

Ep 171: Wine Flavours, grapes and styles with Rob Buckhaven, Drinks Columnist for The Metro (Part 2)



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 cannot 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 wine friends! So, I am very excited to have Rob Buckhaven back for part two. And so, this episode, I'm going to be picking his brain about what is it really like to be a drinks writer for the Metro. Have you ever wondered what it's like to have that gig? Well, now you will.

And whilst Rob shares with us some of his wine discoveries, we will also be talking about his book, *The Alcorithm*, which examines the flavours and compounds in wines, drinks, food, herbs to be able to guess what other drink or product you would like next. So, get ready to learn more about several different grape varieties, which ones are similar and learn some wine trends and wine surprises on the way.

Now, if you are enjoying these episodes, may I ask you to take two minutes to leave a review on the app that you're listening to as it does make the podcast more discoverable. And of course, you screaming and shouting with your wine-loving friends also does too. So, enough of my requests. Let's go over to the chat with Rob now.

Janina Doyle 00:01:43 I want to ask you a question as a drinks journalist, how often are you actually tasting wine? Everyone wants to know.

Rob Buckhaven 00:01:51 Well, really good question.

Janina Doyle 00:01:52 Don't lie.

Rob Buckhaven 00:01:53 Every minute of every day. No, so I get sent samples all the time. Probably you do as well.

Janina Doyle 00:02:01 Yeah, that is true.

Rob Buckhaven 00:02:02 So you know. And it's weird because I explained to my friends who aren't in the industry and it's kind of like, "Oh, okay, yeah, that's a really bad problem to have." But you really have to temper it because A, I just don't have the space for the samples. I've got a wine cellary kind of thing, but it's constantly, I mean, it can fill up at the drop of a hat.

Tasting wise, I'm tasting pretty much every day. I'm tasting things as they come in. Really, so as not to leave them there. So, I actually have space. But I realise with my book and stuff like that, that I

think organisation is key. And by that, I mean, is writing in your tasting notes as soon as you do it. So having some kind of spreadsheet, writing in the tasting notes.

So, it sounds like it should be a really fun experience, but actually it's work. It is work. You're tasting it because you're not gonna necessarily write about it at that moment or that week or even that month potentially. It could be a few months down the track so you've got to remember what you've thought about them and you don't want to keep on asking for samples. So, it's kind of a fine balance. So, it is work. And sometimes you're tasting – I mean, if I'm doing a rosé piece for the Metro, for example, I might taste 50 rosés.

Janina Doyle 00:03:14 And that's not actually fun. After about, for me, I think my limit is like 20 wines. Once I've done 20 at any tasting, actually, now my mouth starts getting furry. I start getting a little bit distracted. And so, actually getting up to 50, you have to really, really focus.

Rob Buckhaven 00:03:34 It's basically a whole day. So, you've ordered them in, but for this piece that you're doing. So I did one called the rainbow of rosé because I wanted to show that there were more than just Provence.

So, all different colours, all different styles, as we know. So, I ordered in so many of these. I mean, they were just everywhere. And I remember, this was actually in the flat before and there was limited space. And I remember having to sort of put them by style in different parts of the room. And then I'd kind of put it all on the spreadsheet. And then I'd go, right, okay, that one. Then I'd have to label them all. Then they have to be at the right temperature. There's a lot to think about.

Generally I try to keep it down to fewer. So, I try to taste as I go, rather than have a massive sort of mammoth style tasting. But then sometimes if you're working on, for example, it's usually champagne and sparkling wine for Christmas, it's port and fortified wine and sometimes sherry. So, you do have these big epic ones, but generally it's kind of as you go.

Janina Doyle 00:04:34 So, you're tasting throughout the year, you're making notes. What is it like writing for the Metro? Because you've got to come up with ideas and articles, right? Apart from, "Here's your perfect Christmas wines at Christmas." What do you write in July? What do you write in March?

Rob Buckhaven 00:04:53 You're totally right. Do you know what I've started doing? So, I have started, and this is my trade secret, which I'm going to give away. I've started doing it – you know, everything has a day. So, Chardonnay Day, Sauvignon Blanc Day, Pizza Day, Pie Day, all of this...

Janina Doyle 00:05:07 Friendship Day.

Rob Buckhaven 00:05:08 Friendship Day, International Pet Week, whatever it is. So, I basically run my pieces via that calendar of notable events. So, if there's a notable thing, if there's like National Pie Week, so I'm trying to go, okay, there's National Pie Week, which wines go really well with pie?

So, you try and keep it topical, that really gives you a structure. Then there's things like Easter, all the other ones. But then equally Metro loves a trend. So, they love a social media trend. So, I'm scouring TikTok for the new trends. What are the kids doing? What are people doing with wines? Are they

mixing it with ice cream? Are they putting it in a blender? And then as the expert, I'm then trying it out and saying, what do I think?

So, it's very much keeping yourself, like, yes, you have to be an expert, but you have to also see what's going on, what other people are doing and trying and be relatable and keep it real. So, it's that kind of balance.

Janina Doyle 00:06:08 What did you put in a blender?

Rob Buckhaven 00:06:10 Oh my gosh! Okay. So, I put Snoop Dogg's wine, which I've got to say kind of belongs there. I put it in there and it says Cali Red, which actually isn't that bad. It's very sweet, though. You know, it's very sweet and it's very good for the US market. But I put it in the blender and weirdly enough, it did aerate it. Not weirdly enough, because you expect it to. The only problem is with a finer wine...

Janina Doyle 00:06:34 Damn, yeah, it's too much. You're taking away all the nuances.

Rob Buckhaven 00:06:41 It's too aggressive, yeah, and you're basically separating it in a weird way. So, you're separating out all the flavours. But I think with a wine like that, that is so beefy and big and doesn't matter, anything goes, I think it's fine.

Janina Doyle 00:06:52 So, wait. Conclusion on this, right? Anyone who's getting a big bold red at like £7, 8, 9. Maybe if they want to throw in a blender, it probably might make it a bit better.

Rob Buckhaven 00:07:11 Do it. Yeah. But only a couple go on the Nutribullet. Like, don't do too long.

Janina Doyle 00:07:17 That's so specific. No, but I agree unless you've got as well a very fragile wine with age or something very, very premium. Like, I will happily take that bottle of wine and throw it into a decanter. No grace, like boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

The wine is glugging away and I'll happily double decant it, triple decant it and just throw it about a bit. So, Nutribullet is a bit more aggressive for me. It's going a bit further, but at the same time for a very young, juicy wine. Well, okay cool. There we go.

