

WHAT PEOPLE DRINK

ALDER YARROW

Founder & Editor of Vinography.com

Interview by [Alan Kropf](#) // Photography by [Chris Reis](#)



Alder Yarrow is the founder and editor of the award winning wine blog, [Vinography](#), which is among the most respected and influential in the world. Launched in 2004, [Vinography](#) covers a range of topics in wine from ratings to reviews to news and now features a roster of contributors further bringing the vision to life. The Mutineers caught up with Mr. Yarrow, a sought after public speaker and wine judge, at the Lake County People's Choice Wine Awards judging event at Langtry Estate & Vineyards to find out what he drinks on his own time.

WHAT IS THE LAST THING YOU DRANK?

A bottle of 2005 Sadie Family Sequillo red blend from Swartland, South Africa. Totally killer wine, one of the best made in South Africa and a phenomenal value at something like 30 bucks.

WHAT DO YOU DRINK WITH BREAKFAST?

When I'm on vacation? Champagne. During the week? OJ.

WHAT NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DO YOU ENJOY?

I'm an anti-soda pop guy for the most part, but I've recently discovered G.U.S. (which I think stands for Grown Up Soda) which is a brand of naturally flavored sodas with much less sugar than the commercial crap. Their cola is fantastic. Apart from that, I'm big into sparkling water and juice.

WHAT'S THE FIRST WINE THAT REALLY BLEW YOUR MIND?

I can remember having a wine as a kid that some importer brought to a party that my mom had dragged me to. Everyone was going nuts about this wine, so I demanded to taste it. I'll be damned if it didn't taste like chocolate. That, I think, was my first indication that wine could actually taste really good.

WHAT ARE YOU DRINKING AT A BAR WHEN YOU AREN'T DRINKING WINE?

I love a dirty vodka martini, and I'm always willing to let my friends try to school me on their favorite obscure cocktails. But I must admit to not being much of a cocktail fanatic.

ANY WINE REGIONS YOU'RE PARTICULARLY INTO RIGHT NOW?

I'm always into the wines of Friuli in northeastern Italy, which I think are some of the world's most interesting, but I recently got back from Australia and am super excited to be exploring a lot of less well known wine regions there whose wines are in some cases the polar opposites of the big, jammy stuff that everyone associates with Australia.

WHAT IS THE LAST GREAT WINE LIST YOU ORDERED OFF OF?

CRU in New York City. That place is fricking amazing. I could read that wine list for hours.

WHAT IS THE LAST GREAT WINE EXPERIENCE YOU HAD IN A RESTAURANT?

Most of the time, when I think of great wine experiences, it has more to do with the wine and my dining companions than the restaurant itself, but maybe that's what you're asking about? We just had a phenomenal last-minute dinner at Bar Tartine a couple of weeks ago with some friends, and I opened a '95 Rochioli Russian River pinot that was just fantastic. We were all swooning.

WHAT'S THE LAST GREAT WINE AND FOOD PAIRING YOU HAD?

I drank that Sequillo wine with spicy sausage pizza, and that was pretty damn good.

DO YOU HAVE ANY SIGNATURE FOOD AND WINE PAIRINGS THAT YOU PREPARE AT HOME?

Every once in a while, we like to order killer fried chicken to go from this restaurant, The Front Porch, near our house, and then we bring it home, open a bottle of Champagne and dine like celebrities. If you haven't tried a really good bottle of Champagne with fried chicken, you're totally missing out on one of life's great experiences.

DO YOU HAVE ANY GO-TO EVERYDAY DRINKING WINES?

There's no wine these days that I buy cases of to drink as the "house wine" just because I'm into trying so many things, but the stuff I probably buy in greatest quantity for my own cellar are relatively inexpensive German rieslings like the low end Selbach-Oster's and things like that.

WHAT'S THE MOST OBSCURE WINE YOU'VE HAD LATELY?

I totally dig obscure wines of all kinds. The latest ones I've been working my way through are the wines made by Frank Cornelissen on the high slopes of Mount Etna in Sicily. This guy is totally a self taught wacko of a winemaker, making wines with literally not a single added ingredient, not even the sulfur dioxide most people use as a preservative. His grapes grow without any water, on some of the most barren landscape you've ever seen. And the wines are phenomenal, though most people have to get over the huge chunks of sediment floating around in them and the somewhat austere flavors at times. But they are really remarkable. Total geek wines.

WHAT ARE SOME WINE BLOGS THAT YOU ENJOY READING?

I really like some of the stuff that Jamie Goode writes about, and I'm enjoying my friend Blake Gray's blog "The Gray Market Report" [wblakegray.blogspot.com] a lot these days as well. Other blogs I read regularly include Dr. Vino [drvino.com], 1WineDude [1winedude.com], Fermentation [fermentation.typepad.com], and Good Grape [goodgrape.com]. I skim about 200 others.

Wine Blogger Alder Yarrow has a showdown with a deer in a cabin at Langtry Estate & Vineyards in Lake County.