

Ep 73: The best restaurants in the world, wine experiences and cooking for Bordeaux legends with Celebrity Chef Andrea Zagatti (Part 1)



Janina Doyle 00:00:07 Welcome to Eat Sleep Wine Repeat, a podcast for all you wine lovers, who, if you're like me, just can not get enough of the good stuff. I'm Janina Doyle, your host, Brand Ambassador, Wine Educator, and Sommelier. So, stick with me as we dive deeper into this ever evolving, wonderful world of wine and wherever you are listening to this, cheers to you!

Hello to all you delicious divine wine lovers. I've been told off by one of my listeners, Max. Yes. You know who you are. I'm not allowed to say lovely wine lovers anymore. It's not good grammar. Doesn't sound good. So right. It's gone. Max, I hope you're happy. Right. Welcome all of you to today's episode. I am excited to introduce to you my guest, who is a celebrity chef, Andrea Zagatti. Now he's only just gone and cooked for the likes of Kanye West, Drake, the Real Madrid football club, Chelsea football club. If you like your fashion, there's Valentino Garavani, the list goes on. Prime ministers, Royal family etcetera. So today we're of course going to be looking at his history and why cheesecake changed everything for him. We'll be looking at the best 50 restaurants in the world, how it is to be a celebrity chef, the Liber Pater party that he cooked for, the golden vine awards. Then of course we'll be touching on the wines that were drunk at this very special wine ceremony. Now, as this is my first chef on the podcast, and this is going to be a little bit more of a food related episode. I want you all to know in 2021, currently, what are the top five restaurants ranked in the world's 50 best. So number one like many, many years is Noma in Copenhagen. Number two equally in Copenhagen. So I think we might all need to plan a trip is Geranium. Then heading to Spain, there is Asador Etxebarri, which is in the region Atxondo. In Peru, in Lima, the capital, there is the Central restaurant. Then back to Spain in Barcelona, there is Disfrutar. Now let me touch on Noma for a second because I just dream of going there. This is Scandinavian cuisine from founder and chef Rene Redzepi. Three menus throughout the year. The vegetable season, the game and forest season and the seafood season. They ferment, they forage, therefore, with a great focus on purity and on the environment, it may not be a great surprise that all of the wines are in fact natural. Apparently, there isn't even any Bordeaux. So that Liber Pater party that I'm going to be talking with Andrea about later. Nope, not even that wine is there.

Janina Doyle 00:03:00 But natural wine sometimes get a bad rap as if it's just a trend. And so I just want to touch on that for a second. The history and tradition of natural wine in fact goes back 8,000 years, starting with Georgia, most likely, and they're clay vessels called Qvervris. I've actually been requested to do an episode on this one. So I will be coming back to that in the new year. So watch out for that. Now, although some natural wine can be funky and can have that mouseiness, that doesn't represent all natural wine. We should be seeing natural wine as a bit more of an important part of our wine culture. The story that it can give, the person behind the wine, the place. Certainly 90% of natural

wine is made in the vineyard. It is a living wine. Now there can be many additives in conventional wines, and we don't have labeling laws to actually show you what's in that bottle. So at least with natural wine, the positive is, you know, that nothing was added and nothing was taken away. Now since 2019, the Union for the defense of Natural Wines has been around and they've been able to get France to recognize the term, that happened last year in 2020. So now there is a label that winemakers can use if they sign up to this union. I think it's still a very long way away. Most wines are mentioned as being natural, but don't have a label. But if you do see the term Vin Méthode Nature, this is going to mean that for sure, the wine has been handpicked. It comes from certified organic grapes only, made with indigenous yeasts and with only up to 30 milligrams per liter of sulfur, or also known as 30 parts per million PPM, and this can only be actually added at the end. So not before or during fermentation. And there are in fact two different labels. One that says there has been a little bit of added sulfur. And one that says no added sulfur at all. And of course, as I said, nothing added, nothing removed. And to get the Vin Méthode Nature label, each vintage is awarded every year.

Janina Doyle 00:05:11 Now as Noma, doesn't have a wine list online, I'd imagine that's because their wine list is constantly changing. I've kept an eye out on the kind of wines that you're going to find there by following the Head Sommelier, Mads Kleppe on his Instagram account. Do check out Domaine de L'Octavin from the Jura. If you haven't seen these wines before Google them and check out the labels, I'm not going to say anything more though. Just look it up. Then I've seen that they have a very iconic wine, a volcanic orange wine made by Gabrio Bini in Sicily using a hundred percent Moscatel de Alejandría. Very interesting. And this is called Serragghia Bianco Zibibbo. You definitely want to try this. And potentially the master of natural wine making on the Sicilian island, Frank Cornelissen, is of course, there on the list. Right, well, I think I will do a much more in-depth episode in natural wine soon, but for now I want you to be energized by the incredibly passionate Andrea. I loved listening to his story, so I hope you do too.