Rob Buckhaven 00:07:53 Not everyone has a decanter. Obviously, there are other things you can use, but I'm all about using stuff in the home as much as you can, Use stuff you've already got. And also if you're time poor, if it's not damaging the wine. So, if you don't have a decanter, take a vase, for example, Nutribullet shouldn't be the first thing you go to, but if you're desperate to aerate a wine, it's really not opening up and it tastes a bit weird, then just put it in for a couple of pulses in there and it's fine. It does open up.

Janina Doyle 00:08:23 Wine advice from Rob Buckhaven.

Rob Buckhaven 00:08:27 Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:08:28 I love it.

Rob Buckhaven 00:08:28 Anytime. And then, I'm trying to think of the other one I did was rosé with a jalapeno pepper.

Janina Doyle 00:08:35 What did you think of that? Because I mean, the delicacies of rosé a lot of the time and a big old spicy zing. I mean, rosé goes well with actually a bit of spicy food, but I feel like a jalapeno – it depends on the wedge. It depends on the wedge size, surely.

Rob Buckhaven 00:08:50 Yeah. Totally. Yeah, this was small. It was delicate. And again, it was his Cali Rosé. So, it was quite sweet. And I thought the savoriness offset it, not in a Provence Rosé. And I think I even say in the video, not Provence because it's so nuanced. It's very dry. It's wafer thin in terms of aromatics. So, you can't destroy that balance. So, we'll just go the other way.

Janina Doyle 00:09:17 Okay. So, you can have a bit of fun with a Rosé d'anjou or a Cabernet d'anjou, the sweetest styles of rosé from the Loire Valley with a moderate to small slice of or wedge of jalapeno.

Rob Buckhaven 00:09:30 Tiny. Yeah, just get a small one. Yeah, don't go crazy. Do not go crazy, that's the name of the game. And then I went a bit crazy, actually, and I did... What did I do? I did a gherkin. I did a cornichon. And then I did a pickled onion. And then I did...

Janina Doyle 00:09:47 Oh, you wild child.

Rob Buckhaven 00:09:47 I just was living on the edge. I don't know what happened to me. I don't know what came over me. But most of them were terrible. I mean, it's got to be said.

Janina Doyle 00:09:56 That's a shame.

Rob Buckhaven 00:09:57 Yeah. There's no kind of like you've heard it here first. They were all terrible.

Janina Doyle 00:10:01 Okay. So, moving on from these trends, uh, they don't last for long. So when you're not going around tasting different wines and planning your articles, obviously the wonderful part of your job is also getting to fly to different regions, get to know what's going on. So, you told me you went to Thailand of all places just because Thai wine is a thing.

Rob Buckhaven 00:10:22 Thai wine is a thing. Yeah, it is, but it isn't. And I remember being so fascinated and it was a press trip. We get on some amazing press trips. It is amazing. And now, another thing is there's so many great press trips. I will only say yes to them if I can write something about it. Whereas I used to just go on everything and just be like, yeah, it's a free trip.

But they are actually quite hard work. Their itineraries are jam packed usually. You're always on no matter if you're at a dinner, if you're at this event, you have to be on. They usually sit you next to the owner of the company or the winemaker. So, you're constantly on.

So, I cherry pick, and this one was epic. So I couldn't go when all the other journalists were going. So, I just went, look, I'm really sorry, I can't go in those days. And they kind of went, "Well, look, we'll do a trip for you." And I went, okay, all you need to do is get a commission in the Metro.

So, I got a commission and then showed them it and they were like, "Yeah, cool. Where do you want to go?" So, it was in conjunction with the Thai tourist board as well. And so, I just picked where I wanted to go. They said, "Do you want to do some markets in Bangkok? Do you want to do this? Do you want to do the floating markets?" And I was like, all of the above, I want to do all of that.

Janina Doyle 00:11:38 Yes, yes, yes.

Rob Buckhaven 00:11:38 Just cutting to the chase, the main thing was the vineyard. So, I went to a vineyard and it was Monsoon Valley.

Janina Doyle 00:11:44 Yes, well, they are the biggest, aren't they?

Rob Buckhaven 00:11:46 They are the biggest, exactly. And this was helmed by a German winemaker who'd come over there, and she'd only been there for a few years, I think. And then we were talking about it, and she said to me, "It's incredible, because obviously there are no seasons. So, we have to make the vine think there are seasons by flooding the vineyards, by doing various things. And we have tried everything in terms of," because I was going, would this wine work here? she was like, "You're wasting your breath. We've tried everything."

Janina Doyle 00:12:16 Yeah, because it's tropical.

Rob Buckhaven 00:12:17 It's tropical weather. So, she said, "Look, we've tried everything. And the ones that work are Chenin Blanc, Sangiovese," was another one that worked. I know Merlot worked.

So, there were a few grapes that really worked. And so, I was going, what about Tempranillo? And she was like, "Yeah, that doesn't really work." I was going through them. So, it was just incredible. And their vineyards, there's a lot of tourism there. It was amazing. Just looking into the distance and there's this golden Buddha in the distance. You're like, "Where am I?" I'm in Thailand, this is ridiculous.

But it was just incredible. Their wines, look, for what they go through, their wines are fine. They're not bad at all. And they probably improved since I'd been there. They did a dessert wine. They did a sparkling wine. I was so impressed by how they could do it.

Janina Doyle 00:13:05 No, but I'm wondering how they actually do trick the vines. Because as an example, I did a podcast on Brazilian wine and in Sao Paulo, they actually invert the vines so that they make the vines sleep during the summer and wake them up in the coldest winter months, which aren't that cold.

Rob Buckhaven 00:13:24 It's not dissimilar. Okay

Janina Doyle 00:13:26 Okay. So, they would call that Vinos de Invierno. So, winter wines.

Rob Buckhaven 00:13:21 Yeah, exactly. And it's basically a bit of trickery because you are then tricking the vines into thinking it's that season. And I can't remember what they actually call it, but I remember them thinking that is ingenious. That's such ingenious.

Then there's obviously canopy management and all of this kind of thing to know about. But it's these other things that they have to go through because it's such a hostile environment for growing anything. That was amazing. So, that was one of the wow moments of everything. I thought that was incredible.

