

3100 Cellars: Specializing in bubbly

By **HEATHER SMITH THOMAS**
For the Capital Press

GARDEN CITY, Idaho — Hailey Minder and her husband, Marshall, started making wine in 2014.

“The year before, we’d gone on a river trip in Hells Canyon on Halloween and talked about the fact that no one in Idaho was making sparkling wine,” Hailey said. “We like bubbles, and no one was making bubbles!”

Rivers are part of their story. She and Marshall met on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River when he was a river guide and Hailey was a guest on one of his boat trips.

“The name of our winery, 3100 Cellars, comes from the fact there are over 3,100 whitewater river miles in the state of Idaho,” she said. “We started on the Middle Fork and together we’ve meandered through a fraction of those thousands of miles.”

They only make sparkling wines.

“They were all inspired by Idaho rivers and our experiences on those rivers. Our main wine, our sparkling Chardonnay, we call White-water,” Hailey said. “We also have a pink wine we call Runoff Rose, which is like rivers in the spring — a bit murky.”



Hailey Minder and her husband, Marshall, of 3100 Cellars in Garden City, Idaho.

Another wine is called General Phunk.

“Marshall’s boat captain name was General Phunk, so that’s what we call this

one; it’s a bit different,” she said. “We bottle it while it is fermenting, rather than waiting for it to finish. Thus it can be variable, depending on how the fermentation is going and how far along it is when we bottle it.”

With the other wines, fermentation is finished first.

“Then we add a specific amount of sugar and yeast and bottle it. With this one, the fermentation is in process when we bottle it, and it’s usually a little cloudy and out of our control,” Hailey said.

Some of their other wines are held longer and finished differently.

“One of them is the same Chardonnay, but aged longer and we call it the Eddy Out. It takes more time, so like the river it eddies out,”

she said.

Their plan is to always use only Idaho fruit.

“We take a lot of our inspiration from Idaho rivers so we want to stick with the Idaho theme,” she said.

“We are expanding our profile; we also make a Gewurtztraminer and Malvisia Bianca, which are white wines,” she said. “Our roses are made with several different grapes, which include Syrah, Malbec and Mourvedre.”

When she and Marshall decided to make their own brand of wine, Hailey already had some experience with the wine industry.

“I’d been working for Telaya Wine Company in Garden City. Before that, I harvested grapes at Walla Walla and became interested

in the wine industry,” she said.

She and Marshall have an estate vineyard in the Eagle Foothills.

“We planted it 5 years ago, and last year was our first commercial harvest of fruit. In the beginning we sourced grapes from other vineyards, and mostly worked with Sawtooth and Skyline vineyards but also worked with Bitner and other vineyards over the years, since our vines were still growing. We will continue to use some fruit from other sources,” she said.

“We have a 10-acre parcel, with 5 acres planted so far. We have a building there now, and hope to make our wine there and have a small tasting room. We’ll probably plant another one to three acres,” Hailey said.

Marshall grew up on a farm in Indian Valley, where his family grows alfalfa, timothy hay and triticale.

“He had a farming background but no grape-growing experience until he met me, but he is really good with a lot of our equipment and is good with the grapes,” Hailey said.

Their wine is sold mostly through a wine club, and about 10% to businesses, co-ops, restaurants in town that want their wine on the menus, and other consumers.



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