

Ep 93: Cider is Wine (Part 2) with Alistair Morrell



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 and welcome back to part two with Alistair Morrell. So we are continuing our conversations into cider and perrys, fruit juices. Now stay with us. I'm gonna be tasting a cider made with Cabernet Franc grapes. So for those of you who are into your sparkling wines, specifically Pét-Nat, Pétillant Naturels, this is an amazing cider for you to try so you need to know about it. Now we're gonna talk out the drink Melomel. Now do you know what that is? I certainly didn't until this episode. We'll talk about key regions in the world for cider. What do mature trees bring to apples? A little bit of history talking about some cider museums that you may want to go and explore. Wild yeasts. Ice cider. We'll talk about when it was first created and then of course, different styles of this category, the pioneers, and because this is a wine podcast and Alistair has been in the wine industry for decades. I have got him to pinpoint some of his favorite wines and or wineries that have inspired him that hopefully you then may want to go off and try. So I hope you enjoy the second part, grab yourself a glass of cider or perry, and let's get to the chat.

Janina Doyle 00:01:58 So question, are there better apples? Let's talk about apples here. You know, we talk, you talked about pears being the Pinot Noir. Um, we obviously have all these different varieties in the wine world that have so many different flavors. Obviously everybody knows a Granny Smith, apple, and a Golden Delicious apple, are completely different actually. So, and there you go, that's where my apple knowledge stops. But, you know, are there specific apples that people use?

Alistair Morrell 00:02:27 Oh definitely. I mean, there's apples that, uh, make a difference and have made their mark. Um, but I think it's interesting for people to know that, uh, in the first instance there are about 60,000 different apple varieties in the world.

Janina Doyle 00:02:41 Oh okay. So how many of them can you name?

Alistair Morrell 00:02:44 Yeah, exactly. Well, I, I thought that comparison is interesting with, with grapes because there are about 10,000 grape varieties in the world and about a thousand of those are produced commercially. Uh, whereas with cider, we don't really know how many are produced commercially. There's certainly a huge amount and this country is a tremendous base of knowledge about, uh, cider and cider making apples. Um, I certainly know one estate Welsh mountain that we work with. Um, I think they have over 500 different, uh, apple varieties on their, uh, land, in the highest

orchard in the, in the UK. And there are things like Kingston Black, Dabinett, uh, Yarlington Mill, all of which, uh, are notable apple varieties.

Janina Doyle 00:03:32 Yes, yes. I knew them. I knew them... I didn't.

Alistair Morrell 00:03:35 Browns, Ellis bitters. Um, I mean there are, and there's some absolutely incredible names as well.

Janina Doyle 00:03:43 And I suppose a cider maker would pick maybe some because perhaps the skins would be maybe thicker. So you might give more tannins. Some they might wanna go with more acidity or they might. Yeah?

Alistair Morrell 00:03:56 Absolutely. But there is a distinction, uh, between dessert, apples and cider making apples as well. Um, so dessert apples. Yes, are the things that we know and love the, whether it's Pink ladies or Bramleys or Coxes or Russets, these are, these are dessert apples typically. Um, and then there's a whole world of cider making apples that we wouldn't come across just because they're not particularly nice to eat on their own, and, um, and they, they are, as you exactly say, too acidic, too tannic, um, too sharp, uh, for, for, for eating in that way. However, for cider making, they're absolutely brilliant because we need all of that acidity and tannin, um, for the structure of the drink and it shows the fruit off to the best, uh, best effect. Whereas if you use dessert apples, you have a tendency to have really low acidity and a rather flabby sort of drink. Um, and, uh..

Janina Doyle 00:04:57 Yeah, we don't like flabby. We don't like flabby.

Alistair Morrell 00:04:59 No, we don't like flabby, no.

Janina Doyle 00:05:00 So, let me pour the next one. And I'm very excited about this one, because this is the by Berryland. It's a 2020 vintage, and this is, it says Cabernet Franc apple cider, brut. So they, what do they do with Cabernet Franc, the grape variety?

Alistair Morrell 00:05:22 Um, well, this is fascinating. I mean, this is from the Ukraine and we all know the dreadful news that we've had from there in the last, uh, few weeks. Well, we are donating 10% of our sales, our Berryland sales to the Ukraine, UK-Ukraine, um, aid charity to support them. We just felt the, uh, with a Ukrainian range in our midst, then, uh we had to do something because the, it is just shocking, upsetting and, uh, and really rather unnecessary, but what can we do? Well, we can do something. So we, we are doing something to support them.

Janina Doyle 00:05:59 Amazing. Okay. So these wonderful Ukrainians are producing this interesting cider and I, can I just point out to everybody it is red. So in my glass, apart from the froth, it is just, it's exactly the color you would see if you were pouring a Cabernet Franc into your glass, or probably a little bit lighter, actually.