And then you get to go to places like Provence. I love going to Provence. I thought it was a great press trip, but I would only go there if there was an angle because even if it's three days, that's three days you're taking out of your work schedule. And being freelance, you can't really afford that unless you have a really good reason to go there.

And I remember, it's the same with Cava as well, the angle for Provence was that they were trying to deseasonalize their wines because everyone thinks of Provence rosé as during the summer. And I know these guys were working so hard to go, no we're not, our aim is for people to sip rosé with their Christmas dinner.

So, I thought this was amazing. So, they were sort of ageing some of them in oak and they were, you know, doing loads of good stuff that I just thought, wow. And I hadn't really tasted a Provence rosé that had been aged slightly in oak. I thought it was amazing. It has this richness that you don't associate with that.

Janina Doyle 00:15:01 I love it. Yeah, do you know, when I ever mention to people about oak ageing with rosé, they're so shocked. But I mean, everyone's heard of Whispering Angel because it is the biggest marketed rosé in the world. Newsflash everyone, I'm sorry to say it's really not the best rosé. However...

Rob Buckhaven 00:15:20 It's funny because I'm just writing a piece including Whispering Angel right now. Absolutely.

Janina Doyle 00:15:25 Oh, controversial. What are you going to say? You're going to be gentle.

Rob Buckhaven 00:15:27 You're going to wait and see. I'm going to be gentle. It's big. Yeah. But carry on.

Janina Doyle 00:15:32 Many people don't realise that Whispering Angel is part of Chateau d'Esclans and they have several wines above Whispering Angel. And if you can get your hands on, I mean, they have the Garrus. Funny enough, Garrus is higher than Les Clans or Les Clans, if we're going to say in the French way. But I tasted the two of them next to each other only two weeks ago and actually really preferred Les Clans.

Rob Buckhaven 00:15:58 It's so bizarre, isn't it?

Janina Doyle 00:15:59 Yeah, because actually the oak seems to make it creamy and textural and rounded.

Rob Janina Doyle 00:16:06 Because they do Batonnage. I found Les Clans, I found it like a white burgundy because there was Batonnage, so they were stirring the lees and they were lees it on there. So, it was getting creamier as well as the oak influence. So, you had all of it. It was so well balanced. I agree, Garrus, I find too much. I find it almost too rich.

Janina Doyle 00:16:26 And it almost goes a little bit, almost starts going smoky, which I think with the right food. And also granted, I tasted this at a tasting straight out of the bottle, having not decanted it and given it a certain time. And this is the point. So, Les Clans, when I bought a bottle of that myself several years ago, it was about pounds 40. It has to be about 50, 55 now.

Rob Buckhaven 00:16:49 It's 65, I think. It's 63-65.

Janina Doyle 00:16:52 Punch it. Fine. When you are spending that amount of money and then thinking about even the Garrus, you really should be decanting it. You should make sure it's warm enough and not straight from an ice bucket or straight out of the fridge.

These are phenomenal wines, actually. You hit the nail on the head when you said like a white burgundy, they have this absolute opulence and roundedness and beautiful defined fruits.

Rob Buckhaven 00:17:18 Yeah. And I remember it just being super aromatic as well. So, we did this, and I hate a blind tasting. I hate a blind tasting. I really hate it.

Janina Doyle 00:17:27 Why?

Rob Buckhaven 00:17:27 Because I'm the sort of person that overthinks things. So, I get the right answer, and then I think myself out of that answer into the wrong answer. So, we did a blind tasting of eight different rosés, including Les Clan, including Whispering Angel, including Ultimate Provence from Waitrose.

So, there were some really good ones, and there was a wine from Corsica. So, this piece is coming out. And I remember just thinking, when I had Les Clans, I was like, this must be Les Clans. And then I talked myself out of it. And I was like, but it was so obvious.

But it's so interesting to see how your brain works when you're just overdriving. And my thing is when you are blind tasting, always go with your first instinct. Do not overthink it at all. Anyway, it was very interesting. And I love the way rosé, so, this is one of the things I got from going to Provence. I love the way they were working so hard to actually make this happen. And the quality was sky high.

They didn't want to just be known as a one trick pony. And I think that was the same for Cava when I went there and it was only a three day trip, but they showed us around everywhere. And I think when you go with a DO rather than just a single producer, your itinerary is so much more packed because they want to show you everything and they are so enthusiastic.

So, the minute you touch down, it's like lunch here, then we have a tasting of this, then you go over to the next one, then you're seeing that. So, you are fully booked for the whole time, as you should be. But Cava, I know we've talked about it, but I was really impressed by what they were doing there as well. So, I will only go on these press trips if it's not just the run of the mill, oh, let's see what they're doing, I kind of know. There has to be something more.

Janina Doyle 00:19:07 But the great thing about this, and you're going all over the world, you're tasting these different wines, is that, like you said, you might hate a blind tasting, but you do start understanding and identifying different characters in different wines, what to look for, what's what. So, is that what inspired you to write your book? So, the Alcorithm – love it. The Alcorithm.

Rob Buckhaven 00:19:27 I love the pronunciation as well.

Janina Doyle 00:19:28 Oh, did I do good?

Rob Buckhaven 00:19:29 Wow.

Janina Doyle 00:19:29 Right. It's great. Tell me about the book for a second. We'll go into detail about what's in the book. Everyone, wait one. Why did you write it?

Rob Buckhaven 00:19:37 I wrote it during lockdown. So, I'd always wanted to do a book. So, I was doing my Metro column. I was a brand ambassador at that point. And I was doing some of the things. And I'd always wanted to write a book. I'd done some TV and I was really keen to write a book because I had it in my head that I just wanted a published piece of work that was mine. That was just there. I had my own thing.

I remember, I went to a Jancis Robinson launch of her latest edition of the Wine Atlas. I then chased her publisher around the room for the whole time. I said to her, "Sorry, can I have a meeting? I write for the Metro." And she went, "Yeah, sure, let's have a meeting." And from that moment on, we were discussing ideas, et cetera. And I was also approaching others, just via LinkedIn, trying to get other publishers as well.

I must have sent her about five different proposals and on the sixth one, she went, oh, there's something here. So, I remember sending it around to a bunch of other publishers, like Bloomsbury, like Penguin, and loads of them liked it. So, this idea was The Alcorithm.

