

[TRANSCRIPT] Facebook Live Video Interview of Dave Specter, Bells Up Winery by Wine Julia, April 18, 2018

Wine Julia:

Because it's been-

Dave Specter:

Gotcha.

Wine Julia:

Hey, everybody. It's Wine Julia here. And I just noticed a big bee, Dave. I'm sorry. I'm terrified of them.

Dave Specter:

Where? Where? Oh, he's over there.

Wine Julia:

Right by your feet.

Dave Specter:

Oh, he's just a bee, not a yellow jacket.

Wine Julia:

Okay. Okay.

Dave Specter:

You'll be okay.

Wine Julia:

All right. So anyway-

Dave Specter:

I promise. He doesn't want you.

Wine Julia:

Of course, that's how I ... Yes, that's true. I need to remember that. He does not want me.

Dave Specter:

He's looking for flowers.

Wine Julia:

It's only for me would I start the show with this big, huge, big daddy bumble ... A fat daddy bumblebee right at my feet. But anyway, you all know I'm Wine Julia. This is Dave Specter. And he is up here, or I

should say, down here from the Newberg area where Bells Up Winery is. And we've had Bells Up prior. About a year ago, we featured Bells Up. And I fell in love with their wine actually when I visited up at their beautiful winery. It's just gorgeous. Just trust me and go up to the winery and visit them. It's by appointment only or are you-

Dave Specter:

By appointment only. We actually scaled up to 400 cases. So we're I think still the smallest place I can find that has its own dedicated tasting room space. So just call me, email me, and we'll schedule something. We'll get you in. We're totally flexible.

Wine Julia:

I love that, you're a so small production. And here you are, you're sitting with me and we get to try your wines tonight.

Dave Specter:

Well, of course.

Wine Julia:

So anyone who's coming to the tasting tonight is very lucky. I'm seeing a lot of people coming on right now that I know. And I am at Capitello, Jennifer, that's where I'm working now. I work in the tasting room and I am doing my Wednesday night tastings here. So come and see me, Jennifer. Hello. There we go, Ducks newbie. I don't know if I've ever met you, but I know your name. Come and meet Dave and try the Bells Up Wines, because they are absolutely delicious. There's a whole story behind their label, which I'll give you a quick shot of. You can see the French horn here. So we're going to talk a little bit about that. I've got a lot of questions for Dave. And what's really exciting about this wine right here, which we'll be trying tonight, it is Dave's ... This is a celebration tonight. Because this-

Dave Specter:

Big time.

Wine Julia:

... is your first estate wine that they've actually ... Because they have baby grapes there. So how old-

Dave Specter:

Yep.

Wine Julia:

So you planted them in?

Dave Specter:

We planted ... The blocks that produced the rosé we planted back in 2014. Should make sure to explain that when we bought the property at the end of 2012 what we inherited was, and I kid you not, the neighborhood eyesore. It was about 10 acres worth of dead Christmas trees, blackberries.

Wine Julia:

Oh gosh.

Dave Specter:

And to this day we have people, the neighbors that will come up to us and only saying, "Thank you so much for getting rid of all of the garbage that was on that property." And that was the stuff you can see.

Wine Julia:

Right.

Dave Specter:

You buy a farm property and then you find things like the old metal dump in the corner-

Wine Julia:

Oh, yeah.

Dave Specter:

... that you clean up.

Wine Julia:

An old car.

Dave Specter:

Yep. Yep. 30 old rotten tires. I mean, our scrapper just loves us. Can't wait to see us again. But yeah, so it took us about a year, which is why we had to start planting spring '14. But now these vines are producing, the way I describe these, not ready for prime time pinot yet. We're going to do rosé again this year. We'll see where we are next year.

Wine Julia:

Okay. That's exciting. I don't know. I can't wait to taste all of your estate fruit. I know that you ... What I've been raving about for a year now is the Seyval Blanc, because that's special to you. You brought actually clippings from Ohio, right?

Dave Specter:

What-

Wine Julia:

How did you do that?

Dave Specter:

The way we-

Wine Julia:

How did you get Seyval Blanc here?

Dave Specter:

... did it was we ordered clippings actually from New York.

Wine Julia:

Oh, okay.

Dave Specter:

Because we needed to get it from an established greenhouse.

Wine Julia:

Gotcha.

Dave Specter:

And Ohio really doesn't have those. But in New York where you actually have greenhouses that can produce those sorts of cuttings. And I talked a little about Seyval Blanc the last time. But what it is, it's one of these hybrid grapes that's been bred primarily for cold tolerance. But Sauvignon Blanc is one of the French parent grape, bred with an American grape. And what it gives you is something that's very different from the other hybrids. A lot of times the hybrids gives you sort of these kind of weird ... You'll hear the term, "Foxy flavor," thrown out a lot.

