

“Kristen and Bruce Jordan make traditional styles of artisan cider with certified organic apples and are ‘setting the bar much higher in terms of the culinary tasting experience in the wine/cider industry.’”



Sea Cider Farm and Ciderhouse

If the idea of opening an orchard is appealing to you, talk to Kristen Jordan at Sea Cider Farm and Ciderhouse on the Saanich Peninsula. While you sit and chat in the beautiful tasting/dining room and look wistfully out at the rows and rows of apple trees, she will tell you about the 1,000 wheelbarrows of chicken manure needed for planting and fertilizing the apple trees. “That was really hard work” she says. “But, with the help of Bruce’s parents, the four of us managed.”

Bruce and Kristen Jordan, the owners of Sea Cider, are an unlikely pair of entrepreneurs. He was a lawyer and she was an international development aid worker in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the non-profit organization Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief. But they have followed their passion. Bruce “loves making anything to do with alcohol,” according to Kristen, and she worked in the area of sustainability and food security in Africa.

Sea Cider sells its alcoholic cider products to more than 100 restaurants, wine shops, hotels, and liquor outlets on Vancouver Island and the mainland and has a tasting and dining showroom. Sea Cider is also planning to establish culinary tours on the Peninsula and is looking to partner with Butchart Gardens and the Sidney Pier Hotel in developing these. The tours will be “much the same as they have in the Cowichan Valley with the vineyards and restaurants there” says Kristen.

Sociability, sustainability, and community involvement are the three pillars of Sea Cider’s business philosophy. The tasting and dining room is a work of art with long wooden tables and a wooden roof all milled from the trees they cleared for the orchard.

Sea Cider is involved with the Lifecycles Fruit Tree Project, a non-profit organization whose volunteers collect fruit from local backyards for the food banks. Sea Cider turns the collected fruit into cider, sells it, and gives the proceeds back to Lifecycles.

While Sea Cider has been a success, “it’s a non-stop business and, with two young children, there never seems to be enough time,” Kristen says. “But it has been worthwhile. Once we got through the toughest part — other than carting the chicken manure — which was the decision to take the plunge and buy the property, it’s all been worthwhile.”

The best part of the business, according to Bruce, is “I get to work with my wife everyday”