Janina Doyle 00:06:21 Andrea, I'm very excited you're here. Teach me about food, teach me everything you know, go.

Andrea Zagatti 00:06:29 What do you want me to teach you first?

Janina Doyle 00:06:30 Oh, I don't know. I don't know. Tell me, anyway, you have, oh, had so much experience working in the food world and of course, adore wine. And that is also how we have become friends. So how the hell did you become a chef? What, what was your inspiration? Let's go with that first.

Andrea Zagatti 00:06:51 To be honest, um, I was 16 years old and my girlfriend at the time wanted me to make cakes for her. So...

Janina Doyle 00:07:00 So that's not a bad thing. Okay.

Andrea Zagatti 00:07:02 Yeah. And that's how I got into cooking. I try, you know, um, I started doing cheesecake and, uh, so what happened is that I was never happy. So I made cheesecakes for like two months, every day until I reached, I reached the perfection of cheesecake and then I won an award in Italy for a cheesecake and yes, when I was 16 and I was like, maybe I should get into cooking. I got into cooking and I started to watch Heston's Feasts, uh, on TV in English. I didn't know English. I was just watching him doing stuff. And, uh, um, I was like, I want to try to do this thing. So I bought the Fat Duck

book at the time, you know, I mean, it was one of you know, Heston was the pioneer of molecular cuisine. So I bought all the ingredients from Spain, from, uh, Ferran Adria, of course the other pioneer of molecular cuisine and got into molecular cuisine. And I didn't understand any of it. But...

Janina Doyle 00:07:59 At what age were you doing this? 16. You were dealing with molecular cuisine. Okay.

Andrea Zagatti 00:08:05 Yeah 16. In the, in a country where Italian food that's, that's it, that's all there is, Italian food, actually not that, regional food. If you are born in Ferrara, you have food from your region, always say from your city, that's it. You know, because Emilia-Romagna is actually the region in the world with the most variety of food. So every single city has different food.

Janina Doyle 00:08:26 You are very lucky coming from that region. I mean, we will get, we will get onto the balsamic and the Parma Ham and cheese later won't we.

Andrea Zagatti 00:08:35 Of course, but anyway, you know, I got into molecular cuisine, I didn't understand anything, but you know, the reason that I got into the cooking is because I love to do things. I know nothing about. If I don't know anything about, I'm curious and I want to learn, I want to know more and it's practical rather than theoretical. You actually see results, you know, the same way, you know, you do math one plus one equals two, all right. Uh, you know, salt plus water equals salted water and so on and so on. So, um, it was very good to learn quickly because you can see the results straight away. And, uh, that's how I got interested.

Janina Doyle 00:09:13 Fantastic. So you are obviously all over the place now. Now your CV is pretty impressive. Actually, let's talk about that before we get into the celebrity chef world. So you're doing your molecular inspired cuisine. You've mastered this cheesecake, you're winning competitions in Italy. Where do you go from there?

Andrea Zagatti 00:09:32 Of course, my, you know, when I told my parents, I want to go to cooking school, they said, no, because think about the 99% of the chefs in the world, what do they do? They stay in the restaurant long hours. No holidays, no time for the family. Most of them are addicted to drugs or alcohol. So, you know, it's not a very nice environment for you to be like, oh yeah, Son, just go in there. You know what I mean? It's because it's not easy. It's very challenging on many sides, but I knew that, you know, I only needed to learn how to cook to then take my life or whatever I want it to be, you know, but you know, we're talking about more than 10 years ago. So, uh, it's just very difficult to predict where my life would have been. You know, if I didn't do certain choice. But, um, you know, I convinced them. They sent me here, started at Le Cordon Bleu, uh, French cooking school. And, uh, I researched online for the best cooking school in the world. There was Le Cordon Bleu, the one in the US and there was one in Switzerland. Uh, the difference that the US is too far away, so I didn't consider it. The one in Switzerland is five years. The one in London is nine months.

Janina Doyle 00:10:47 Nine months. Wow. Very good.

