesling and a Rosé of Pinot Noir under the Smith Story label. Both hail from the Rheingau region of Germany, and Eric Story Selections plans to eventually expand into Austria and the Loire region of France for future bottlings.

For the Riesling and Rosé of Pinot Noir, Eric relies on the close friendship with his mentor - a relationship that developed while managing the German Wine selection for K&L over the years, coupled with sabbaticals to work harvest in Germany in 2003 and 2004. It was during his time working in the Rheingau where Eric learned the most about winemaking.

Smith Story's Rheingau Riesling is in the *feinherb* (off-dry) style that has proven to be quite the crowd-pleaser. It spends time sitting on its lees in tank before bottling, which adds beautiful layers of complexity. The Rosé of Pinot Noir conveys a delicate pink color with a brisk, juicy profile that pairs beautifully with both anything and nothing at all. Both vineyards (certified "Sustainable") are located in the Johannisberg appellation of Rheingau, and are characterized by their loess & loamy soils.

SOCKS FOR SANDWICH



In 2014 along with their ([Instagram star](#) @sandwichthedoodle), Lord Sandwich, Ali & Eric founded a non-profit, [Socks For Sandwich](#), which inspires others to give and also donates new socks to the needy. Their [Smith Story Lord Sandwich Red Table Wine](#) was the number one selling red wine in the Smith Story portfolio by volume in 2017. Proceeds of the Lord Sandwich Red Table Wine go to SocksforSandwich.org. Over 25,000 pairs of new socks have been donated and distributed so far to victims of domestic abuse, homeless communities, teenage-foster care programs, immigrant farm workers and to US neighborhoods that suffered damage from natural catastrophes.

Socks for Sandwich happily accepts donations of NEW socks, as well as credit card donations at [socksforsandwich.org](#) or checks made out to "Socks for Sandwich." Socks for Sandwich is a CA 501c3 Non-Profit Organization.

Shipping & Mailing address: Socks for Sandwich / 1415 Fulton Rd. #205-224 / Santa Rosa, CA / 95403

Ali and Eric often announce Socks for Sandwich donation drives throughout the USA and how anyone can simply help them help those in need of NEW socks. Follow the hashtag #socksforsandwich and the duo's efforts on the @socksforsandwich Instagram page.