Alistair Morrell 00:06:20 That color and that description, the frothiness of it. I, I think rather signals, uh, and wets the appetite for what is to become. It always makes me think of Beaujolais. You know, Beaujolais was always described as that foaming kind of red frothy purple red juice that's coming. And that, that, that in, in, in the first instance, that's what, what comes to you. However, when we move on to the actual smell and the taste and the aroma, I love this. I love this drink. I mean, this is just...

Janina Doyle 00:06:51 It's stunning.

Alistair Morrell 00:06:53 This takes us to another place altogether.

Janina Doyle 00:06:55 We've gone up slightly. This is a live little bit of sweetness. Like it's, it's just off dry. Like, I mean, again, it's not sweet for anyone, but again, there's just a touch of sweetness isn't there right at the, at the end.

Alistair Morrell 00:07:06 Just by taste. Yes. But by, by making process, no, it's a Brut cider and they make this by taking Cabernet Franc grapes. They crush them into juice. They take their, the apples, they crush them into juice and they ferment them together. Now this is not the way that co ferments are done in this country, mostly for tax reasons, um, I can explain. And you end up with this wonderful foaming, bright frothy red drink with how wonderful umami. I, you know, I get this lovely sort of savory saltiness from this, uh...

Janina Doyle 00:07:43 I get a smokey, again, smokey nature for me.

Alistair Morrell 00:07:46 Really. And, and, and I, you can tell the Cabernet Franc and the apple, uh, constituent parts, cause you get that leafy, say smokey nature from the Cabernet Franc

Janina Doyle 00:07:56 Leaves, that's crushed leaves. Absolutely.

Alistair Morrell 00:07:59 Um, but at the same time you have the structure of the apples, uh, the acidity, the framework, if you like around this Cabernet Franc. Flavors just dance around the palette. Uh, and, and the finish that is incredibly long. Um, I mean, I, I, again, my mind goes crazy when I think about the sort of food matching that we can do here. I think it's, uh, really, uh, huge. And um,

Janina Doyle 00:08:28 I think like, sorry, I'm just gonna interrupt you. I was just gonna say things like pheasant, duck, rabbit. I would be looking at those kind of more, like gamey gamier meats. I think it could really work.

Alistair Morrell 00:08:40 Absolutely. I think that those are brilliant suggestions. Um, and, and, you know, the Ukraine is the second year largest country in Europe and really should be the bread basket of Europe as well. I mean, it has, it can grow just about anything. It's got a, a really continental climate. They have every sort of season within the, within the country there, uh, and, uh, hot, cold, um, and, and a wonderful ability to grow fruit and, um, uh, and, and horticulture in general. Uh, and, and I think, you know, it demonstrates in this drink, I think it's a wonderfully, uh, different, uh, drink that is still just so utterly drinkable, um, and implores you to drink.

Janina Doyle 00:09:25 Absolutely. It's beautiful. You've got that smoky nature. A little bit of herb. I'll get some thyme, maybe a little bit of Sage in this. So again, the fact that I'm picking out those herbs, any kind of, you know, if you were, are put getting your, I don't know, pheasant dish, and you're making some roast potatoes and you throw on a whole load of fresh herbs, it's gonna work. Um, but it, it, I think for anybody who quite likes, um, Pét-Nats, with the fact that a lot of them are made with red grape varieties and they have this kind of frothiness, but they're actually a lot of the time, very savory and quite dry because of course they only have that fermentation once in bottle. This is potentially the closest thing, which is kind of interesting if people kind of say, I'm not ready for cider, or I just don't really want the green apple flavor. I don't want any of that. I mean, this, this is almost its own category in itself. It's so different, right?

Alistair Morrell 00:10:12 Yeah, absolutely. And, and this is where cider meets wine, wine meets cider, um, there's a crossover. Uh, is, is it one thing or the other, well, it's probably a bit of both, but one thing it is, on its own is just a sensational drink. Uh, that's really surprising and delights.

Janina Doyle 00:10:32 How much is this one?

Alistair Morrell 00:10:33 This is 13, uh, 13 pounds

Janina Doyle 00:10:36 Still nothing, again. And it's 7 to 7... I love this it's 7 to 7.5%. So we don't, we don't know, it could be 7.2 could be 7.3, but it's somewhere around that range. I like that. It's like, mheh!

Alistair Morrell 00:10:50 Yeah. I mean, a wonderful, a wonderful drink and a wonderful array of products from Berryland as well. We have rhubarb Melomel. Do you know what Melomel is?

Janina Doyle 00:11:00 Um, I'm gonna pretend I do, but explain for everyone else.