Andrea Zagatti 00:10:51 I was like, all right, um, I want to do that. But the problem is that the university in Italy, you know, for any course, business, whatever, you know, finance, uh, let's say that nine months of course at Le Cordon Bleu would have costed like seven years of university and lifestyle and holiday in Italy. So they told me, you either choose seven years of that or nine months, but we close the bank after, you know what I mean? So I decided to choose for the nine months in London. And then,

because, you know, I was very motivated. I emailed the top 50 restaurants in the world, and I said, I wanted to stage over there.

Janina Doyle 00:11:35 All 50?

Andrea Zagatti 00:11:36 All 50, all 50 anywhere in the world. And I received a couple of answer negative. And one saying yes, you are on the list. You can start with us on the 2026. This was 10 years ago, for you to understand. So there is like 13, 14 years waiting list to start staging with them. And, uh, this was this restaurant called Mugaritz in San Sebastian. And, um, so I simply called them and be like, I received this email there must've been a mistake. I'm ready to start now. You know? Uh, and then they said, no, actually the waiting list, you know, for next years. But it kept emailing them and calling them until...

Janina Doyle 00:12:16 They got annoyed and said, okay, leave us alone. Just come here.

Andrea Zagatti 00:12:20 They called me and when they said, if you're here by 3:00 PM tomorrow, you can stay with us. So I just took left, whatever I was doing and took the first plane and nearly skipped the graduation of Cordon Bleu just left right after, and on the same day. And, um, went to San Sebastian, I started my venture over there, which was difficult because I did not know Spanish. So, uh, I had to learn Spanish with a little brief Dictionary on the plane, on the journey there.

Janina Doyle 00:12:48 Knowing you I'm sure that your, literally a three hour plane ride, you were already fluent in Spanish because you seem to be able to get everything sorted in ridiculously quick times.

Andrea Zagatti 00:12:58 Yes, it was crazy. But I nearly got kicked out the first week because I did not understand much.

Janina Doyle 00:13:05 I also don't think that you would have been well behaved. I don't believe that, you know, you would have been easily controlled. Do you think that's accurate?

Andrea Zagatti 00:13:14 Well, yes, also true, but...

Janina Doyle 00:13:16 You know, your own mind.

Andrea Zagatti 00:13:19 Yes. Precisely. But anyway, nevertheless, it was an amazing experience. The day one arrived there, they made me wear a binbag and stay outside. It was winter when I went there and, uh, they gave me 10 birds, massive, massive birds, tall like me. They have just been shot and I had to pluck them.

Janina Doyle 00:13:43 Oh my gosh. So you're wearing a binbag to protect you from all the...

Andrea Zagatti 00:13:46 From the bacteria's of the, of the feathers. You know, it's wild, but wild bird. And they told me if you, if any of them, the skin breaks in any of them, you go home today. This was my, my welcome gift from, from Mugaritz. It was very scary. And, uh, it took me nine hours to do all 10, just so you can understand. It was a really long, but I did it, you know, I did it. I mean, in Mugaritz, I was doing all sorts of things. Having, you know, razorblades, the one you use for your, for your legs as a woman, uh, do them on pig tails to peel the hairs from the pigtails, hundreds of them, or going inside the fridge with a blue neon light to separate crab particles, from white to brown and all sort of things. Uh, it was ridiculous, but, uh, you know, a lot of learning, a lot of experience, um, a lot of hours for free,

of course, but, you know, it's an experience. You meet a lot of very people, the contacts that are made in, uh, in Mugaritz, they are still one of, some of my best friends in life today. So, you know, um, because you know, you leave altogether 50 chefs live in the same house all together. And, uh, so it's crazy because it's 50 stages over there for 50 clients, you know? But, um, yeah, I mean, amazing adventure after that, I went to Osteria Francescana, so the restaurant in Italy with Massimo Bottura.

Janina Doyle 00:15:19 And you could speak Italian obviously. So that made things easier.

Andrea Zagatti 00:15:21 Way easier and, uh, you know, uh, amazing experience at a time. It was the second best restaurant in the world. So, you know. Be in the second best restaurant in the world, just after six months I was graduated. It was fantastic for me, you know, my amazing experience. But the problem is that being, Mugaritz, the first restaurant I ever stepped in my life, I was trained in the mentality of Mugaritz, which is sort of military. Stand up correctly, always clean, always whatever, always organized. It's literally military school Mugaritz. And Osteria Francescana was Italian, Italian playing football in the afternoon. Yeah. Animals in the kitchen. And I was like, where am I? It was mad. So I could not find myself happy with where I was. I loved the environment, loved the food, but it didn't match with the way I was trained. You know? So then very quickly, you know, I, after four months, I didn't like. It wasn't the place for me, amazing place, but it wasn't a place for me. And, uh, I had offers to go to Auberge in France. I had offers to go to Noma in Copenhagen and all these places, but instead I didn't want to stage anymore. I wanted to, you know, uh, to learn, you know, to, to get paid.

