

Star Struck

Founder and creator of the wine blog Vinography, **Alder Yarrow** also is a **photographer, Oxford scholar**, improv artist, husband, father and **"The Wine World's Brightest Cyberstar,"** according to *San Francisco* magazine. He squeezed in time from his home in the City by the Bay to talk with *Grape* about today's myths in the winescape and the great pairing paradox this fall.

HISTORY

I had only tasted a few wines by the time I studied for a year abroad. I started cooking for myself because the food was so lousy. Somewhere along the line I fell in love with wine.

THE WORLD WINE WEB

After college I continued teaching myself about food and wine. I started getting asked the same wine questions over and over, and blogs were starting, so I thought the answer was a wine blog. I did a search for wine blogs, and none appeared.

TRUE OR FALSE

It is a myth that you have to know something about wine to enjoy it. My only principles of wine education are be curious and try everything. Then just drink what you like.

STAMPING OUT SNOBBERY

In a lot of ways wine intimidation goes back to the founding of our country and the fact that for many years the only people who could afford wine were the very wealthy. Take Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, who could afford to send for crates of First Growth Bordeaux from France. It was a very upper-crust thing in America. Today we can afford to learn and explore.

THE PAIRING PARADOX

Another myth is there is one perfect pairing with one dish. Now do some wines match better with some foods? Sure. I enjoy Sauvignon Blanc and Champagne with oysters better than Cabernet with oysters, but that doesn't mean that one is right or wrong. There are some general guidelines, but after that all bets are off. My philosophy is

that people should drink what they know they are going to enjoy, period.

FALL FAVES

When the weather gets colder and we start getting wonderful smells of leaves and moist earth and harvest time, that leads to more meat, apples, root veggies and squash, and that all puts people in more of a red wine mood. I prefer lighter, sometimes obscure reds, like Pinot Noir, Aglianico, Nerello Mascalese and Tempranillo. My other fall favorite is rosé since it goes with so many different things.

GRECIAN GRAPES

Agiorgitiko (red, ay-gee-

OHR-gee-tee-koh) and Assyrtiko (white, ah-SEER-tee-koh) are world-class, unbelievably interesting, distinct Greek wines that most wine lovers should try.

ADVICE TO WINE BLOGGERS

Don't quit your day job. Don't expect to make any money off of it. Pick a niche.

IF WINE ISN'T IN YOUR GLASS, WHAT IS?

Sparkling water.

MOST BEAUTIFUL WINE REGION YOU'VE EVER SEEN?

It's a toss-up between the Franchhoek Valley in South Africa and Central Otago, New Zealand.