Alistair Morrell 00:11:04 So for your information, Janina, cause everyone else knows really don't they. Um, but seriously, uh, Melomel is where, uh, I didn't know what Melomel was until last year. Uh, and it's where fruit wine meets, um, Mead, um, because we have a rhubarb and an apricot Melomel in our range and they are a hundred percent from the fruit, from the fresh fruit fermented with local honey to augment the sugar that's there, and they are utterly delicious. I, they're just fantastic. They taste of the real fruit and that might sound ridiculous. But, uh, when you taste some of the horrible kind of flavor mixes that come out in, I don't know, ciders, different drinks. Some the concocted things, you know, these are the return to the actual fruit. You get that real raspingness of the, of the rhubarb, it's a dry drink. And yet it gives you an impression of a certain amount of, of sweetness. Fantastic match for smoked salmon. Uh, the apricot is totally beguiling as well. You get that rich, intense apricot, uh, uh, flavor and yet totally dry. So they really, urgh.

Janina Doyle 00:12:25 How exciting. You know, like you, you are, you are demonstrating that there's really so many different, uh, drinks. This, this is a drinks category that I think many people haven't really even gone down into. And so, and it sounds great. It's exciting.

Alistair Morrell 00:12:39 It's very exciting, indeed. A whole new world that we, we never even knew was there.

Janina Doyle 00:12:45 A whole new world. Can I just, can I just ask you finishing off with Berryland, it says from mature trees. So I, I mean, oh, the, the tree being older maybe affects the, just like with vines and older vine, it can concentrate the flavors? It can, roots go down deeper, takes more nutrients and minerals, is this the same kind of thing?

Alistair Morrell 00:13:09 Maybe, I'm also intrigued by this subject. And I ask around, um, our makers and so on because there isn't a lot of published, uh, uh, information available about this. And from what I can gather then older trees, um, don't make a huge amount of difference in terms of the actual quality level of the fruit, the, the intensity of the fruit. Uh, they have, they're much more, much longer lived. Um, they don't grow exponentially in the same way that vines, you know, a vine is a weed, isn't it? I mean, it will grow for as many tentacles as it possibly can for as long as it can, if it's allowed to. Whereas a, an apple tree or a pear tree, will kind of get to a, a mature growth stage where it probably won't grow that much bigger any further. And that's why we end up with 100 and 200 year old pear trees. And, uh,

and so on, we know that we know that there are, uh, growers within our midst that, uh, with our range that, uh, that, that age of tree. Um, so I don't think it's true to the same extent, no. What is true is that they are, uh, biennial croppers. So we end up with a cycle where one year will be really low and the next year will be really a, a very strong crop, but that's not to suggest that there's any dilution going on. It's how the tree operates. And we know that that, that happens in grapes too, but to a much lesser extent, it's not quite the same.

Janina Doyle 00:14:43 So conclusion, mature trees: Good. How good? Don't know. But yeah, still worth mentioning.

Alistair Morrell 00:14:51 Yes. Yeah. More, more information in the future.

Janina Doyle 00:14:55 Well, we are developing this category. I say we cause I'm, I'm joining you now.

Alistair Morrell 00:15:00 You are indeed joining us.

Janina Doyle 00:15:01 We are developing it. Now, I am onto the next one, cause I am thirsty. La Petite Grange du Cidre 2020 and our new word keeved. This is Keeved cider.

Alistair Morrell 00:15:16 It is indeed. And, and uh, this is a sensational drink from Llanblethian Orchards in south Wales.

Janina Doyle 00:15:23 Oh, sorry. So I didn't even mention their name. Oh.

Alistair Morrell 00:15:26 Llanblethian Orchards, uh, by the wonderful Alex Simmons, uh, small orchardist and grower and, and maker. Um, but very, uh, experimental. There aren't many Keevers left in the UK. I mean, Keeving used to be a really strong part of the UK industry. And by the way, the UK cider industry is the biggest in the world. We make 40% of the world cider and we drink 40%.

Janina Doyle 00:15:51 Do we? I was gonna say what, what, I mean actually, sorry, I'm just gonna cut you off. Cause I have so many questions. I mean, we are obviously then the key region for cider. I kind of thought that, but that's because I just live here, doesn't mean I have any knowledge. Um, where else, I mean, where is the other, I know that we've tasted some wine now from, from Spain, from New Zealand, from France, but I mean, are they the key regions?

Alistair Morrell 00:16:15 Uh, to, to a degree? Yes. I mean, Germany is quite strong. Eastern Europe's quite strong. Uh, it's the second fastest growing drink in, in the United States. Um, set about alcoholic, uh, drink growing in the United States. So it's, it's got some strong, uh, regrowth there, but we forget that cider in this country was the, was the drink of choice uh, 200 years ago. It was the drink of nobility.

Janina Doyle 00:16:42 So you've born, you've born too late.

Alistair Morrell 00:16:45 Born too late.

Janina Doyle 00:16:46 Yeah. Never mind. You're bringing it back. You're bringing... yes.

Alistair Morrell 00:16:49 We could be reborn as well. I mean, there's, there's naissance and there's renaissance, isn't there.

