



Phillip Titus
Winemaker

In California, less than 3% of the grapes come from vineyards above 1,000 feet in elevation. While these coveted sites are small in number due to the challenges that come with farming mountain vineyards, they are the source for many of America's most famous wines. In 2020, Acumen cemented its commitment to building one of the New World's great mountain wine estates when it appointed legendary Winemaker Phillip Titus to oversee its winemaking program. As the winemaker for Pritchard Hill's iconic Chappellet Vineyard for the past 30 years, Phillip has earned renown as a master at crafting mountain wines. Today, building on the foundation established by winemakers Denis Malbec and Henrik Poulsen, Phillip is writing an exciting new chapter in the Acumen story, crafting wines that embody the grandeur and sophistication of Atlas Peak.

Raised in the Napa Valley, Phillip discovered his interest in viticulture when he began working alongside his father and brothers in his family's St. Helena vineyard at the age of 12—an interest that was further kindled around the dinner table, where his father would often pour wines from Europe and California. After studying agronomy, viticulture and enology at UC Davis, Phillip traveled to the vineyards of Burgundy and Bordeaux to gain a deeper understanding of the history of wine. In 1990, after working at such wineries as Quail Ridge, Stratford, and Cartlidge & Brown, Phillip was invited by legendary vintner, Donn Chappellet to guide the winemaking program at Chappellet Vineyards. That same year, Phillip also became the winemaker for his family's acclaimed Titus Vineyards.

In the three decades since, Phillip has earned renown as one of Napa Valley's most gifted winemakers, garnering numerous 100-point scores, and the respect of his peers for his encyclopedic knowledge of winemaking. Though Phillip is equally adept at making wines from both mountain and valley floor sites, his 30 years (and counting) of experience on Pritchard Hill have provided him with an unparalleled understanding of the intricacies and opportunities of mountain winemaking.

In early 2020, after years of working with grapes from Acumen's acclaimed Edcora and Attelas vineyards, Phillip was invited to join the Acumen team as winemaker, where he works closely with Assistant Winemaker José Rodriguez and Viticulturist John Derr. "As a winemaker, and a wine lover, my fascination with Atlas Peak has only grown over the years," says Phillip. "Those of us who know the mountain vineyards of Napa Valley intimately, know what an extraordinary terroir it offers for growing Bordeaux-varietals. What Acumen has already achieved on Atlas Peak is remarkable. I am excited to work alongside José, John and the Acumen team to establish new benchmarks for the wines of Atlas Peak."