Janina Doyle 00:16:48 You wanted to fly! Oh, oh, sorry. Yeah, totally not on the right end of the stick here. Okay. Yeah. You want it to get paid. Great.

Andrea Zagatti 00:16:53 So, I went to work for Gordon Ramsey. The three-star restaurant, in Hospital Road. I was hired there and, uh, I made a quick trial. Same day of the trial, I said to Claire Smith at the time, uh, sorry, this is not the place for me. I have another offer from Alinea in Chicago, which is another very good restaurant, uh, that I did not go to at the end. But, uh, you know, she understood. She gave me a number. I mean, there isn't that I didn't stay there is because it was insane. Probably the most insane restaurant I've seen in my life in terms of human, human conditions hopefully changed now, but it was not human. But anyway, uh, you know, I went to work for Jason Atherton for a new restaurant opening though at the time. It's called a City Social. And, uh, we gained a Michelin star in what, in six months. I mean, amazing, amazing, amazing. But after six months, um, I realized that I didn't belong into the restaurant world. We are talking about me at 22 years old saying, I am too good for restaurants and me saying that, uh, you know, I, I don't want to stay behind the shadow because I want people to enjoy the food I cook and want to see them trying my food. So, uh, there was not easy, you know, it, wasn't an easy move for me the 22 years old with a thousand pound, uh, rent room in London, you know, uh, to simply leave my job. Right.

Janina Doyle 00:18:24 So what did you do?

Andrea Zagatti 00:18:25 I started asking people around. I mean, what other jobs do chefs do? So, I did a six months transition where I tried, everything, gastro pubs, hotels, catering companies, weddings, all sorts of things. And, uh, then I found out through a guy, oh, there is also somebody, you know, there's this job being a private chef that where he cook for people, either you do parties, you stay with them, you travel with them, whatever you want is possible. And so I got into it. I made quickly my website, some photos with friends, some business cards. Uh, I made some very, very good business card

and spent all the money on them because I thought if people need my business card, it needs to be luxury. Otherwise they will not keep it. I don't want to make it white. I want to make it so thick that it can't break. And my business card at the moment, if you turn on fire, it doesn't burn. It's that kind of thing. It's crazy. And it is made of paper.

Janina Doyle 00:19:25 Are you an American Psycho? I'm just wondering.

Andrea Zagatti 00:19:28 No, But I understand there.

Janina Doyle 00:19:30 Tell me, tell me exactly what color of white or beige or cream is your card and exactly what font and gold print are you using?

Andrea Zagatti 00:19:42 But yeah. Sort of things like that. Um, having said that, that scene from American Psycho it's really good. I mean, it's really, really, so, yes. Um, randomly in the street, I met Roger Waters from Pink Floyd. Uh, stopped him, gave him my card and he completely ignored me, but he took the card because he was nice. After two weeks I received a call from him, from his PA, not from him, uh, asking if I can work for Mr. Waters. And that's how my journey started.

Janina Doyle 00:20:10 How is that for the universe taking care of you? I say this all the time. If you manifest enough, people might think it's all crazy, but I'm like, if you believe in it, you are motivated. You put it out into the universe, look at that. What are the chances of meeting basically a celebrity on the street. Yeah. So explain to me now we're fast forwarding all the way you have done incredible events. I mean, you've done events for like Kanye West and the Chelsea football teams and Royal families...

Andrea Zagatti 00:20:42 Yes. A bit of everybody.

Janina Doyle 00:20:42 Oh my God. So by the way, if you do have any interesting stories, do feel free to let us know.

Andrea Zagatti 00:20:47 I don't know. It's not easy to say. Interesting stories are very difficult. All I can say, one funny story is that I was on a hidden island in, uh, in the middle of Bahamas. And, uh, this guy wanted, uh, some, some sort of fruits, uh, that you could find not on the island, but apparently was present on another island. So they sent me with a machete and then a helicopter to find this fruit, with a guarded bodyguard next to me. With an armed bodyguard. It was crazy.

Janina Doyle 00:21:19 Did you get the fruit? Did you get the fruit?