Janina Doyle 00:16:54 Ah, there you go and that, and we know which stage we are in.

Alistair Morrell 00:17:00 Yes. Um, so I, I, uh, you know, I think it's about time that we got back to that state where cider was, uh, looked up to, was respected. There was, uh, was actually appreciated on the same level of wine. It's only when that cheap, dirty French wine came in that we actually started drinking wine, as opposed to, as opposed to cider.

Janina Doyle 00:17:20 You might have upset a few, you might, a few people might have switched off now.

Alistair Morrell 00:17:24 Yeah. And uh, yeah, we've, we've kind of got things top turvy. And if you go to the cider museum in Ledbury in Herefordshire...

Janina Doyle 00:17:32 Oh there's a cider museum?

Alistair Morrell 00:17:34 There's a cider museum. Um, they're actually, uh, based in the old Bulmer's offices and they, the brothers Bulmer went out to champagne in, uh, the late 19th century and came back and dug a champagne cellar. And that's where the cider museum is today. And this is, is a champagne cellar for all the tea in China, uh, for all the apples in Southwest England. Uh, it is a champagne cellar, but in Ledbury, Herefordshire, it's amazing. There's Pupitres, chalk cellars, it's, I mean, it is. Yeah, it's quite incredible. So the point being, that the family Bulmer, the family Bulmer, despite being responsible for, um, some rather big brand, uh, made from concentrate ciders, um, uh, it was actually had a, a mind to recreate champagne from apples, uh, in the late 19th century. And indeed we did invent the champagne method. Um, well, before Dom Perignon stepped a foot into, into a Northern French, uh, cellar.

Janina Doyle 00:18:35 There's a whole history there isn't there?

Alistair Morrell 00:18:38 We have a huge amount of history and heritage that we just don't celebrate.

Janina Doyle 00:18:42 Yeah. We created the strong heavy bottles didn't we.

Alistair Morrell 00:18:44 Indeed.

Janina Doyle 00:18:45 The French, theirs was just all exploding and popping, but that is for another podcast. So this one I have, I can see the sticker on it. It won gold in the IWSC, uh, 2021 tasting.

Alistair Morrell 00:18:59 It won gold and Llanblethian won the IWSC trophy um, last year. Uh, the, our first trophy awarded absolutely, uh, superb, I mean, lovely, rich peachy style fruit, uh, you know, again, broader than apple, so much broader than apples. 3.9% alcohol. I mean, get that.

Janina Doyle 00:19:21 3.9?

Alistair Morrell 00:19:23 And yet...

Janina Doyle 00:19:23 Does it say that on the bottle?

Alistair Morrell 00:19:24 And that, and yet, it's such a complete drink. It is really...

Janina Doyle 00:19:28 Wow. It actually, okay. That is impressive. Oh, and just for anyone who has a dirty mind like mine, they use the apples Golden knob. Okay. But anyway, there is...

Alistair Morrell 00:19:41 Wonderful name. There's some wonderful, wonderful flavors in this. Uh, it's not dry, but it's not sweet.

Janina Doyle 00:19:49 No, it's off dry plus. I, that's where I'm putting, I wouldn't even go medium sweet, but it's definitely now it's the sweetest we've tasted so far.

Alistair Morrell 00:19:57 Um, and that's the, that's what the keiving does for, for it. But it's a wonderful drink. And, um, it's something that Nigel Barden talked about on, uh, greatest hits radio with Simon Mayo just a week or so ago. And, um, they loved it, um, thought it was really fantastic as well so.

Janina Doyle 00:20:13 It's brilliant. It has a really tannic body. It's actually probably the grippiest one they've had so far, but then it has this wonderful sweetness and then it's got this beautiful kind of, I'm not sure. Fresh nectarine, maybe orange skin, maybe an orange zestiness to it. It's it's quite, is it pithy? I mean, I it's, it's quite hard to... it's super lively. No, it, I wouldn't go pithy. It's actually quite clean at the same time. It's just more grippy because of the tannins, but it's got a lot of structure. Very, very interesting. I mean, this would probably be really nice with, again, because of the grippiness it's just taken me all the way to, you know, your game meat, but maybe like duck a l'orange because of that orange flavor, you know, or something with a sweeter sauce.

Alistair Morrell 00:21:03 Yeah. I mean that, that's, that's, again, it is where takes me to Southeast Asia when I think of, of dishes that, um, you know, could be, uh, on the, a, a lighter chicken sort of dish with a lighter curry, uh, um, spices, or it could be a, uh, a Chinese more powerful, slightly more powerful Chinesey, um, type of, uh, dish or, uh, maybe, uh, Singapore noodles, uh, with them.

Janina Doyle 00:21:37 Yeah, with a whole load of color, some pork thrown in there, a load of chili in there. Actually the Singapore noodles is the one, I like that because it's, I dunno, because of the tannin and the structure, I personally would prefer something less creamy. That's not, I not say it's not gonna go with creamy dishes cause the acidity is high, but something like Singapore noodles, which is actually drier. Dunno, just feels like that would really like, like for like, um, how much would this be?

