

DUCKHORN WINE COMPANY

ALEX RYAN

*Chief Executive Officer & President
Duckhorn Wine Company*

As chief executive officer and president of Duckhorn Wine Company, Alex Ryan's vision and passion help define the future of the company, while ensuring the continuation of its commitment to quality and excellence.



The son of a wine executive, Alex moved to St. Helena in 1976 after his father was hired at Beringer Vineyards. Growing up in the close-knit Napa Valley community, Alex was exposed to the wine industry from an early age. In high school, he began working part time for his best friend's father, Dan Duckhorn. After Alex graduated from California State University at Fresno with a degree in viticulture in 1988, he returned to Duckhorn to begin work in vineyard operations. One of the first full-time employees at Duckhorn, Alex functioned as a jack-of-all-trades, quickly making himself indispensable in the day-to-day operations of the winery.

Alex's first year proved to be a pivotal one for Duckhorn as the winery began building its estate vineyard program. As Duckhorn Vineyards grew to include six of Napa's finest properties, Alex was promoted to vineyard manager. His viticulture and production background made him the ideal person to direct the meticulous cultivation of the vineyards, and in 1997, Alex became vice president of vineyard and winery operations.

As Duckhorn Wine Company has expanded to include Decoy, Paraduxx, Goldeneye and Migration into its family of wines, Alex has worked to maintain the distinction and integrity of each individual label. "My belief," he says, "is that you can refine quality by focusing on smaller areas of specialization. By being site specific, vineyard specific, varietal specific, and by empowering winemakers to craft and define each label individually, you create excellence."

In 2000, Alex was made general manager and chief operating officer of Duckhorn Wine Company; in 2005 he was promoted to president. His duties touch on every aspect of the company, from vineyard operations and production, to marketing and sales. Alex approaches every new challenge from a basic premise. "There are no small decisions. Every choice in the wine business is a long-term decision. From barrel selection to vineyard planting, you need to be thinking in terms of five, ten, even fifteen years. It's my job to find a way to execute the big ideas while maintaining our commitment to the smallest details."