

2009 – A Look Back, 2010 – A Look Ahead

POSTED BY DRINKWHATYOULIKE.COM IN UNCATEGORIZED

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Year-end 2009 marked the first full year of this site, which was started way back in June 2008. At the risk of sounding too self-important and cliché, I wanted to post a quick 2009 year-end wrap up for posterity.

Tags

*Le Telquel, Matthiasson,
Matthiasson White,
Patricia Green, Virginia
Wine*

I started this site as a way to bring order to my wine notes and chronicle some of my travels that involve wine. Since this site is still an informal, random collection of my wine experiences, I'm not sure if I've met my initial charge – but I've totally enjoyed the learning experience of formalizing some of my wine thoughts on this blog, and I've met some great people to boot.

In 2009, a couple of my quasi-accomplishments:

- I wrote 115 posts
- Enjoyed wine on 5 continents
- Flew 152,000 miles.
- Spent 149 nights in Marriotts (and a few more at other hotel chains)
- Took a long awaited trip to Oregon's Willamette Valley
- Attended the Wine Bloggers Conference in Santa Rosa, CA
- Took a wine tasting weekend in Virginia wine country with friends and fellow wine bloggers, Dezel Quillen of [MyVineSpot](#), and John Witherspoon of [AnythingWine](#).
- Met a lot of great wine friends through this site

Unfortunately, I wasn't able to meet my primary 2009 wine related goal:

“Redesign and move this site to WordPress and turn DrinkWhatYouLike in to an actual blog that resembles a real website vice something that a bored wino fobbed together.”

Aside from attending the European Wine Bloggers Conference, my number one 2010 wine related goal is to finally professionalize this site (*guess that would include devoting more than an hour a week to this site*). I realize the formatting, layout, and consistent grammatical and spelling errors detract from the actual content and cheapen the site (*of course I'm not sure if that's a bad thing to keep expectations low... 😊*). I will work on improving this site as I take my wine education to the next level in 2010.

Although I'm not able to devote enough time to this blog to capture all of my tasting notes and wine experiences, I have a couple of notable favorites this year that I'd like to recap:

Favorite Wine Trip of 2009: My favorite wine related [trip of 2009 was to Australia](#) where I met some incredible wine makers, toured beautiful vineyards and countryside, and was turned on to [Australian Pinot Noir](#). The only downside to this trip was the fact that my wife wasn't able to join me. I'll be returning Down Unda in May/June, and hope to take wifey along with me.

A close second was my trip to the Willamette Valley – FINALLY! Having my wife with me made this trip perfect. I plan to return to the Willamette Valley in 2010 for a week or two. I am planning my trip during the Fall, and hopefully can convince a winery to let me work (volunteer) with them for a week during harvest.

By rough estimate, I tasted 500+ wines in 2009. This includes winery visits, wine festivals, trade tastings and wine consumed during meals. Of all the wines I tasted, a few stood out for me (there are of course too many other great ones to list here).

Favorite White of 2009:

By far, my favorite white wine of 2009 was the **2007 Matthiasson White**. During a trip to Napa in January, my wife and I had the pleasure of having lunch at the home of Matthiasson founders, Jill Klein and Steve Matthiasson, where I was first introduced to their amazing wines ([read post here](#)). Given the amount of very well deserved national recognition and big time press Matthiasson wines are receiving, I suspect these wines may be much harder to find in 2010.

Favorite Red(s) of 2009:

One of my favorite reds of the year was the **Patricia Green 2005 Anniversary Pinot Noir**. We [opened this bottle](#) in February as part of 'Open the Bottle Night.'

One indicator that I will never be a professional wine critic is my situational bias – the fact that my enjoyment level of any given wine goes up exponentially if I happen to be consuming that wine during a Steelers victory, or, if my wife and I happen to be enjoying the wine together on a quiet night at home (I travel an insane amount so this is a rare occasion). One of my favorite wines while enjoying a Steelers victory (AFC Championship Game) back in January was the **Le Telquel Gamay** produced by ultra minimalist Theirry Puzelat. This wine tasted much better as the Steelers sealed their victory.

On wine blogging in 2009: I realize it's passé to blog about wine blogging, but I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few of my favorite wine blogs that I read on an almost daily basis. I currently follow about 100 wine blogs with Google Reader, but these are just a few of my favorites:

- **Good Grape** written by Jeff Lefevere. In this time of short attention spans and Twitter-dominated communication, Jeff's long-format Op-Ed style is refreshing. Thankfully the wine blogosphere has people with Jeff's writing talent and passion for the subject of wine. If you don't read Good Grape, you should. It is, by far, one of the very best wine related sites 'out there.'
- **Bigger Than Your Head** written by Fredric Koeppl. Much like Good Grape, Bigger Than Your Head is exceptionally well written with a strong focus on wine reviews. Fredric is a professional wine writer by trade and that clearly shows at BTYH. He is on my list of wine people to meet. If I'm ever in Memphis I plan to look him up in the hopes of shaking him down for some **cheese toast**. Not only is BTYH well written with valuable/usable advice and tasting notes, it has a clean layout that I appreciate.

- **Virginia Wine Time** written by Warren Richard and Paul Armstrong. As the name suggests, their blog is solely focused on the growing Virginia wine industry. Virginia Wine Time, in my opinion, is the best single-state-focused wine blog in the blogosphere. The word 'best' defined as actually having useful information. I have been a long time reader of VWT and have utilized the site several times when making decisions on wineries to visit during trips out to Virginia wine country. Paul and Warren are also on my list of wines peeps to meet in 2010.
- **HoseMaster of Wine** written by some guy named Ron Washam. This guy is a hoot – he's crass, rude, funny, opinionated, uses swear words in his posts, and posts the occasional nude female images – but I like it. I really enjoy good satire, and this is good (at times) satire. Ron too, is on my list of wine people to meet in 2010.
- **Wino sapien** written by Edward, a 40 something, father, husband, doctor based in Perth, Australia. I found Wino sapien early in 2009, and read it religiously. Edward's site was a huge resource for me leading up to my trip to Australia. From his writing, Edward appears to be a cerebral dude, and I like smart people, and like reading their writing. Hat tip to Edward for turning me on to a couple of good books during the year as well.

I certainly left out a lot of other great wine blogs, but wanted to give a few shout outs.



— Happy New Year! Thanks for reading! Here's to a great 2010...