Alistair Morrell 00:22:02 Uh, so that is £9.99 and it's a bargain. There's a limited amount of stuff available of that as well. We only have, um, I, I think about 60 bottles, so it's, um, it's not gonna last forever.

Janina Doyle 00:22:16 Now on, I like so far, not all of them have had full, full information, but there's actually a lot more information on the back of these bottles, or front than actual typical wine bottles. And this specific one is brilliant. It's saying the batch number. Also mentions that it's using wild yeasts.

Alistair Morrell 00:22:34 Yes.

Janina Doyle 00:22:34 So again, that brings me to yeast in general. So obviously they're just using the yeasts that come in from the apples and the ambient environment of the cidery. What you call it, what you call the, what you call a winery, for cider. A cidery?

Alistair Morrell 00:22:49 Yeah. A cidery. Yeah. Yep. Yes, it really is. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:22:53 Okay. Good, good, good, good tick. Um, so of course that's what the wild yeast is, obviously here. Is it in all of these wines? Are they, is it a mix? Some of them are using specifically bought yeasts?

Alistair Morrell 00:23:08 Yeah. Uh, so you can use cultured yeast. Typically many would use champagne yeast.

Janina Doyle 00:23:15 Okay. That's....

Alistair Morrell 00:23:16 A, a known well known, uh, strain used in wine making. Uh, but many use. I mean, there is a natural bent to many of these cider makers, uh, and producers because, uh, because they wanted come back to something that was more authentic, more real, you know, whether you're talking about Mark McGill in New Zealand or, or Adam Bland in, uh, in Normandy or Alex who really comes from the land in the first place, uh, then they really want to, uh, do, be doing something that's, uh, connected to that real authentic, uh, proposition, um, and the fruit itself. So.

Janina Doyle 00:23:54 I'm, I, I said to you that you had to convince me at the beginning of the other episode last week, but I have to say the, just, just tasting how different every, every single one is, seeing the personality, the difference in tannin structure, the difference in sweetness levels, the difference in flavors, I said to you, I thought they're all taste like apple. Um, and now, and now, okay. I, this is the one I'm most excited about because I love a good ice wine. Eiswein. And this is ice cider. This is from Brännland who you were talking about in the first episode. They were the cidery, I wanna say winery. The cidery that you used to do this wonderful cider maker's dinner. This is I think, yeah, it's just simple ice cider, 2019, right? 9.5% alcohol guys. This is the most, this is the highest alcohol. And it's a half bottle. So 375ml, as you would expect from many dessert wines. They're half bottles. So tell me about this ice cider.

Alistair Morrell 00:25:00 So ice cider is a new invention, really. Ice cider was created in late eighties by a guy called Barthomeuf, in Canada, Quebec, Canada. Ice wine is a bit of a thing in Canada. They love their ice wine.

Janina Doyle 00:25:16 Literally a few, a few episodes ago. I've just released, um, a whole episode on ice wine.

Alistair Morrell 00:25:22 Yeah. So, uh, you know, ice wine, uh, released, came to the four in the mid 18th, mid 19th century, Germany and Austria, uh, and, uh, got ahold in Canada in the 1970s, uh, and eighties. And Barthomeuf, is a leading producer of ice wine. And then he said, Hmm, but I've got an orchard. What am I gonna do with that orchard? Huh? You know what? I'm gonna make ice cider. And that's what it did. And then in 1995, they actually legislated AOC style in Quebec for Ice cider and how you make it. So it's got, the apples have gotta come from Quebec. Uh, they've gotta achieve a certain level of, uh, natural sweetness in the, when they're harvested. They've gotta be made naturally cold. And this is an interesting area of, of discussion. Uh, naturally cold means that either you've gotta take the apple from the tree frozen and press it, and bear in mind. It, you know, in Quebec it gets pretty cold in winter, minus 30 is not unusual by any stretch of the imagination. And that's pretty difficult thing to do, not many producers do it. Um, or you take the fruit, fruit from the tree as a ripe fruit. You, you, uh, mill it into juice and then you leave your tanks outside to freeze over winter in the natural cold. You can of course, make it by taking it into a commercial freezer and freezing the fruit there or the juice there.

Janina Doyle 00:26:48 Well, I suppose that's never considered, just like the same, you could do that with ice wine, but if you want the most premium and what's considered the best quality it's having it frozen on it vine, frozen on its tree.