Andrea Zagatti 00:21:21 Yes. We got the fruit, but it was ridiculous.

Janina Doyle 00:21:24 And did he enjoy his fruit?

Andrea Zagatti 00:21:28 He loved it. But yeah. I mean, um, there is no, no, uh, everything that a client asks for it's yes. Everything is possible.

Janina Doyle 00:21:35 So to explain to me a day in the life of a celebrity chef, you know, working with celebrities and high end business people, talk to me through a typical, do you have a typical day?

Andrea Zagatti 00:21:45 No. Uh...

Janina Doyle 00:21:47 Give me one day.

Andrea Zagatti 00:21:48 Every day on my life is different. Okay. Let's say that I am hired to go for three days somewhere in the world to cook for somebody. You may do breakfast, you may go out shopping. You may go on an adventure. You may, for example, there's this client in Scotland and wants me to go with him, diving for scallops in the morning. Every day at 6:00 AM.

Janina Doyle 00:22:09 Do you go diving? You personally go diving?

Andrea Zagatti 00:22:12 Yeah with him. Yeah. So, you know, depending on the clients, you have to do different things. So far. I have been, you know, more than 10 years with every day, a different day.

Janina Doyle 00:22:22 Okay. So then in that case, I want you to tell me about the experience you had hosting a private party for the Liber Pater wine. So if anyone who doesn't know about Liber Pater, there are three wines, like a red, a white and a sweet wine from Bordeaux, but they are, phhh, they sell for 2000 pounds a bottle, very often plus, and the whole idea of this winery, it's Loïc Pasquet. He wants to produce these wines that are as close to pre-phylloxera wine. So before like the 1800s when phylloxera came and devastated the vines, there were vines like Castet, Tarney Coulaunt, Saint Macaire, and he is growing just a little bit. And he's making these superb amazing wines. He doesn't follow the Bordeaux rules. He can't even say Graves, the wine region. He has to declassify himself as a Vin de Pays. He's selling one of the most expensive wines of the world. These are on ungrafted rootstocks. They're just incredible, incredible wines. Aren't they? Right. So what did you do? How was that party? Who came?

Andrea Zagatti 00:23:25 So, um, this was the party for the launch of the 2015 Liber Pater. 2015 Liber Pater is the most expensive bottle on release ever sold. We're talking about the 30,000, 27,000 pounds bottle for 2015, you know, on release. It means that it's not being aged or anything, it's not vintage, it's not, you know. Limited edition to 500 bottles, of course, uh, incredible wine. What happened is that, uh, we see, he simply called me, uh, through a friend of mine called Sasha Alexander Lushnikov who's one of the founders of the Golden Vines, that we're going to talk about. Uh, so he asked, listen, he needs to make this dinner for 50 guests. He has, you know, in the cellar, in his, you know, where he makes the wine, but he has nothing there. So we need to go there and build the kitchen and build the dining room. So, in a week we, we built the place up, considering there was a lot of work, a lot of, a lot of lots, a lot of work to do because of course, you know, amazing, uh, uh, wine, a winery in the countryside in France. It's not, I cannot say it's very luxury most of the time. You know what I mean? It's not even, we're not talking about Chateau d`Yquem. We're not talking about DRC. It's a rural company that makes exceptional wine. That's what Liber Pater is. Uh, you know, I went to visit d`Yquem, uh, after, you know, during the visit and the, you can see this massive luxury estate. It's beautiful, but you know, two different worlds, Liber Pater, Loïc is a genius that makes mind blowing wine in his boutique winery.

Janina Doyle 00:25:15 Well, he just, literally, when he farms his vines, he goes out him and a mule. And I think he has a plow that's like 150 years old. And that's it. So that's what you're getting. It's insane. Yeah. Did you go into his vineyards?

Andrea Zagatti 00:25:30 Absolutely yes. We went there and we picked some grapes. We tried the grapes, all different ones and I actually made the risotto with some of the grapes. So yeah, that was really good.

Janina Doyle 00:25:40 So how did you do the risotto? So you picked the grapes....

Andrea Zagatti 00:25:43 It was a risotto with, uh, I mean, it is an escargot risotto. Uh, so escargot, snails and, um, I picked the grapes, sour grapes. So they were not ripe. And I made like a reduction of it. Some of his 2015. So I used some of the 2015 plus some grapes. And I made a sauce out of the, you know, out of the wine, I will call it a red grapes reduction, the most expensive red wine reduction ever made in the world of course, but, uh, that's how you finish the risotto with it. So you do a parmesan cream, escargot, uh, parsley, parsley oil, and red wine reduction. It was mind blowing,

Janina Doyle 00:26:32 But I hear it in his vineyards. Like he plants at super high density, like very often for people to understand what high density is. We're talking like 10,000 vines per hectare. He doubles that at like 20,000 vines per hectare. I don't even, I've never been in a vineyard like that. So that must be, that's why I was asking you, had you been in there? Cause that's just....