So, it was basically, Netflix does it, if you like this film, you're going to like this film. I thought no one's doing that for food or wine. No one is doing that. So, I thought, why not use this algorithm, but I'll be The algorithm and I'll decide from my experience as a wine expert or drinks expert, if you like these flavours, you'll like these drinks.

And it's not just wine. If you like chocolate, you're gonna like XYZ. You're gonna like this cocktail. You're gonna like this soft drink. You're gonna like this coffee. You're gonna like this, cause I thought it's all about flavours and people need the confidence to be directed around the drinks universe. There's lots of wine books that go, if you like this wine, you'll probably like this wine. But this is like, you're going to like the universe. This is what you should be drinking.

Janina Doyle 00:21:29 You've been working hard eating and drinking everything for us. Thank you, Rob. Appreciate that.

Rob Buckhaven 00:21:34 Okay. Yeah, you're welcome.

Janina Doyle 00:21:35 So, we want to give people a little bit of a sneak peek so that they understand like, okay, what are you suggesting? So, now one of the flavour profiles is, instead of a Bordeaux Cabernet Sauvignon, you said, go for a Touriga Nacional, which is the main red grape variety in the Douro region Portugal. So, what's your thinking on that? And I agree, but I'd like to, I can compliment that maybe afterwards. What's your reasoning?

Janina Doyle 00:22:00 Okay. I love Touriga Nacional because it's usually in a blend, as you say. It's usually in a port blend, but they're using it more and more as a single variety. And so, what I love about it is that it's more aromatic. It's got sort of violets, blueberries, plums, but it's also got bergamot.

This is what I delve into in my book. My first draft was full of these complex compound names because I was keen to get science behind it and say, look, what we're tasting and smelling in this wine, and we're comparing it to, say I'm comparing it to blueberries, has it got the same compounds as blueberries or has it not? Is it something completely different?

So, what I loved about this is Touriga actually shares compounds with bergamot. So, you do get, so that's why they've done experiments where they will get a regular wine like a Merlot and they will put an Earl Grey tea bag into the Merlot and you'll have something very much resembling a Touriga Nacional.

Janina Doyle 00:23:01 What, really?

Rob Buckhaven 00:23:02 Because you'll have these bergamot aromas coming through. I mean, it's a very rudimentary, silly one. It's like a trend piece but there is something to be said for that. And I love the fact that I do get that bergamot that's lifted kind of, always citrus coming through in that one, which is really unusual for red wine. And then, it shares things with Cabernet. Say the Cabernet in Bordeaux, which has all those kinds of mint and cassis flavours. So, mint...

Janina Doyle 00:23:31 You stole what I was gonna bring up.

Rob Buckhaven 00:23:35 Oh no, I'm sorry. So, mint very much is in Touriga Nacional as well. It's that herbaceousness.

Janina Doyle 00:23:39 Yeah. You know, you've got your dark fruits. It is full bodied. For me, it's almost like a Bordeaux blend that is beefier and warmer because yeah, that's where it comes from. But with climate change, the alcohol levels in Bordeaux blends are going up all the time and they're trying to bring it down. Actually, it's just like a juicier rounder version. And because of the floral and slight mintiness mixed in with those fruits. I can say, tick, I like it.

Rob Buckhaven 00:24:10 I like that you like it. That's brilliant. I mean, you could also say that it shares elements with a Barossa Shiraz as well. So, it's kind of in the middle of those. It's got certain sort of similarities with the austerity that it can come from a Bordeaux blend, but it's also got the voluptuousness of a Barossa Shiraz, I guess, as well.

Janina Doyle 00:24:30 I like it. Okay. So, going to white, because, you know, we want to make sure equal opportunity for everybody here. So, you said, instead of an Albariño, which I love from Rias Baixas in Spain, you have said, why not try Assyrtiko, by the way that I love from, well, I assume from Santorini. You can get Assyrtiko from the mainland. It just is not the same and it's never as good as on the Santorini island.

Rob Buckhaven 00:24:57 Yes.

Janina Doyle 00:24:58 The saltiness.

Rob Buckhaven 00:24:59 Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:24:00 It's a good link.

Rob Buckhaven 00:25:00 The saltiness, it's a great link. Yeah, it's the saltiness. I remember, I went to Santorini on a press trip. Sorry, dropping all these names, but it was really impressive and I'd never been there. And it was literally as you'd expect, as you've seen on those postcards, that kind of Azure blue sea and those really white buildings.

And the wines, they were really championing. Assyrtiko is their hero grape. Why not? It's amazing. And so, I remember we did all these tastings with Gaia and tasting it by the sea. So, obviously, there's an auto suggestion because you're by the sea and you're getting this kind of salt in the air and all around you.

I was tasting these Assyrtiko and I remember saying to the winemaker, would you compare this to an Albariño? And she went, "God, I've never really thought about that." Yes, you could actually. There's definitely elements. What I love about Assyrtiko is it's much more unapologetically salty. It's very salty.

Janina Doyle 00:25:58 Linear and like, hello, I am here. Albariño might be like, oh, hello, everyone.

Rob Buckhaven 00:26:04 Albariño's more sort of, yeah, all right. I've got a little bit of saltiness here. Yeah, exactly. But Albariño's got more of the kind of peach stone fruit. To me, it's got more of the citrus, but loads more of that salinity. But I think they can be compared sort of roughly.

Janina Doyle 00:26:22 100%. So you've got that lovely acidity in both. You've got the salinity. Assyrtiko for me, the mineral drive and it obviously is insane. But also again, it can be higher in alcohol as well. So, then it tends to be quite a full bodied wine.

And if you compare that to Albariño, where so often they are stirring the lees, they are creating a lot of the good Albariño, have got this lovely texture and body to it. So I love that comparison, and especially with the saltiness, you can't go wrong.

Rob Buckhaven 00:26:52 Oh God, you cannot go wrong. And you know, it just makes them both really good food wines as well. What's by the sea? You get so much good seafood, they go so well, but they can go by themselves as well. I loved it.

Janina Doyle 00:27:04 I am very jealous that you've been to Santorini. It's still somewhere that I really wanna go. And I think for so many people I've spoken to who've been on holiday in Santorini, I say to them, oh, my God, did you go to a vineyard? And they say, "No, but we drove around and we didn't see any." And it's like, you didn't see any because they're just on the floor in these baskets and people are so used to seeing.

