



**Aaron Walker**  
**Winemaker**

As Winemaker for Pali Wine Co., Aaron Walker oversees all aspects of the winery's Lompoc production facility. While Consulting Winemaker Kenneth Juhasz' guidance ensures excellence in every step of production, Aaron is the primary caretaker for Pali's line-up of wines. He's a dedicated craftsman who is thrilled to be making wine from top vineyards and appellations on the West Coast.

Like many members of the Pali team, Walker first fell in love with the nuances of wine through food and restaurants. He studied Liberal Studies at California State University San Diego in preparation for a multiple-subject teaching credential. After graduation, he began working in restaurants, first at the Royale Brasserie (now Lou & Mickey's Steakhouse) in the Gaslamp Quarter of San Diego, then at Bradley Ogden's Arterra in Del Mar, where wine was considered an essential and complementary component to the fine dining experience. Walker enjoyed the hospitality world, and considered enrolling in culinary school, but the opportunity to work harvest for Bonacorssi in the fall of 2006 took him in another direction. The experience formally introduced him to the production side of wine, and after three intensive months in the cellar, he had found his calling. Aaron began working for several small wineries, apprenticing with highly-respected Central Coast producers such as Joe Davis of Arcadian, Seth Kunin of Kunin Wines, Stephen Dooley of Stephen Ross Wine Cellars, and Gray Hartley of Hitching Post. "In just a year and half, I was exposed to several different styles of winemaking and ways of doing things. It was a real crash course in artisan production and I learned a lot from each winemaker," he says.

Walker picked up extra work as a server at the Hitching Post, a destination steakhouse and Central Coast winemaker watering hole in Buellton. At the Hitching Post, Aaron learned about Pali Wine Co. and was put in contact with Pali founder Tim Perr. After an initial phone conversation, Aaron met Tim, Brian Loring, Kimberly Loring and grower Peter Cargasacchi at the Pali production facility for an impromptu group interview. "It was intimidating, but from then on I understood Tim's passionate commitment to making the best wine possible," he says. He was hired as Pali's assistant winemaker in June 2007. He worked under Brian Loring's direction and guidance through the 2007 vintage, and then with Consulting Winemaker Kenneth Juhasz in subsequent vintages.

Born and raised in southern California, Walker is an outdoor enthusiast, and enjoys sailing and surfing when he has the chance. He's also working on a side project, called MoonWalker Wines, with his college friend David Muñoz; the first vintage is a 2007 Syrah from Santa Barbara County.