

MEET DAVE.

Dave Minnick has seen more grape juice than he cares to remember. As a young boy growing up, his family raised Concord grapes for Welch's; then times changed and they converted the farm to wine grapes in the early 1980s. When his dad retired, Dave took over the farm and today the majority of his 700 tons of grapes are sold to local winemakers. He fulfilled a dream in the mid-90s when he opened Willow Crest, a small award-winning winery named after the large willow tree in front of his farm. Not many people go from field-hand to farmer to winemaker. Dave's self-taught, and his classroom has been the vineyards and barrel-rooms of the Yakima Valley. "Great wine starts in the vineyard," he says with an easy smile, "and my job is to not screw it up in the winery." So, whether you enjoy Washington merlot, chardonnay, pinot gris, cabernet franc or syrah, remember Dave Minnick—the gentleman winemaker; in a sea of vineyards north of Prosser, he's a part of the Heart of Washington.

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