Rob Buckhaven 00:27:25 I could not believe it. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:27:27 Things are starting to change now because they can't find the right labour in it. It really takes a skilled worker to prune. But typically, you imagine a vineyard, you think long rows, trellised. And here these are the Kouloura, which means, I think, it means curl actually in Greek. So, they're curling the vines into a basket, which is...

Rob Buckhaven 00:27:48 It is incredible. Wind kind of lashes around and then you've got this kind of really arid. You've got really hot conditions. Very arid. Very dry. Low rainfall. They do have

these in these baskets. They're quite big, actually. They're much bigger than I thought. And I just found the whole thing amazing.

I mean, it's some way you don't really see it, but all the places I've been, it's like I mentioned Priorat before, it's another place where you can't really replicate it anywhere else. You never really see that. It's the same for Santorini.

Janina Doyle 00:28:25 And at the end of the day, I would suggest to anybody just if you're interested and you want to go somewhere really cool or quirky or different, just type in volcanic soils. So, obviously, Santorini is a place with volcanic soils.

When I think about Lanzarote. When I get people to Google the vineyards in Lanzarote, it's pure black – pure, pure black soils. And they create these little holes in the soil to protect the grapes from the wind. Obviously, you've got Tenerife, which has the most crazy type of trellising system. It's fantastic. I'm very upset. I haven't been there.

Rob Buckhaven 00:29:01 Yeah. Oh, you've got to go. I'm really surprised you haven't gone. I would have thought you had.

Janina Doyle 00:29:07 Well, you know why? I'm a cheapskate and every time I'm like, where should I go on holiday? And I look at the flights and Santorini is always the most expensive. And I'm like, nah, I'll go to some other Island.

Rob Buckhaven 00:29:17 Get on a press trip.

Janina Doyle 00:29:19 DO Santorini. Hello, Janina calling.

Rob Buckhaven 00:29:23 Yeah, hi!

Janina Doyle 00:29:23 So, right. Okay. Bringing us back to, we're going to go red again. You suggested, instead of a Cabernet Franc, which I love for its elegance. I really like that you have taken people to Mencia in Spain, which is one of my favourite red grape varieties because they share this for me, this gravelly nature, but this softness and generally medium to full bodied – like there's just this juiciness with this earthy gravel nature, right?

Rob Buckhaven 00:29:58 I agree with you. And for me, with Cabernet Franc, I love Cabernet Franc, particularly from the Loire. I find it really herbaceous. I mean, it can sometimes, you know like Carménère for me. It can sometimes border on too herbaceous and too almost green, too unripe in a way.

Janina Doyle 00:30:15 It's the challenge, yeah.

Rob Buckhaven 00:30:16 Yeah. I think if you don't get it right, but ripen properly, you get those lovely herbaceous notes coming in. Mencia for me, all around the Bierzo region is all about that kind of smashed slate.

And again, like Priorat, whether it is auto suggestion, because sometimes you'll see, for example, in Chablis, when you've got the Kimmeridgian clay, which is all these smashed up marine fossils, you

will immediately think, oh, okay, I'm getting that sort of slightly mineral, I'm getting minerality from this.

It's the same for Bierzo, same for Mencia, for me, it's this auto suggestion, but I do find it, I like the light weightness to it, I like the slightly herbaceousness to it. I love it. For me, I get pomegranate, I get all of that kind of low-lying brush you get around there. All comes into being in my mind when I'm tasting it.

Janina Doyle 00:31:11 I like that both of them, depending on where they're grown, they do sit in that, oh, hey, we've got some raspberries, but we've also got some darker fruits as well. It's red and black. It's not one way or the other.

So, I think if people love the bell pepper, they need to stick with Cabernet Franc. But Mencia is just this absolutely delightful grape variety. And also, unless you're getting the bigger ones that they really do put in oak, but they're normally, it's very judicious oak. They're ones that you can have a little bit chilled as well, just slightly as well. And I just love that.

Rob Buckhaven 00:31:44 Absolutely. Yeah. There's a purity to them, which I love. And you know, you get things like wild lavender and rosemary. And weirdly, when I was writing this book, I was learning as much about things like rosemary and lavender and what compounds they had and the fact that you usually find them growing side by side and they do share compounds.

So, now when I'm tasting things like – and that's another thing with tasting, to get the appreciation of wine and all these things that we see, lovely things, blueberries and rosemary and thyme, to have an understanding of the compounds that thyme has, and then transpose that to wine and say, okay, so does this have the same as that? Or does it have other compounds that are mimicking this? And how does that happen? I just found that fascinating.

Janina Doyle 00:32:33 So sciency. I just like to pick up the wine and give it a sniff. So I'm going to finish off with one more, which is a classic for us Brits working in the wine industry that you have said, a Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, if you want to do something different, you can go for an English Bacchus. Of course. Yes. I'll ask you as if I don't know. Why did you choose that? I talk about this constantly in my job. I say this a million times a day. Why did you recommend it? I do.

Janina Doyle 00:32:02 Well, of course you would. Yeah. I mean, this must be a busman's holiday for you. Yeah. People go, what does it taste like? Because obviously Bacchus is becoming England's hero white grape like Sauvignon Blanc in New Zealand, for example.

And to me, they are very similar. You do get that nettle, you do get that gooseberry, you do get that sort of tropical fruit as well, which I love. And if you refer to my book, with New Zealand, it's all about thiols.

The thiols are the things with precursors to the aroma. I'm not going to get too sciency, but they are triggered by fermentation. And that is what gets the passion fruit. All these other lovely things that we describe them as. And for me, Bacchus has got all of those and more. It's got a really light texture. It's got citrus. It's got all of these different things going on, and I think they are very comparable.

Janina Doyle 00:33:55 Typically, actually, I think Bacchus can be even slightly more approachable for people and people's palates because New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc tends to actually be just that little bit more acidic, and a lot of people sometimes want something that's not as intense.

So, Bacchus is high acidity but not as, but also it's not as pungent. So, you get these herbal aromas. You get always this kind of elderflower. Elderflower is always like something you want to look for if you're trying in a blind tasting to differentiate Bacchus and New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. But it just seems there's a lighter, slightly more delicacy just with the Bacchus in comparison to New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, which is interesting.

Rob Buckhaven 00:34:37 I know what you mean. Yeah, that blossomy.

