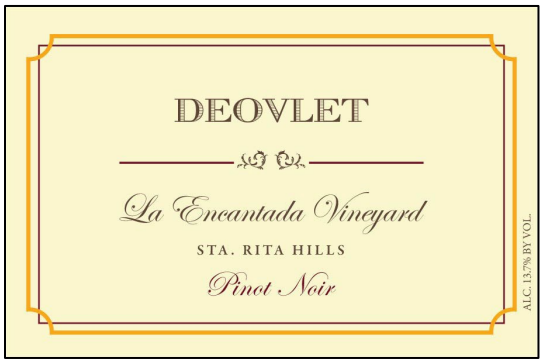
Deovlet Wines
California
(California sales only)



Ryan Deovlet makes precise wines that reflect the same sense of relaxed, comfortable personality that Deovlet himself does... The most interesting part of Deovlet's winemaking is his deft use of various aging vessels in unconventional settings: terracotta amphora for Cabernet, steam-bent cigar-shaped oak barrels for Chardonnay, etc. This experimental spirit never tips the wines into "natty" territory, instead lending them purity and clarity while allowing the sites to speak. You can't go wrong with this range. –Billy Norris, Vinous Media, September 2026

In 2004 Ryan Deovlet traveled to Australia to work in vineyards under the auspices of World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms. He went to find life after baseball, hoping that agriculture might fit the bill. He had been an infielder in the semi-pros, but an arm injury closed the door to the majors, a fact that knocked him off his dime for a bit. He finished college with a degree in sociology, but academia never appealed to him like the game had. So he decided to take a journey to see where it might lead.

He took four books with him:

On the Road
Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance
Rumi
The Prophet

Along with the books, his inspiration was the memory of going to Hawaii as a young man to stay with the family black sheep, an older cousin who had given him a Bob Marley t-shirt and who had three passions: fishing, growing pot, and growing coffee in the Kona district of the Big Island. One morning they went out fishing, and upon returning the cousin served him a cup of coffee made from his plantation beans. Ryan never forgot the taste, and he was fired up forevermore by the idea that it could only have come from Kona and nowhere else. Agriculture, he realized, could be so much more than cornfields and overalls.

In Australia, he did vineyard work in the Hunter and Yarra Valleys, waited tables in Melbourne, and worked the harvest on the Mornington Peninsula just south of the city. He read the story of Josh Jensen's struggle to start up the Calera Winery in *The Heartbreak Grape* and went on to New Zealand to work on pruning crews.

From 2005 to 2007 he worked with the highly respected winemaker Stephen Dooley, making wine along the Central Coast. He became assistant winemaker at the Red Car Winery, where he met consultant David Ramey and where he was further exposed to vineyard and soil experts. He went to a Pinot Noir conference and took to heart what Richard Sanford said on a panel discussion about the inspiration of Pinot Noir. He worked a harvest in Argentina at Vina Cobos with Paul Hobbs.

In the spring of 2008, he returned from Argentina. He was back in the game, determined to make his own wine. He knocked on Richard Sanford's door to ask how he might possibly buy some fruit. That took some brass, given that Sanford was the legendary pioneer of the Santa Rita Hills. But Ryan came armed with the very words that he had heard Sanford speak, framed in calligraphy as a gift for the crusty Vietnam Veteran: *Pinot Noir is about commitment, it's about persistence, it's about the journey. There's a magic in it, there's a magic in Pinot Noir!*

Sanford had been the first to see the potential for vines in the Santa Rita Hills, a unique coast range that runs east-west rather than paralleling the coast and so is directly open to the Pacific's cooling influences. He planted Sanford & Benedict Vineyard in 1971. He went on to establish the La Encantada Vineyard in 2000 just to the west of his original vineyard. He agreed to sell young Deovlet enough grapes from La Encantada to make around 100 cases of wine.

A lot of years have passed since those early days. Ryan has earned quite a reputation, and he quietly exemplifies the best of the new breed of Californians who have embraced the elegance of the last century with today's better understanding of viticulture and winemaking. He's quick to point out that he likes the kiss of the sun—his wines are never austere—and he's not orthodox in his methods, but he has dialed back on extractions and on the use of new oak, and he's comfortable being among the region's first to start the harvest.

His number one in the cellar is Grace Kegel. She's done harvests in New Zealand, South Africa and of course along the central coast. She joined Ryan in 2013 and together they concentrated on a handful of top sites in the Santa Rita Hills—foremost being the iconic Sanford & Benedict Vineyard on the south side of the valley along with its neighbor the La Encantada Vineyard, and the Zotovich Family Vineyard on the north side.

In 2024 he purchased Baywood Ranch immediately to the east of the southern end of Morro Bay in the new San Luis Obispo Coast AVA, or Slo Coast as it's better known. A coastal strip between the ocean and the Santa Lucia Mountains running from Santa Barbara up to the Monterey, Slo Coast is an especially cool appellation, breezy, foggy and flooded with sunlight. In the eight years leading up to the purchase, Ryan placed weather monitors around the 55-acre ranch and got permission to dig several trenches for soil analysis before he signed papers in 2024. He then planted 12 acres to Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Gamay, Meunier, and Pinot Noir as well as fruit trees and grains. Longer term he hopes to put in another 8 acres along with orchards and grains. In his own words:

Four miles from the ocean, Baywood Ranch is on the flank of the hills that face north. Ten-degree slopes, like Grand Cru Burgundy!

The fruit trees, grains, and flowers are to promote biodiversity on the ranch and provide produce for our team and family, as well as livestock. Plus, the layers of different organic material (sunflower stalks, sorghum, grasses, tree limbs & prunings, manure, etc.) that we can add to our grape skins and stems, the better the compost will break down before returning the black gold to the vine rows.

We're farming Baywood Ranch organically now. It will be a block-by-block consideration with respect toward regenerative organic farming. I think tilling is an issue brought up regularly within the ideology of Regenerative Organic certification, and I don't necessarily believe that no-till is best for every terroir. We would love to learn more deeply about biodynamic principles and applications with intent of fashioning our own philosophy (again block by block) on farming Baywood Ranch as a whole, perhaps implementing some BD applications. Some concepts there make sense, others I fight with.

My dream is to have the wine be the voice of the property, but the farm as its own ecosystem. Steep learning curve, but committed to learning and listening.

His name is pronounced *Dev-let*. His grandfather, Dewey Diran Deovletian, escaped Armenia in 1914 just before the Armenian genocide. In the early 1940s, struggling in his metal fabricating business and trying to look less foreign with the outbreak of war, he dropped the *ian* ending. It just so happens that the old farmer Ryan bought Baywood Ranch from is of Armenian stock too.

https://www.deovletwines.com/