Wine Julia:

I like that.

Dave Specter:

Which is interesting. But it's very, very different from what you get with kind of your standard French varietals. So it just takes a little getting used to. But there are a lot of lovely wines you can make with that. What I like about this one is it's sort of a natural transition point. It really tastes like something you would find out in France, even though-

Wine Julia:

Wow, I love it. So that's your Seyval Blanc.

Dave Specter:

That's the Seyval Blanc.

Wine Julia:

Yes.

Dave Specter:

Yes.

Wine Julia:

So they only did five gallons. So that's how much you got-

Dave Specter:

Well, not exactly by choice. Those vines are three years old.

Wine Julia:

Right.

Dave Specter:

And our thing is we're not ... There's a time to stress vines, but young is not the time to do it.

Wine Julia:

Right.

Dave Specter:

So we're just taking these first couple of years and just letting them build up root structure to the extent we can get any usable fruit off it, great. With the third year we just decided, "Hey, let's just treat this as proof of concept and make sure we like the flavors and what we're getting out of it." So we cut a lot of fruit off, ended up with a 100 pounds, which was enough as Julia said, to make about five gallons. Translates to a little under two cases. So we're not quite ready for a commercial branding on that yet.

Wine Julia:

But soon.

Dave Specter:

But give us a couple more years and we're going to get there. That's eventually-

Wine Julia:

And that's exciting, because nobody else has Seyval Blanc. I mean, I know that down in the Umpqua Valley, but nobody up in the Willamette Valley has Seyval Blanc. We did try a Seyval Blanc from Mark Girardet a couple of weeks ago. He blended it in with a couple of other things. And it's a really ... Well, what I remember from when I tried the wine that you had brought that you had made in Ohio, it was really a beautiful acidity. Bright, bright acidity. That's really what stood out for me. And that's what I loved about it. And it's this crisp white, pure varietal that I absolutely love. So when Dave is like this famous superstar, because he's-

Dave Specter:

Yeah, right.

Wine Julia:

... making this fabulous Seyval Blanc in Willamette Valley. And he's the only person doing it. I can't wait to be sitting next to Dave and talking to you about that, and drinking that. While we're sitting-

Dave Specter:

I can't wait for that.

Wine Julia:

... out in the sun like we are today, because this is so nice. Finally we're blue sky.

Dave Specter:

Yes.

Wine Julia:

So we are at Capitello tonight. A lot of people don't know that I've moved from Oregon Wine Lab over to Capitello. It's a great space. We've got a lot of room. There's some food here. And I'm behind the bar. So it's really kind of nice being behind the bar. I can help you ring up whatever you need, get you glass pours, get you your bottle of wine, whatever you need. And Dave of course is going to be pouring the tastes. And we have got our wines for you to try from Bells Up tonight. And you want to talk about those a little bit?

Dave Specter:

Sure. So I pride myself on having a very diverse lineup. And so I've brought four completely different wines. I brought our Pinot Blanc. As Julia was talking about with my Seyval Blanc, we make this a very similar way. Crisp acidity, but well-balanced. And with a lot of chew on the inside. This was actually the first time we've gotten fruit from the Old Amity area.

Wine Julia:

Oh, wow.

Dave Specter:

So we're really excited about that.

Wine Julia:

Yeah.

Dave Specter:

And it's nice to have that back in the lineup. We'd been sold out of it for about eight months, which is-

Wine Julia:

Oh, wow.

Dave Specter:

... kind of embarrassing. But hopefully we won't run into that problem again soon. And then we have our Estate Rosé that we're excited about. And we have-

Wine Julia:

And that's this one that I was showing. Yay.

Dave Specter:

We have our tightened Pinot Noir 2015. Yes, it's young. Unfortunately I sold out of 13 and 14 last year, because everything started tasting really yummy at about the same time. And then they started flying off the shelves.

Wine Julia:

Oh, yeah.

Dave Specter:

So we're with 15. And then our 2016 Syrah from-

Wine Julia:

Did you ... I was just going to say, did you source the Syrah from the same place in Walla Walla?

Dave Specter:

Yes, from-

Wine Julia:

Right inside-

Dave Specter:

... Summit View Vineyard. It's in the Milton-Freewater area. It's not in the Rocks. It's up on a hill overlooking the Rocks, giving us that same really gentle character. I mean, I make this the same way I make the pinots. And this is for people that love Willamette Valley Pinot Noir, the gentleness and the smoothness. This is what I'm trying to accomplish with the Syrah too. I don't want the big heavy tannins.