Janina Doyle 00:34:38 You have to remember that with Bacchus, Riesling is in its parentage. And so, I've done a blind tasting.

Rob Buckhaven 00:34:48 Oh, my God, who's getting scientific now? Wow.

Janina Doyle 00:34:51 I didn't want to show off. So, my mother loves Bacchus and she loves New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. So, one time I decided to do this blind tasting three and three. And I found it really interesting and actually quite difficult as well. But what I gleaned from that was one, actually, Bacchus, by the way, very often looks like water in your glass. very disappointing actually. So, it always doesn't look like it has a colour.

Rob Buckhaven 00:35:13 It's got to deliver.

Janina Doyle 00:35:14 It does. But that's actually a really good way to, is this actually a Bacchus? Is it like almost water in your glass? So, that's actually number one. But yes, it seemed to have more of the florals because Bacchus can be citrusy, it could be herby, and it can be tropical depending on when it's been picked.

But equally, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, is it from the Wairau Valley? Is it from the Awatere Valley? They can be again, either more herbaceous or more tropical. So, they don't necessarily have so much floral nature, the New Zealand Sauvignon Blancs, and I always tend to get more of that with Bacchus. So, that is the slight difference.

Rob Buckhaven 00:35:50 Interesting. But I love you mentioned Elderflower and Elder Blossom and I love the fact that that's so English. It's such an English descriptor. I quite like that because it does give the English stamp to it as well.

Janina Doyle 00:36:04 Elderflower and hedgerow, if anybody really wants the tasting note.

Rob Buckhaven 00:36:08 Hedgerow, yes! It could not be any more English. I love that hedgerow. No it couldn't. And then I had to kind of unpack what hedgerow was. Hedgerows, any fruit that grows in a hedgerow, but then you get that herbaceousness as well from the leaves, from everything from the bramble.

Janina Doyle 00:36:25 Oh, my God, do you know what? I just got some tomatoes and sorry everyone, I don't remember which tomatoes, but they were on the vine. But you know, sometimes

tomatoes are just so much better and I pulled them out of the packet and yet they were in plastic. Anyway, but as soon as I got it out, first of all, I was hit with this herbaceous sweetness.

This literally just happened yesterday so it's vivid in my mind, as literally fresh in my mind. And as I was picking off the tomatoes from the actual vine and I was smelling the end of the stem, this sweet, floral, it was almost like there was some vanilla in there, which was so weird because it was so herbaceous, but it was this weird pungent. Oh, my gosh!

Rob Buckhaven 00:37:11 And I love it because tomato stalk always brings you back to Sauvignon Blanc.

Janina Doyle 00:37:15 Tomato leaf. Yeah. Yeah.

Rob Buckhaven 00:37:16 Tomato leaf, tomato stalk. But also it brings me to the Loire more than anything. I get this Sancerre, Pouilly-Fumé rather than the really over the top. So, I love that difference as well between the two. I know what you mean, that fresh sweet.

Janina Doyle 00:37:35 I can't describe it any better than that but, everyone, just get a whole load of tomatoes on a vine and just give them a stiff. So, we've been talking about Bacchus and actually, for both of us, it's something that we both have a passion for.

I am currently a brand ambassador for an English winery. You were a brand ambassador for an English winery. However, you started as a brand ambassador when there wasn't actually a brand, right?

Rob Buckhaven 00:38:02 Yeah, I know. And I didn't know that was the case. I remember I was speaking in my interview. I kind of went, oh, yeah, I couldn't find your wines on your website. So, this was the owner I was talking to and he said, "No, we don't have any. So, we won't have any for a year and a half."

And as a brand ambassador, how would you deal with that? And I kind of just thought... You know, you kind of go into this kind of computing mode when they just show lots of sums and equations in the background. That was happening in my mind. And I was going, okay, we'd have to get creative, we'd have to bring people down here and get them immersed in it and get them excited about it, I guess.

So, that's what happened. So, I got the job. I was with Rathfinny for seven years. And I remember that it was through necessity. And I always think necessity is the mother of all invention. And it really is. That's why I just thought, okay, so we have nothing to show people. I can't knock on the door of the Ritz and go, I can kind of describe what it tastes like. So, I just thought, let's invite them down because they all have downtime. All have times when they're not so busy.

So, we used to bring groups of sommeliers down to taste out of tanks, to do all this stuff. They loved it. They couldn't get enough of it. They were like a kid in a sweet shop. We do blending trials, all of that. They'd be absolutely lapping it up. And by the end of it, you've got this loyalty that you'd built up with them in this great kind of relationship. And it worked really well.

That was kind of the crux of how I think we did so well, because everyone, we'd had a year and a half to kind of seed the market. And then, we had a big launch at Somerset House and it was a big thing.

And I think we deliberately kept it away from journalists like myself. So, no one could taste it. So, journalists couldn't write about it. So, they had to taste it at the same time as everyone else when it launched and everyone was super curious. It was amazing. And I loved English wine. I miss it.

Janina Doyle 00:40:03 There's enough of it. It's growing. Don't worry. It's not going to run out. You said about you were bringing people down to the winery and you were doing blending trials. And I have to say they are some of my favourite things. What were you doing for the blending? Because Rathfinny obviously is sparkling wines, they're not doing any stills, are they?

Rob Buckhaven 00:40:23 They do a little bit of still, but the focus is sparkling.

Janina Doyle 00:40:25 And so, was it simply looking at blending different proportions of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Meunier to see whose blend was best?

Rob Buckhaven 00:40:22 You know, what I loved about Rathfinny is they were very much into their clones without getting too scientific. And I was really interested in the different clones they were using because obviously they used a rootstock called Fercal, which was very deep rooting. The vine didn't get chlorosis.

So, it was very specific to chalk. And I love the fact that these clones of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier have been chosen especially to match this rootstock and to match the chalk as well. Whenever I talk to sommeliers, I'd go into super sort of, because I know they're quite anorak-y a lot of these guys.

So, they love talking about what a different clone of Pinot Noir brought to the blend. And so, what we try to do is almost a Vin Clare tasting with some of them. So, we get them in a room and we go, okay, so this is 1067. This is what this brings in. This is the Dijon clone, X X Y. This is the Champagne clone. This is the Geisenheim clone.