Andrea Zagatti 00:26:50 It's unique and it's also very natural. You can see insects coming and going, you know, he lets nature be nature, you know, uh, he doesn't interfere, intervene with it and uh, it's, it's something unique compared to every other place that I've explored in the world.

Janina Doyle 00:27:08 Fantastic. So you made this reduction with the, um, with the grapes, obviously they were showcasing the 2015 wine, which you had, I assume, at least a full glass.

Andrea Zagatti 00:27:18 Yeah. I have three bottles in my house.

Janina Doyle 00:27:23 Still?

Andrea Zagatti 00:27:26 Yes. I drink it every once in a while. Uh it's it's really good.

Janina Doyle 00:27:30 Oh. I've never had a Liber Pater wine for obvious reasons.

Andrea Zagatti 00:27:35 Uh, of course, Liber Pater, you either buy it or you're lucky enough to try it or see the bottle. Let's say that.

Janina Doyle 00:27:41 Is his wines quite concentrated and powerful? Cause I know they're very low yielding or actually is it still quite a classic, um, earthy, savory kind of dry style of Bordeaux? Where would you put his wine?

Andrea Zagatti 00:27:55 It's very difficult to describe it. So the 15 in this case, uh, has a unique experience because the grapes that he uses, the techniques that he uses, it cannot be compared to any other Bordeaux wine. Uh, that's my point of view. Unfortunately. It's, it's very difficult to go to describe, very different to describe.

Janina Doyle 00:28:19 All right. Okay. So you've mentioned about the Golden Vine Awards, which you helped organize. This is, I just hope people who were thinking about like, should I go into Cheffing and whatever, you are going to inspire people right today? So what was your part in organizing the Golden Vines Award?

Andrea Zagatti 00:28:36 So of course, you know, for the people that don't know what Golden Vines Awards where, uh, you know, how can we describe them, the first noble of fine wine?

Janina Doyle 00:28:48 Yeah. So Gerard Basset for anybody who doesn't know, look him up. In fact, when I passed my WSET diploma, you get to go on stage and somebody important in the wine industry, basically hands you your certificate. I was very lucky that Gerard Basset was the person. Yeah. So, you

know, it just, it feels special to have had, yeah, I mean the tiniest of interaction with him, but, you know, he is superb. And for anyone who doesn't know, he is the only person in the world to have a Master of Wine and be a Master Sommelier. Along with that, he has an OBE and an MSC and, uh, an MBA. He was world's best Sommelier. You know, he was the owner of the TerraVina hotels down in the New Forest. And he's just an incredible, he was an incredible human being and people should definitely look him up. And he sadly died in 2019 at 61 with cancer. Anyway, his wonderful wife used, they were very much about diversity. Um, and he was a foreigner that came into England and had to really work his way up. And so this whole like foundation that they've set up is to raise money, to fund diversity, inclusion in the wine industry. And so, yes, there's amazing awards go around to all these wonderful wineries, people, celebrities, everyone turns up, people basically are spending money at, it was Christie's that hosted the thank you, that hosted the auction and the most popular lot... Do you know what the most popular lot that sold?

Andrea Zagatti 00:30:22 Tell me.

Janina Doyle 00:30:23 You don't know?

Andrea Zagatti 00:30:24 I must probably know, but I want you to say it.

Janina Doyle 00:30:25 Yeah, it's a Liber Pater 2011, 18 liter bottle. It did come with lunch and a tour of the Graves estate.

Andrea Zagatti 00:30:34 It also, I don't know if you know that, but, uh, the, it was sold one minute to the end of the auction. So one minute before the end, we received the offer and it was incredible. Yeah. £90,000. Correct. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:30:50 Insane. Okay. So I've led you in, I've explained what the Golden Vine Awards are. So tell me about being there on the night.