Wine Julia:

Right.

Dave Specter:

It's not old world, but it's a lot closer to it than a lot of the ones you're going to find.

Wine Julia:

Yeah, I totally agree. That's a way to describe it. And it has this certain finesse to it that you just don't find in other Syrah. It's a little bit more delicate. But that doesn't mean that it's not complex. It's super complex. So it's a beautiful wine. And I'm excited for everybody to try it. So Jen, you want to know the address of where we are? I'm on the corner of Charnelton and 5th Ave. So I believe 540 Charnelton Ave. And it's at Capitello Wines. Have you never been here? What's wrong with you? You need to get down here.

Dave Specter:

It's cool. Y'all gotta check this out.

Wine Julia:

I know. It's a beautiful tasting room. And hey Ryan Hewitt, how you doing?

Dave Specter:

Ryan Hewitt, I'm still waiting for your visit. I'm still waiting.

Wine Julia:

Ryan, you're in trouble. You better get over there and see Dave. So I'm excited about a couple things. So the first time that I met Dave and his wife Sara, they hosted me at their house. And one of my favorite things of the day there besides their beautiful blue ceilings and ... You have to go there and see, trust me. But Sara makes this grape pie. Grape pie, okay? Not something you see very often. And we've got one here tonight. So I am so excited.

Wine Julia:

This is part of the raffle tonight. You're going to get a special grape pie made by Sara Specter of Bells Up Winery. And trust me, this is the best pairing with that Syrah that you will ever have. It is so delicious. And I am so excited. She baked this pie, and we have some here. So you got to come down. We always have a raffle basket as always. And this is definitely the most unique piece of a raffle that we've ever had. And trust me, it's delicious with the Syrah. So you need to get the Syrah and win the pie. You have to buy some wine and then get your name in the drawing, and be the winner of this pie. Because you won't have anything like it. Believe me, you won't. It's really different and so good. Grape pie. I had never even heard of grape pie.

Dave Specter:

Yep. It's a table grape. But as it turns out, this particular table grape has in its parentage, wine grapes. So it's one of the very few that we found that when you bake it, just the chemistry actually holds it together. When you cut it, it's not going to just completely run off on you or anything like that. And it goes by this lovely, lovely name of 47616.

Wine Julia:

47616?

Dave Specter:

Yep. You can tell a lab geek definitely enjoyed coming up with this name. But we got these grapes up at Hubbard from Broadacres Nursery there.

Wine Julia:

Okay.

Dave Specter:

And they are fabulous people, and just a lot of fun. So definitely check them out in September when they have their open houses.

Wine Julia:

Oh, cool. I love it. That's so fun. All right. Some of the other things that I want to talk about, I know that I did an interview last year with Dave. But it's been a year. So I think everybody should know your story behind Bells Up and why there's a French horn, what the meaning is of Bells Up. Because it really truly is ... And even the names of their wines like Prelude and Rhapsody for the Pinot Blanc. And even on the

back, you might not be able to see, but you can see right here it's all about music. So talk a little bit about Bells Up-

Dave Specter:

Sure.

Wine Julia:

... and how you became Bells Up.

Dave Specter:

So it kind of started with the logo. And I was a French horn player for about 20 years back in my youth. I started in sixth grade. I played all the way through college. I would describe myself as a very good college player in a similar way to where you describe a very good college athlete. You can compete at that level, but when you start looking at what it takes to be a professional, you realize very quickly you aren't quite that good. But I had so much fun and so many amazing life experiences, got to travel all over. And it's such an important part of my life. I still have the horn. And I dream about someday having 30 minutes a day to practice. But what are you going to do?

Wine Julia:

Do you ever get it out and play it? Ever?

Dave Specter:

I haven't in a while. To be honest, last time I opened the case a few years ago, I saw all the valves were frozen. It's going to need a little ... It can be saved. But it's going to need a little work.

Wine Julia:

Okay.

Dave Specter:

So we'll figure that out.

Wine Julia:

I'm determined to someday watch you play. And listen, I just-

Dave Specter:

Oh, geez.

Wine Julia:

So hopefully that'll happen one of these days we'll see you. So go ahead and tell them the story.

Dave Specter:

Yeah. So I knew that I wanted that to be the theme, but I didn't have a name picked out. And I wanted to wait until we had the property, which drove my dear wife crazy. Because she's the marketing genius behind what we do. And all I heard for years was, "How do you expect me to market something that

doesn't have a name?" And I'm like, "Well, you're just so good at it, honey. I don't need to do ... " Well, so we end up ... The property that we ended up with is on Bell Road, just a little bit-

Wine Julia:

I love that.

