

Walter Scott Wines

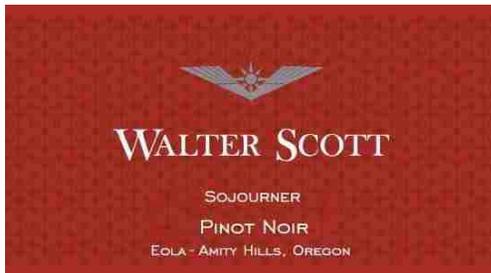
Eola-Amity Hills

(CA sales only)



Erica Landon and Ken Palow have built an enviable and well-deserved reputation for the consistent quality of their, for lack of a better term, Old World-inspired Pinot Noirs, which combine savory character with Oregon fruit exuberance.

-Josh Reynolds, Vinous Media, June 2019



Ken Pahlow and Erica Landon are the couple behind Walter Scott Wines. The operation is named for a grandfather and a nephew on Ken's side. It's a little business, young, altogether passionate, and financially solidly underpinned.

Ken got the bug in 1995 when he joined Mark Vlossak at the Saint Innocent Winery. For fourteen years, he was Mark's right hand, working every harvest, visiting vineyards, tasting barrel samples and blends, and taking charge of Saint Innocent's wholesaling within Oregon. In 1999 he augmented his income and wine education by taking a job as a rep for a local fine wine distributor.

In 2007 he fell in love with soon-to-be Advanced Sommelier Erica Landon. This didn't exactly happen overnight—he had been presenting wine to her since 2002—but once the genie got out of the bottle, Erica proved to be the catalyst Ken needed to start up the winemaking venture he had long dreamed about. This required both of them to empty their nascent retirement funds in order to buy enough grapes and equipment to make a whopping 160 cases of wine in 2008.

In 2009, Ken traded labor for space at Patricia Green Cellars, and the young couple ratcheted up to 650 cases.

In 2010, Ken moved the operation over to Evening Land Vineyards, where he went to work in sales and in the cellar. For the next two years his viticulture and winemaking horizons expanded enormously under the tutelage of Dominique Lafon and his team at the Seven Springs Vineyard (Evening Land's vineyard in Oregon). Erica, meanwhile, became one of Portland's leading sommelières.

In 2012, the couple took on financial partners and leased a small winery facility from the Casteel family, owners of the Bethel Heights Winery. This is located on the Justice Vineyard in the Eola-Amity hills. Bit by bit, they slowly expanded their production as they managed to secure increasingly better sources of grapes.

Perhaps the most pivotal year, however, was 2014. Ken quit his day job with Galaxy Wines, a distributor job he had taken after Evening Land; and Erica quit her wine director job with a Portland restaurant group—both to go full time with Walter Scott Wines. They also had a baby this year. And they made 3,600 cases, which is right about where they want to be for sustainability (and where they can do the job without help).

Next on the horizon, if and when the gods smile, they may buy a little vineyard.

For years both Erica and Ken have been intimately involved with the Eola-Amity Winegrower's Association and with IPNC/Pinot Camp. From his sojourn with Mark Vlossak and his time with the French team at the Seven Springs Vineyard, Ken has become passionate about vineyard sites, and he now works with some of the best (all dry farmed too). Most are in the Eola-Amity AVA—his home turf and favorite zone—but the couple buy from several other sites close by. All of the wines, unfortunately, are in limited supply.

www.walterscottwine.com