Andrea Zagatti 00:30:56 So of course, you know, we've been working on the project for over a year and a half. That's something important to understand. Uh, lots of details, uh, to organize considering his non-profit events, uh, you know, it was, it was intense and there was a lot of organization, but the beneficial and the foundation that we built is, is exceptional. The potential that it will give into, you know, to all the community of Sommeliers. And, uh, you know, the source, the access that we're giving it's unique. My role in the Golden Vines, rather than the mind that created it, which is Alexander Lushnikov and Lewis Chester, uh, from Liquid Icons. You know, it was to, you know, help me connect with them with as many people as possible, help them choose the venue, help them choose the... all sorts of things. So for example, I put them in touch with Mauro Colagreco, the head chef of Mirazur, the 2019 best restaurant in the world. So I simply, you know, simply give him a call and talked to him about the project and got him on board to make a lunch for us at The Connaught Hotel, uh, to make a dinner for us at Annabelle's. And, uh, you know, already trying to find the money when needed, uh, the best, one of the best chefs in the world to cook for us, because we're going to have the best wines in the world. And having Mauro Colagreco was exceptional, really, really good. And, um, this year I was unofficially part of the Golden Vines. So organizing the Golden Vines, but next year is going to be officially. This is good.

Janina Doyle 00:32:31 So let's see what happens next year.

Andrea Zagatti 00:32:33 It's going to be even better. Of course, but this year was mind blowing. Kylie Minogue became singing, which was exceptional. We had an amazing host that we had, in the wines, were absolutely incredible.

Janina Doyle 00:32:47 Okay. So what did you, so you started with Dom Perignon P2 2003.

Andrea Zagatti 00:32:53 Correct. We actually, we actually started with Dom Perignon as an aperitivo. Then we started, then we went with Dom Perignon P2.

Janina Doyle 00:33:00 So for anybody who doesn't know what Dom Perignon P2 is, and there's also a P3 as well, it basically the P stands for apparently plenitude. So Dom Perignon, just to understand it's always a vintage, the chef de cave, he kind of believes that Dom Perignon, it kind of matures in cycles. So you have like these different peaks of maturity. So the first release always gets released after seven years aging on the lees. That's effectively a P1, but it's not labeled that way. It's just the standard. Then you have P2, which is what was drunk and that's aged, so that will be from that same vintage, but they leave it longer. So it's 12 years lees aging. And then there is a P3, which is 20 years lees aging. But the 12 years lees aging for anyone that, you know, the creaminess, the richness, anyone who's not aware of what lees can do, the autolysis and the flavors that come with that in champagne, you get this kind of really, the brioche, the, the biscuit. And it would have just been so intensified, but also incredibly fresh because the lees also stops the wine from oxygenating. So I can't, oh, I'm jealous. I'm jealous that you had the Dom Perignon P2. Yum.

Andrea Zagatti 00:34:11 We started with a Dom Perignon, Dom Perignon P2. Then we jumped into Egon Müller 2015, which was an incredible wine, creamy, nutty, a bit sweet. And, uh, I just had a kind 12 glasses of it. Of course I had to, I had to try it. I had to try it again.

Janina Doyle 00:34:31 For anybody who doesn't know about Egon Müller. I mean, this is one of the highest respected wineries in Germany. They focus really on Riesling, they have some ungrafted vines. Um, so, and in fact, many of the wineries won awards on that night and the Egon Müller won, the fine wine producer in Europe, didn't they? So check them out for sure. Okay. So you loved that. Again, I've not had, I've not had any Egon Müller.

Andrea Zagatti 00:34:59 Or you have to try it. It's mind blowing, mind blowing. And, uh, of course after Egon Müller, what can come? Domaine de la Romanee Conti Grands Échezeaux 2005. And, uh, I had to try quite a few glasses of that too. I had to double check that it was actually nice, you know?

Janina Doyle 00:35:21 I mean, DRC I've only ever had a, not even a full glass. I've had a sip, you know, as a Sommerlied, opening up a bottle quickly checking it's okay. And taking it to a customer, which is just not the same. Exactly. But for anyone who doesn't know about DRC, I mean, this is, these are the largest owners of red wine grand crus. They have the monopoles in La Romanée-conti, La Tache. They're known as The Domain aren't they? These guys, one of the most, in fact, one of my episodes, just before, I talked about counterfeit, wine fraud, fake wines, and I mean, DRC wines are basically one of those counterfeited wines in the world for obvious reasons, because they are incredibly desirable, incredibly rare, incredibly expensive. So yes, of course you had quite a few glasses.

Andrea Zagatti 00:36:09 It was a really good to be honest.

Janina Doyle 00:36:10 How was that moment? How does that compare as a, as a Pinot Noir, you know, drinking Pinot Noir in that moment, do you feel like you're not even drinking Pinot Noir, you feel like you're drinking something...

