



**ROD MCDONALD**  
**East Coast Trading Co.**  
**Winemaker + Director**

With an early love for farming as a young boy growing up in Whangarei, Northland, New Zealand, Rod was bitten by the wine bug while working in hospitality following school and dropping out of University, then in 1993 he worked his first vintage at Hotel du Vin, Mangatawhiri, south of Auckland.

After harvest, he packed up his car and headed south to Hawke's Bay to take up a cellar hand role at Vidal Estate, part of the Villa Maria Group. He spent thirteen years at Vidal, nine years as winemaker and was awarded New Zealand Winemaker of the year in 2006.

Later that year he went out on his own and started Rod McDonald Wines, now Te Awanga Estate, where he still the winemaker as well as CEO of the Hawke's Bay Wine Company. Te Awanga Estate is the home of a well-established family of wines: Trademark, Quarter Acre, Wildsong and One Off.

In 2017 the Quarter Acre Syrah 2015 was awarded the trophy for Champion Red Wine of Show at the prestigious International Wine Challenge (IWC) in London, along with trophies for the best International Syrah, New Zealand Syrah, New Zealand Red and Hawke's Bay Syrah.

In 2019 the Trademark Syrah 2015 won four trophies at the International Wine Challenge (IWC) including Best International Syrah. This was followed up by the Trademark Syrah 2016 being awarded the Syrah Master Award at The Global Masters the same year, and Rod being named in The Master Winemaker 100 list.

Rod has been a Senior Judge at the New Zealand International Wine Awards for eight years, Chairman of Judges for the A&P Hawkes Bay Wine Awards for seven years and spent six years as Chairman of the Hawke's Bay Winegrowers Association, helping establish it as one of the great winegrowing regions of the world. Way back in history he gained a Post Grad Diploma in Viticulture at Lincoln University.

Rod's winemaking style can best be summed up by others – especially those who drink his wines - but lately he's been describing it as "minimum intervention, maximum intention."

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