

SCOTT DAHMER

Founder & Proprietor, Aridus Wine Company

Winery operations consultant, Equine & Wines

Born and raised in Canada, Scott Dahmer attended Concordia University in Montreal before graduating from Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. His future as a grape grower and winemaker might have been foreshadowed by his maternal grandfather, who was an accomplished groundskeeper and gardener in Scotland.

He met his wife, Joan (Keating) Dahmer, in middle school. She graduated from medical school at the University of Western Ontario and specialized in Hematology. After several years and, ready for a change, Joan and Scott and their two children moved to Healdsburg, in Sonoma County, California, where the couple learned the key components of owning a vineyard and running a winery.

Scott and Joan decided that they would follow their dream of starting a vineyard and a winery, focusing on southeastern Arizona, whose wine 'scene' was still young and not prohibitively as expensive. Ready for a new adventure, the family moved to Carefree, Arizona in 2001.

In 2009 they purchased 40 acres along Turkey Creek in Pearce and began planting an estate vineyard: when they walked the land for the first time, they found themselves moved and inspired by the beauty of its high desert location, which sits at 5,200 feet in elevation in the Chiricahua growing region. They found a historic apple processing barn in the town of Willcox and began renovating it into the largest custom crush facility in Arizona. Later came the addition of a tasting room in Willcox, and then a very successful satellite tasting room in Old Town Scottsdale.

They chose the name Aridus, a play on the Latin word arid, meaning dry---a tribute to their desert setting.

The cellar doors opened in August, 2012, and from the outset the operation was recognized as a stylish newcomer doing things right, whether by using the latest and most sophisticated equipment or the handsome touches such as using reclaimed local lumber and antique light bulbs as part of the décor. In fact, the winery was recognized with the Design Excellence award from the International Interior Design Association's Southwest Chapter in 2014. The award was for Sustainability and for "Interior Design Excellence."

Aridus continues to win awards not only for the winery facility, but for the wines themselves, bringing international attention for wines made in Arizona.