Alistair Morrell 00:27:00 And, you know, we have a superb, uh, blueberry ice wine, um, that is made, uh, in that way with, uh, commercially frozen in the freezers, but they actually press the frozen blueberries. Takes about four days for the press to complete its cycle. So, so, so hard. So, um, Andreas makes his ciders because they're at 63, uh, degrees latitude north, then, uh, he makes his ice ciders naturally cold and all they produces ice ciders and he had several goes at it before he was successful in 2012, producing his first commercial 500 bottles. And I have to say, um, it's a reward for the world because it's a true superb drink. Um, served in Michelin star restaurants, um, and, uh, really quite, uh, delicious. Um, again, the acidity is the thing that really stands out as something that holds this drink beautifully together and is the, is the balancing, uh, factor. And it, if you put that alongside, um, any, uh, dessert wine, Sauternes, um, ice wine, you will notice just how refreshing, how inspiring, how invigorating the acidity is in the, uh, in the ice cider. It's really quite delicious.

Commented [JD1]:

Janina Doyle 00:28:20 It's stunning. It's stunning. I have to say like, so funny enough I get the nose is so floral and pretty. I get like marshmallows. Yeah. I get marshmallows, this lovely peachy nature, and then just loads of blossom. It's very floral, very soft. And then on the palate it's like this beautiful apple tart tartin. So it's almost, you've got the baked apples, that concentrated apples and maybe this lovely, beautiful flaky pastry, but then there's also some red fruits in there, like strawberries. And then to sum it all up, it's not got that weightiness, that richness that, um... Yeah. Cloying. Yeah. But then I, yeah, I guess I'll say cloying, fine. But at the same time, that's almost like not giving credit to delicious ice wine. But it, they're, they're thick and they're rich, aren't they ice wines and this actually just dances. So I think you could drink a, you could drink a hell of a lot more. And whereas I think that ice wine often you wanna pair it with something or have a very small glass. You can really play around. I think this probably opens up your category with this one for all the different kind of foods that you could have it with. Um, and definitely take it away, not just from dessert wine, because it's actually so light and bright. Um, what is the residual sugar, do you happen to know?

Alistair Morrell 00:29:44 About 180 grams per liter.

Janina Doyle 00:29:47 Yeah, so I mean, super, super high.

Alistair Morrell 00:29:50 Well, it's about the same as Sauternes.

Janina Doyle 00:29:51 Yeah. It's not like Pedro Ximénez. It's super high in terms of the fact that sweet wine typically can start from say 45, 50 grams. It's nothing like, I think, I think, oh, of the top of my head. Oh God, I think Pedro Ximénez is something like 300 or something. Um, definitely ice wine tends to be more, I think ice wine is actually more like 250, um, 280, something like that.

Alistair Morrell 00:30:12 Can be. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:30:13 Yeah. But this, this sits at a really nice place. Very, very easy drinking. So be warned, it should have a warning sign on it.

Alistair Morrell 00:30:22 Well, uh, when we taste this with customers, they immediate want to know where can I get it? Because it just inspires people just to say, I I've gotta have some, I've just gotta have some it's. Uh, it, it is that sort of level of drink. And, um,

Janina Doyle 00:30:39 This is gonna get drunk tonight.

Alistair Morrell 00:30:40 Quite dreamy.

Janina Doyle 00:30:41 They're all gonna get drunk, but I say this is gonna drunk, get drunk tonight because my partner can't keep his, um, mitts off of sweet wine. So he's, he's a danger, he's a liability. Um, so that won't last. That won't last more than five minutes.

Alistair Morrell 00:30:55 Well we do have magnums available if you'd like.

Janina Doyle 00:30:57 Ohhhhh. Oh God, I got a bit excited then. Okay. How much is this half bottle of ice cider?

Alistair Morrell 00:31:03 So it's 20 pounds.

Janina Doyle 00:31:05 Okay. Totally fine. Totally worth it. Yes. Um, and all of these, you can buy individually, but you also do cases, uh, and even monthly subscriptions right on cideriswine.

Alistair Morrell 00:31:16 Yeah, absolutely. We do monthly subscriptions. Uh, you can pack to pay as little as, uh, 30 pounds, 40 pounds, 50 pounds per month, and, uh, get a delicious, uh, selection of ciders.

Janina Doyle 00:31:28 And learn all about this world. Now, are there any other, we've obviously gone from really dry styles. We've done cider, we've done perry. And then obviously then an ice cider. Is there any other weird and interesting, wonderful styles that is in the cider world that, that we haven't tasted or that you haven't mentioned?