Andrea Zagatti 00:36:19 You feel like drinking your DRC, uh, you know, it the same way that you are drinking Liber Pater, you are drinking DRC. It's another level. Uh, it's another refinement. Uh, it's very light, but it's also very aromatic, but it's also a very intense, you know, when you swallow it. So it's a multilayered wine, um. DRC, uh, I had the, you know, the pleasure to try it, quite a few vintages, but you know, La Tache and Grands Échezeaux, there are my favorites and 2005 is a solid, solid, solid vintage for DRC.

Janina Doyle 00:36:55 It is, isn't it. Yes. Um, for many actual regions in France, in fact, and then after that, you had a little sticky didn't you?

Andrea Zagatti 00:37:02 Oh well after that, came a little, little surprise, which was one of the only three liters available of 1988 Château d'Yquem.

Janina Doyle 00:37:14 So they put it in large format?

Andrea Zagatti 00:37:16 Yes. And it does, I mean, if you look for it up for sale, it does not exist. So you can not find the three liters, 88. So Pierre Luton brought one from his own cellar for us. And he was absolutely incredible. I loved, I love d'Yquem. You have to understand that I love d'Yquem and I can drink a bottle of d'Yquem by myself, without any problems.

Janina Doyle 00:37:41 Well, what would you have Château d'Yquem with, if you had, you had to put some food, obviously a dessert, what would you pair with it?

Andrea Zagatti 00:37:47 Um, Pear tarte tatin.

Janina Doyle 00:37:52 Okay. Very nice. I can understand.

Andrea Zagatti 00:37:54 Pear tarte tatin and Château d'Yquem or if you want to go another way around, Chestnut and dark chocolate.

Janina Doyle 00:38:02 Ah, that's an interesting one. I like how you're, I would never think to pair well, not never, but I wouldn't ideally think to take a Sauternes and pair it with chocolate, but I like how you're putting it with Chestnut, so then that's nuttiness...hey, that's an interesting combination.

Andrea Zagatti 00:38:17 It's really good. Pairing cream or just with chocolate with a d'Yquem. They go perfectly. Very different flavors, but they go super well with each other.

Janina Doyle 00:38:25 Oh. So anyone who doesn't know about Château d'Yquem, it's the, in the 1855 classification of Bordeaux, there was only one Sauternes to be like the premier, premier, the Cru Superier wine, and have the top classification. And it was the only one. And still today it is known as, it's fair to say the best, the best? It's definitely one of the best. And possibly many people would say the best dessert wine in the world, right?

Andrea Zagatti 00:38:51 Oh yeah. That is, it is indeed. I've tried a lot of dessert wines, uh, that I love, you know, I've been to Pantelleria, an Island in Italy where you have the Passito from Pantelleria. Mind

blowing experience. But when drink d'Yquem, you drink d'Yquem and there's nothing to say about it. It's the best dessert wine in the world.

Janina Doyle 00:39:11 There, you have it, ladies and gentlemen, the best sticky in the world. You now know where to go.

Janina Doyle 00:39:20 We will be continuing the conversation with Andrea next week. And as he is from Emilia-Romagna, we'll be focusing on that region a little bit. And of course, one of the most famous wines from Emilia-Romagna: Lambrusco and no, it's not all sweet. And yes, you need to know about this wine. Plus of course, we'll be talking more about luxurious foods and some perfect wine pairings to go with it. Now to finish off, I have a wine quote from John Michael Broadbent, who was a Master of Wine. In fact, he was the 24th person in the world to get that recognition back in the 1960s. And it was that decade that he's best known for restarting the Christie's wine auctions. So it seemed quite apt to mention him on this episode. He certainly passed away last year, but at the grand old age of 92, leaving behind an incredible legacy. He was a wine critic. He has written amazing articles. And just one little sentence of his says:

“Drinking good wine with good food in good company is one of life's most civilized pleasures.”

Yes, John. Yes, it is. Thank you as always for tuning in. I absolutely appreciate from the bottom of my heart, you listening. For those of you leaving comments and emailing me and contacting me. It's fantastic. Remember, you can always send an email janina@eatsleepwinerepeat.co.uk, or find me on Instagram [@eatsleep_winerepeat](https://www.instagram.com/eatsleep_winerepeat). Do like the episode, share the episode with your wine loving friends, make sure you have subscribed. If you haven't already, you do not want to miss an episode. And until next week where I take you to Italy, cheers to you.