So, we'd show them, and a lot of them hadn't done anything like this before. So, we were actually sort of dismantling the sparkling wine, the base wine, and actually showing them what each of these clones brought to the blend. And obviously, every year they bring in a different thing because they perform differently in different years, according to the weather. I just thought that was fascinating. So, we bring them there.

Janina Doyle 00:41:52 I agree with you.

Rob Buckhaven 00:41:53 Is that what you do?

Janina Doyle 00:41:54 Yeah. So, and I'm lucky enough, I get to do blendings and tastings. And I think a lot of the time when you talk about clones, and I think it's so interesting for people listening, they might think, oh, what are clones? And does it really make a difference? So, this Pinot Noir is a bit different to that Pinot Noir.

I can specifically tell you that the 828 clone, which is a burgundy clone, is quite jammy and big and juicy and more red-fruited with really soft chalky tannins. And then the Dijon clone 777, which everyone knows if they're into their clones, is actually more gravelly, more grippy, going towards darker fruits. And it's fascinating.

And the same goes for Chardonnay clones. Again, if you compare, I'm just trying to think of two that I remember. 76 is more citrusy and linear and zingy. And then, 96 is much more peachy and soft and rounded. And it is fascinating.

Rob Buckhaven 00:42:50 Yeah, it's fascinating. And there was a Chardonnay clone, I forget which one it was, and it almost tasted like Muscat.

Janina Doyle 00:42:57 Wow! Yeah, okay.

Rob Buckhaven 00:42:58 It was really blossoming and grape aromatic. And I just thought this is fascinating. So, I love it. And I love the way they are just hand selected for this particular terroir. Yeah, we used to bring them down. Sometimes we do a bit of, 'yeah let's do different blendings.' And then they would blend one.

Obviously, we're not going to necessarily use the blend that they put. It's just a bit of fun. And then we do hand disgorgements as well. We do things like that. Dosage trials were a big one. So, dosage for me was another one. So, obviously dosage being the sugar grape musk solution that you put in before the cork goes in.

And for me, dosage makes or breaks a wine. It really does. But in minute quantities. So, we always did it sort of zero dosage all the way up to 10 grams and we worked our way into the middle. And you usually find that when you'd start to get a sort of honey note on your lips and a bit of ploy, you know you've gone too far.

The trick was not to add in anything. You wanted to just enhance what was already there. And I just thought that was amazing. And sometimes half a gram of something would make the difference, that would hit the balance.

Janina Doyle 00:44:11 Right. So, I was very lucky to be involved in British Airways dosage trials that we did, because we were on British Airways last year. And this year as well, everyone.

Rob Buckhaven 00:44:19 Oh, wow.

Janina Doyle 00:44:20 Anyway, we sat down and we did from four grams through to 12 grams. This was for Tim Jackson, Master of Wine, to decide what does he wants on the plane. It was fascinating that obviously at the four, the same sparkling wine I should add, was very chalky, it was very linear, it was very pure.

And obviously, at 12 grams, it kind of makes sense. It seemed super fruity, really round, really opulent, really giving. Anyway, the fascinating thing was that as we were taking notes for every single different gram, you could be, I remember, I might be getting it slightly wrong, but six and eight were like really red-fruited and yet seven grams made the whole thing super citrusy. You were like, what?

Rob Buckhaven 00:45:10 Isn't that crazy?

Janina Doyle 00:45:11 Yeah. It just blows your mind.

Rob Buckhaven 00:45:13 It blows your mind. And did you also find that the more dosage you put in, the shorter the length? We found that constantly because I think Rathfinny, the most we ever put in was five grams. So, it was always low dosage. And that wasn't because we wanted a low dosage, it's because the fruit was super ripe.

Janina Doyle 00:45:33 You're planting on chalk soils, aren't you? Rathfinny is on chalk, whereas Balfour, we have some chalk soils and we have some greensands, but actually the majority, the biggest percentage is clay.

And so again, you and I probably don't know enough, enough because my God, it's just like, it's crazy. But the flavours, like for us, the Balfour style is very much about fruit first. And so, actually I think it can handle more dosage, whereas Rathfinny is on chalk and I like the purity of less sugar and it comes out more so quite clearly with chalky salts, maybe really you don't want to be putting in so much dosage.

Rob Buckhaven 00:46:08 I think you're absolutely right. You're right. Because yeah, it is interesting. I read this piece by Margaret Rand, I think it was in the world of Fine Wine. And she had done a whole article on chalk, mainly focusing on chalk, but I think she mentioned other soils as well. And she was saying, I might be butchering this, because it's not just a poetic thing that you say, oh, you know, chalk is very minerally, you know, again, auto suggestion.

But she said chalk and the type of chalk that's in Sussex in particular gives you a very balanced mouth feel. So, it's not just you get a hit of acidity and then it kind of disappears. She said it's very balanced. It goes throughout. Whereas she said clay, particularly in, I think she was mentioning Kent actually, so this would be applicable. She was saying the clay gives the wine much more fruit character. So, it's more about fruit, exactly what you've said.

Janina Doyle 00:47:13 I always say fruit and depth in clay soils, electricity in chalk soils, and then this aromatic floral nature softness in greensand soils, which are the eroded chalk. It's fascinating.

Rob Buckhaven 00:47:25 It is so fascinating, yeah. We could have a whole episode on this and you probably have to be honest.

Janina Doyle 00:47:28 No, I haven't. But I think I'll have to find someone who's like an absolute soil geek, cause that is...

Rob Buckhaven 00:47:34 Yeah.. Get Margaret Rand.

Janina Doyle 00:47:36 Thank you very much. A good suggestion. So, I'm going to finish off this episode with a bit of fun because just like you said at the beginning, all these TikTok trends and things that you are having to test out.

One of the things going around at the moment is what is the best wine to have with certain crisps and snacks, which I think is fascinating. Move aside pies. Like, let's look at our crisps. I think I'm going to do it soon. So, I want you to tell me. I'm not going to make you guess one. You have to pick between two. Okay.

Rob Buckhaven 00:48:09 So, there's going to be a quick fire round, right?

Janina Doyle 00:48:12 Yeah, that's it. So, Sour cream and chive Pringles. Are you going to go with a Chardonnay or a Sauvignon Blanc?

Rob Buckhaven 00:48:19 I'm going to go with Chardonnay just because I think that it – I don't wanna get too scientific into chives. But with chives, you've got this kind of sulphurous nature, almost like, so it's the same fat, similar aromatics to onions, et cetera. So, I just feel that a chardonnay has the broadness to actually cope with that.

