

UPPER BENCH

WINERY & CREAMERY



Gavin Miller came to Canada in 1997 and was inspired by the burgeoning wine industry in the Okanagan. He then embarked on a 12-year career journey starting in vineyards, then into the cellar, working for most of the established wineries in and around Penticton and the Naramata Bench, notably making award-winning wines for the likes of Poplar Grove (2004-2008) and Painted Rock (2007-2010).

Shana Miller (The Big Cheese) began her love affair with cheese in 2002, when she was taught the art of cheesemaking by the original cheesemaker at Poplar Grove, Sandra Chalmers. For the next three years, as the head cheesemaker until 2006, **Shana** truly developed her passion for the pure, timeless art of cheesemaking.

Gavin and Shana had long dreamed of combining their passions and in early 2011 that dream became a reality when they found the perfect property and partners, the **Nystroms**.

The couple's relationship with **Wayne and Margareta Nystrom** dates back to 2005. Having lived next door to Poplar Grove Winery, the **Nystroms** quickly fell in love with **Gavin's** first class wines and **Shana's** gorgeous cheeses. The **Nystroms** always had a deep admiration of the passion the **Millers** displayed in what they made, so, when **Gavin** ran into **Wayne** at the local Safeway and pitched his idea it was a fairly easy decision for the **Nystroms** to make.

Wayne and Margareta have a blended family with nine children, one of them, **Tessa Sjöblom**, initially started by helping with some of the design concepts before the company had been aptly christened Upper Bench. With her degree in Bachelors of Business Administration (BBA), **Tessa** quickly fell into a marketing, advertising and communications role.