

# Paradise Springs Santa Barbara: The Story

It had been 7 vintages since the inception of Paradise Springs Winery in Clifton, Virginia. After the 2013 harvest, CEO and Founder Kirk Wiles started exploring how Paradise Springs Winery could continue its unexpected quick growth in the wine world. Having grown from 1,300 cases to over 12,000 cases a year in 2013, the demand for Paradise Springs wine was outpacing the quality fruit available in Virginia. During a trip to California in February of 2014, Kirk found himself in Santa Barbara wine country exploring the region with a few lifelong friends. While falling in love with the Pinot Noirs of the region, it was on this trip the answer came to him. Paradise Springs was to start a second winery on the west coast.



It was the perfect way to expand the brand without jeopardizing the high standards of quality he had set upon the winery. Paradise Springs would be the first “bi-coastal” winery brand in the United States, standing for the highest quality of wine while achieving varietal correctness in a region.

Kirk returned to Santa Barbara the following month with a few industry appointments setup by a mutual equipment supplier, Joe and Nikki Lutomski. His first appointment was with one of the regions most well known and respected winemakers, Greg Brewer. Kirk met Greg at Melville Winery where Greg was the Head Winemaker at the time and the two talked about the industry for a few hours. After the meeting, Kirk traveled over to Greg’s personal winery Brewer-Clifton in Lompoc, California. After tasting and talking with the staff at Brewer-Clifton, Kirk learned that there was a vineyard property, which had just come on the market within the Sta. Rita Hills AVA. The staff at the winery happened to

know the real estate agent and within the hour Kirk was out looking at the property.



While the site itself did not end up working out, the real estate agent ended up being a man named Tom Davidson who had also helped to build some of the most well known wineries in area including Sanford, Hilliard Bruce, and Seasmoke to name a few. Tom and Kirk stayed in touch over the next couple of months when finally a conversation they had about how Kirk wanted to start

Paradise Springs Santa Barbara led to the introduction of Doug Margerum, one of the most well respected individuals in the Santa Barbara wine region.



Doug, having grown up in Santa Barbara, was the owner of a longstanding, well-known restaurant downtown called The Wine Cask. In 2001 he started his own winery, Margerum Wine Company, just on the edge of the Sta. Rita Hills AVA in Buellton, California. Margerum had consistently produced some of the best wines coming out of the Santa Barbara region, constantly achieving wine scores from critics in the mid 90's.

After many conversations between Kirk and Doug about the wine industry, winemaking philosophy, and life in general, the synergy between the two seemed to be the perfect fit. Kirk's intuition was that this was the right partnership to launch Paradise Springs Santa Barbara.



The winery was officially formed in the early summer of 2014, licensed by the state of California, and currently shares winemaking space with three wineries (including Margerum Wine Company) in Buellton, California. Doug was to act as Lead Consultant with his team performing the day-to-day work on the wine. Rob Cox, Head Winemaker at Paradise Springs Virginia, was to act as Executive Winemaker of Paradise Springs Santa Barbara with Kirk overseeing the entire operation. Together, the perfect team was formed.

With Pinot Noir from the Sta. Rita Hills as the star of the region, Kirk knew this was where the winery should concentrate winemaking efforts. Known as one of the greatest places in the new world to grow Pinot Noir, the Sta. Rita Hills AVA is closest to the ocean in Santa Barbara County. The combination of nutrient deficient marine-based soils and the Pacific Ocean's cooling influence of wind and fog through the only East to West mountain corridor on the west coast, form one of the best cool-climate viticulture areas for Pinot Noir to grow in the world.



The inaugural wines were produced that vintage year in 2014, a Sauvignon Blanc from Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara AVA and a Pinot Noir from Sta. Rita Hills AVA. These wines would add diversification to the already existing Paradise Springs portfolio while staying true to their mantra of producing exceptional wine of the highest quality.



Over the next year, Kirk and Rob flew back and forth from coast to coast, meeting with Doug, walking the vineyards, harvesting fruit, producing wines, blending barrels, and ultimately bottling the first wines on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015.





### **2014 Sauvignon Blanc (Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara AVA):**

92% McGinley Vineyard (Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara AVA)  
8% Grassini Vineyard (Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara AVA)

Slight green and gold hues, lead way to aromas of grapefruit, honeyed quince, creamy lemon curd that have been layered with hints of gunflint. On the palate pear, grapefruit, and tropical fruit abound with a creamy mid layer and crisp persistent finish.

### **2014 Pinot Noir (Sta. Rita Hills AVA):**

95% Hilliard Bruce Vineyard (Sta. Rita Hills)  
5% La Encantada Vineyard (Sta. Rita Hills)

The deep Ruby color leads to aromas of black cherry and dried cranberry that leap from the glass, and then follow subtle hints of baking spices that waft into the fore. On the palate the wine shows darker Pinot Noir elements; complex olive, soy and ink, preluding cherry liqueur flavors. This wine will age well by the tightly structured and layered supple grape and wood tannins that are underpinned by an excellent acidic backbone.



Paradise Springs Santa Barbara has exciting plans in the near future. The team looks to open a tasting room in downtown Santa Barbara just a few blocks from the ocean where guests will be able to visit, taste wines, and engage the winery on a personal level. Virginia wines are expected to make their way west and be available to taste and purchase alongside the Santa Barbara wines in the tasting room. The 2015 harvest just wrapped up and with it sees not only the continuation of the Happy Canyon Sauvignon Blanc and Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir but the addition of a Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay, a Bordeaux blend from Happy Canyon, and a single vineyard Pinot Noir from the oldest and most esteemed vineyard in Santa Barbara County; Sanford and Benedict in Sta. Rita Hills.

As Paradise Springs looks to establish its roots in Santa Barbara, operations in Virginia continue to push the boundaries on producing the best Virginia wine. The team is looking forward to new opportunities that will be created by bringing the Paradise Springs brand west.

*“The First Bi-Coastal Winery Brand in the Country. From East to West.”*