Alistair Morrell 00:31:47 I mean, it's as diverse as the wine world. And so you have, you have as many styles as you would find in wine. Oak aging: yes. That's a thing. Champagne styles, Pét-Nat styles, um, method ancestral is more common in this, uh, area than in the wine area. Um, Rosés, um, co-ferments with, uh, with fresh fruits as well. So, uh, Blackberry blush is one from Templers Choice or the Dabinett Pinot from Once Upon a Tree. That's absolutely fantastic. Um, from Herefordshire and that's fermented with, on Pinot noir skins and quite sensational, you'd be surprised just how much character it it's able to yield from the Pinot noir and yet still retain a, a very firm Dabinett, uh, apple quality. Um, there's there is so much to, uh, to explore, um, and so much different. And we have to kind of, um, also take a step back from the way that we've been so, uh, grape wine focused because there is a diversity of style, a slightly different frame. It's like taking wine, a frame of what wine tastes like, moving it one place to the left or right. And saying, yeah, it's wine, but it, it is slightly different. Um, it does have its own sense of, of place. And that, that really comes back to this, uh, uh, balance of acidity, tannin and, and fruit that comes together, uh, and provides us with a different horizon and a different landscape of, uh, what we might choose to eat and drink and, uh, and a different prospect of, of how we can enjoy this wonderful, uh, terrain.

Janina Doyle 00:33:40 No, absolutely. Now we are very lucky here in the UK. We obviously can go to your website. We can get these ciders and perrys easy peasy. What about in America? Where probably is my second listener base. Are you exporting? Is there a company that you work with there? People?

Alistair Morrell 00:33:57 Yeah, so, I mean, certainly big shout out for Eleanor Leger, at Eden Ciders in Vermont, uh, who we carry a number of their, their, their products, but Eleanor's a real leader or, and pioneer of real cider in this, in the States. And what she produces is just outstanding things like Cinderella's Slipper. I, I mean, I wanna put it up against White Burgundy every single time and it has that ore about it. And that sense of, of style that is just, uh, yeah, unmatchable. Um, but she's also a brilliant

producer of Ice ciders. She mentored Andreas at Brännland and she's been producing Ice ciders for longer than Andreas. Um, and, uh, and of course she can do it all naturally cold in Vermont, uh, right on the Canadian border, by the way. So it's, you know, it's pretty cold up there. Yeah. Uh, so, uh, I mean, Eleanor is someone that we work with in, uh, in the United States. Um, we don't export, uh, at the minute, but Cider is Wine as a mark, as a quality mark has validity around the world. And we want to see British Ciders being great again. And that's, uh, you know, we are not proud of cider as a, as a product, and yet it's our role. We see it as our role to make people proud of, of cider again, and, and to be able to feel proud when we export it to the, to the rest of the world. We can only do that with a standard. We can only do that with a clear, transparent standard of being made from a hundred percent juice, not from, not from concentrate and giving people the choice of being able to, to, to choose, um, a higher quality product. If cider remains as a rather ill-defined product, it will languish, uh, at the bottom of the, of the pile for a long, uh, a long while yet. And, and there's every reason to go and explore these terrific flavors, tastes and, uh, uh, and experiences that we have in the, in the bottles. If you love wine, you're gonna love these.

Janina Doyle 00:35:59 And certainly what you've done on every single bottle is like a little silver hologram. And that's basically the Cider is Wine trust Certificate, should we say. It's a hologram to say that, you know, this is gonna be a hundred percent from the fruit, not from concentrate, and this could be used. I it's obviously being used fully in those wines here in the UK, but this could now start being used gradually across the world. Right.

Alistair Morrell 00:36:24 Yeah. And we, I mean, it's there to allow consumers to be able to recognize it, and so that they know, and they can trust that they're getting a, a, a, a real authentic, uh, experience and drink. Something that's made directly from the fruit and not made messed about with, um, and we really care about, about that within our food and drink, um, selections today. And, um, and that's, uh, that's what we wanted to bring to this category, cause nobody knows about it.

Janina Doyle 00:36:55 And I have to say whilst I've been drinking these I really care to. Now, just because, just to finish off, because this is typically a grape wine podcast. I just want you to perhaps mention a winery or a few wines that, you know, through your years, working in the wine industry have brought you happiness or that stick in your mind. Something people should go out and just try and discover.

Alistair Morrell 00:37:21 Okay. So, um, I did a vintage with Peter Lehmann.

Janina Doyle 00:37:26 Of course.

Alistair Morrell 00:37:27 Okay. In 1989 in the Barossa valley. The Barossa always holds a special classic place in my heart. The '89 was the hottest vintage that they'd ever had there. Got to 40 degrees for 10, 10 straight days there. And we were working 17 hours a day. Um, but I still love the wines from Peter Lehmann and the Stonewell Shiraz that their head wine maker at the time, Andrew Wigan took me to see, um, with, uh, 50 year old vines, really gnarled old vines, is still a sensational, uh, a bottle of wine, amazing for me and, and, and utterly, um, delicious. Uh, Château Lafite Rothschild.

Janina Doyle 00:38:07 Well, yes, everyone can afford the, everyone can afford the Peter Lehmann a little bit more, but yes, yeah, we'll go to Lafite. I said memorable.