Janina Doyle 00:48:40 Okay, good.

Rob Buckhaven 00:48:42 And it's equally, you've got a bit of acidity there for the cheese as well, which is that.

Janina Doyle 00:48:46 Lovely, okay, good explanation. Salt and vinegar potato chips. Are you going to go with a Riesling or your good friend, Albariño?

Rob Buckhaven 00:48:55 Do you know what? I think I'd go with a Riesling, but I would go with something like a Clare Valley Riesling. So, I would go with something sort of higher altitude. I'd go with something leaner, so you've still got those lovely aromatics that Riesling has. You've still got a touch of texture, a little bit of that sweetness as well, but it would be on the drier side. And I think that would go really well.

Janina Doyle 00:49:14 What about Walkers ready salted crisps? Are you going to go English sparkling wine or Prosecco?

Rob Buckhaven 00:49:21 I'm going to go Prosecco on this one. I'm going to go to Prosecco because I think you've got a blank canvas here. I think there could be a touch. I mean, English sparkling wine to me has a lot of salinity anyway, so you don't want to double down on that.

So, I think Prosecco, that would offset it really well, really nicely. And I'm talking about Brut Prosecco. You don't want to go extra dry or anything. Yeah, too sweet. But I would say something like mini cheddars would be really good for an English sparkling wine. I think that would go perfectly because I always find that English sparkling wines go very well with cheese things. So, we had a thrice cooked cheese souffle at the Gavroche when it was still around. That one with our Blanc de blancs and I've never tasted anything like that pairing. It was insane.

Janina Doyle 00:50:03 Oh, you heard it here first. Okay. Moving on before I start salivating. The Tyrell's Smokey Texas BBQ crisps with, this one I feel is tough, Malbec or Shiraz?

Rob Buckhaven 00:50:14 Malbec because I think with Shiraz, and Syrah in particular, you get a smokiness anyway. So, again, I don't want to double down on that. Sometimes I find with food pairing, you're either doubling down on something or you're not, you're going the opposite. And I think with this one, the opposite. I think Malbec got enough little spice to offset that, but yeah, I wouldn't do both.

Janina Doyle 00:50:35 Beautiful explanation. Okay.

Rob Buckhaven 00:50:37 Well, thank you.

Janina Doyle 00:50:38 Now what about this? The prawn cocktail skips. I have not eaten any of these since I was a child.

Rob Buckhaven 00:50:44 I love them.

Janina Doyle 00:50:44 Provence rosé or a Riesling?

Rob Buckhaven 00:50:47 Provence Rosé.

Janina Doyle 00:50:49 Okay.

Rob Buckhaven 00:50:50 What do you think?

Janina Doyle 00:50:50 I asked these because I've picked two that I would always pair with both of them. So, that's why. I think that prawn cocktail is really aromatic, so I might lead towards a Riesling, something that's really floral and peachy and just, you know, and it's obviously got the striking acidity. It's just going to cleanse everything. I mean, you can't go wrong.

Rob Buckhaven 00:51:11 You just can't. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:51:15 Crack open both bottles. And to finish off with, what about sensations Thai chilli crisps with, I'm either Grenache Rosé or Pinot Gris.

Rob Buckhaven 00:51:27 God, it's a tough one, isn't it? I would go for a kind of opulent Pinot Gris. I think of Alsace Pinot Gris. Pinot Grigio can be a little bit neutral. So, I think with that texture, that roundness, and sometimes a little bit of a touch of kind of sweetness in there as well, I think it would go really well. Because the thing with chilli, not that these are particularly hot crisps, but anything with chilli, you want that fruit, you want that roundness, you want a bit of voluptuousness. Grenache, yes, it's crowd pleasing, but it will still be quite sort of lean.

Janina Doyle 00:52:07 You need a bit more sweetness.

Rob Buckhaven 00:52:09 A bit more sweetness. Yeah. Otherwise you get the clash and you don't want the clash. No one wants that.

Janina Doyle 00:52:15 Thank you, Rob. That was lovely. Beautiful explanations. I think I'm going to go off and go and eat some crisps now.

Rob Buckhaven 00:52:20 I am. It's that time, isn't it? It's five. So, let's do it.

Janina Doyle 00:52:23 It is time. Right. Well, you know what I'll be doing. I'll be thinking of you. Whilst you're eating your crisps, you can think of me.

Rob Buckhaven 00:52:28 And reading my book. Yeah.

Janina Doyle 00:52:30 And of course, well, everybody, the link for the book will be in my show notes. So thanks, Rob. We'll catch up soon.

Rob Buckhaven 00:52:38 Janina, thank you so much. I had so much fun.

Janina Doyle 00:52:40 Me too. See you later. Bye.

Rob Buckhaven 00:52:42 Let's do it again. Bye.

Janina Doyle 00:52:47 So as you guys all know, it's been amazing this season. I have the incredible support and sponsorship of [Wickhams Wine](#), who are an awesome online retailer. If you haven't gone over there yet, they have, I've double checked, a Mencia, if you want to give that a go, and they have Bacchus.

So, if you're feeling it, pop over to their site. The link is in my show notes to their website. And don't forget on your first order, if you use the code 'EATSLEEP10,' you will of course get 10% off.

Now to finish off with, I have a wine quote for you all and I mean this episode has been about wine flavours after all. And so, this is a quote from Louis Pasteur. Louis Pasteur is the famous French chemist and microbiologist who lived in the 19th century and is famous in our wine world for being the person who worked out that it was microorganisms that were responsible for fermentation. Now he is known to have said:

"The flavour of wine is like delicate poetry."

And it is, that's why we need to decant things or perhaps use a nutribullet because each sip reveals layers of different nuances and it's our job to interpret each flavour. Now next week, I'm really excited to say I am talking with Rodolphe de Pins from Chateau des Montfaucon in the Lirac wine region of the Southern Rhone Valley in France.

And this episode is going into detail on Lirac, a wine region, a Cru that is very often overshadowed by its more famous neighbours, such as Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Gigondas. And so, you are going to learn and I am promising you, you'll be very excited and ready to go and visit this region after next week's episode. So, until then, my wine friends, pour yourself that glass, keep reflecting, keep learning, and I'll see you back here next week. Until then, wine friends, cheers to you.