Alistair Morrell 00:38:15 I was, I was able to do a vertical tasting of Château Lafite Rothschild, uh, vintages at, uh, at a wine show professional show, um, in, oh about 1997. And I, I was able to get my hands on, uh, a dozen bottles of the '96 and a dozen bottles of the '98. Paid for, I hasten to add, which I shared with my father and I still have, uh, two bottles, uh, left. We've just slowly drunk these over the last, uh, 20 odd years and thoroughly enjoyed them. And what was incredible where they was the difference in style between '96 and '98 was really quite stark. And it was the difference between the new and the old world of wine making. Uh, in, in that time there was a change of wine maker and you can see, you could see the change of style. Grapes hadn't changed, uh, barrels hadn't really changed, the place hadn't really changed, but the winemaker had. So that was really, uh, that was really, uh, very, very interesting indeed. Um, Alsace wines. I always have a, a special place in my heart. I did the 1986 vintage. Uh, Nelson in New Zealand. Um, I mean all of the wineries there, uh, Weingut Seifried, who I did a vintage with, uh, Neudorf vineyards, uh, Tim and Judy Finn were extremely kind to me, um, uh, back in, in the day. Um, and, uh, and I don't get to go back, uh, very often at all. Um, and Glover's vineyard, which I pruned. Um, these places have, have all got, uh, special places in, uh, in my heart. And I would always, uh, uh, you know, gravitate to, if I, if I have the, uh, opportunity to. As far as day to day drinking is, is concerned. I love just different grape varieties where they bring something, uh, different. Uh, I love exploring the different Italian varieties. Of course there are many of them.

Janina Doyle 00:40:12 You'll never stop with that.

Alistair Morrell 00:40:14 No, exactly, exactly. Uh, and, uh, but I, you know, I don't have favorites in that sort of way because...

Janina Doyle 00:40:23 It depends on how you feel.

Alistair Morrell 00:40:25 It's about mood and occasion.

Janina Doyle 00:40:27 What you're eating, who you're with. The wine glass, the temperature, everything.

Alistair Morrell 00:40:31 One of the most fascinating books that I read was Neuroenology by Professor Gordon Sheperd who brought his, his background of neuro science together with, um, his love of food and drink. He also wrote a book called Neurogastronomy and, um, he brought them together, um, to explore what does taste mean to the human mind and how do we experience it?

Janina Doyle 00:40:55 How very interesting. It's a bit of a geeky book.

Alistair Morrell 00:40:58 Yes, it is a very geeky book in actual fact. But it is nonetheless very interesting for, you know, for what it, uh, what it explores. And it, it demonstrates that that taste is, is really all in the mind. And, and it is about every, all of the experiences around us environmentally and internally that really create that taste. Whether it's expectation, whether it's cold or warm, who you are with. Um, but also kind of some of the science about how the nasal passages are connected, um, lead directly to the frontal lobes of the brain. And that's why smell is so immediate, um, for us and takes us back to memories in a flash, because we are wired up in, in that way, where smell evokes that, uh, sense of, uh, of memory very, very quickly indeed, and why it's such a powerful part of tasting experience as well. Um, that's a, probably a very unfair, short preface of the book. Fascinating.

Janina Doyle 00:42:00 Well that, people will have to, people will have to go and read it. Thank you so much, Alistair. I, I think for everyone listening, obviously, sorry that you couldn't taste these ciders and perry with me. You have my assurance, but quite clearly from listening to the passion that Alistair has and understanding that he's done harvest all over the world and worked in the wine industry for decades and still is now here in Cider land, promoting it quite clearly goes to say that there is some fantastic examples in the world of cider. And, um, we all need to get in, on it. Don't we?

Alistair Morrell 00:42:35 Indeed, uh, I hope you're now convinced.

Janina Doyle 00:42:37 Okay. I'm convinced. I'm convinced. That's it? Done. Thanks.

Janina Doyle 00:42:47 Well, I am definitely convinced. Are you? Get in touch with me? Let me know your thoughts either. Send me an email janina@eatsleepwinerepeat.co.uk or a direct message on Instagram [@eatsleep_winerepeat](https://www.instagram.com/eatsleep_winerepeat). Now to finish off, I bring back Benjamin Franklin again for another cider quote. And he said:

“Give me yesterday's bread. This day's flesh. And last years cider.”

Well, as we've learnt, cider can age beautifully. So I now need to get my hands on a decade old cider. Now that is it for today, but next week I go back to the wine scene and I'm taking you across to New York State. That is the Finger Lakes region, and I'm gonna be chatting with fourth generation, Meaghan Frank, from the Dr. Konstantin Frank winery. You definitely want to tune into this episode because this is the gentleman that actually brought *Vitis Vinifera* vines to the Finger Lakes. So the story and the history is massive. So impressive. Now thank you as always for listening. Do you make sure you've subscribed. You've liked. Share the podcast with a wine loving friend, do it, do it now. And if you can leave me a comment, please do, cause it makes the podcast far more discoverable. You're all amazing. Thank you for your support. And I'm looking forward to sharing next week's episode with you. Until then, cheers to you.