Dave Specter:

... North of Newberg. And that just clicked perfectly. And what Bells Up means, just to kind of give you the short version, it's a moment when the French horn players get to lift their bells in the air. And this is their time to be on display. Doesn't happen very often.

Wine Julia:

It's so cool.

Dave Specter:

But it's that moment where if you're sitting in the audience, you just see this. They go from the bell sitting on your leg to the bell up in the air. And the music's loud. And this is your time to shine. And it just, for me it felt like this was sort of the perfect way to describe the journey that we had as we put this place together all the years, and the blood, sweat and tears literally behind starting up a winery. And it just kind of felt the culmination of that this was the perfect weight honor that. And then each of the individual names of the wines plays into that theme as well. It's got to be a name of a piece that has a lot of French horn in it.

Wine Julia:

Ah, okay.

Dave Specter:

Which I thought would be easier than it was when I started out. Turns out when you start looking at all the names you can use and you say ... Oh, what happened?

Wine Julia:

I don't know.

Dave Specter:

Something dropped on you?

Wine Julia:

Something fell on me. It was a big bug. It's off of me. I'm okay.

Dave Specter:

Hey, you never know what's going to happen with these. Right?

Wine Julia:

I'm just ... Anyone who knows me knows I'm terrified of bug. There was a stinkbug the other day in there and I just about had a heart attack. And I was alone, and it's all on camera. I'm just letting you know now.

Dave Specter:

We 're going to have to pull up those tapes I think.

Wine Julia:

Okay. Sorry.

Dave Specter:

No, it's cool.

Wine Julia:

So go ahead.

Dave Specter:

So yeah. So that's the thing. So we have a lot of fun with it. With our winery we're only by appointment. Being as small as we are, we really want to take the time to get to know every customer that comes in. And really the only way you can do that is just to have everybody having their own separate appointments. We don't double book. So like we said earlier, just give me a call, shoot me an email. We'd love to share with you what we've been doing. And now that the weather is turning great, we can probably now start having more tastings out on our back porch with our view.

Wine Julia:

So beautiful.

Dave Specter:

Thank goodness.

Wine Julia:

Gorgeous view.

Dave Specter:

We were waiting forever for this.

Wine Julia:

Bells Up porch is definitely something to talk about and to see and experience. I was lucky you had just built it when I came out there. So I got to stand outside and have some wine, and look at the view. It's gorgeous. And what was I going to say? Because you were talking about tastings. Oh, I was going to say that what Dave was saying is that they really do make their tastings so personal. You really feel like you get to know Dave and Sara, which is one of the things that I really love about it. You really spend time with the people that you're with. And maybe you'll even get, I don't know, a little piece of grape pie with the Syrah. Who knows? That's totally have to Sara and Dave. I'm just saying-

Dave Specter:

It often depends on how good a customer you are. Hang on. Yes, uncle Barry. I ship to Pittsburgh. If you order, I will send something. Thanks.

Wine Julia:

I know. And I saw Sara, I must have tagged ... There must be another David Specter in my 5000 friends that I know so well on Facebook, that there must've been another David Specter, so I saw Sara wrote, "You need to tag the right David Specter." I'm like, "Okay, I will."

Dave Specter:

Oh, that's all right.

Wine Julia:

I promise, Sara. I will. It's easy to change. It must have tagged somebody else. But yeah. So somebody in Pittsburgh wants your wine.

Dave Specter:

That's my uncle.

Wine Julia:

Oh.

Dave Specter:

That's uncle Barry.

Wine Julia:

Uncle Barry. You'll get wine. Yeah.

Dave Specter:

You will get wine when you ... I sent you an email on it, uncle Barry. You just have to tell me what you want.

Wine Julia:

That's easy enough, because the wine is so good. I don't know. I'd be happy with anything. So come on down to Capitello and try these wines. Get to try their first ever estate wine, which is the Rosé Pinot Noir. And if anybody from the symphony is watching, come on down. Of course, this is your kind of wine that you want to have. Because this just goes with your whole theme. And I don't know, it's great wine. We're going to have a great time at Capitello. It's a great experience inside. It's beautiful. It's comfortable.

Wine Julia:

And we're even sitting outside right now, and we have outdoor seating. So if you want to sit outside and enjoy a glass of wine, you can do that too. We've got our tables set up outside. So you can do that

because I mean, we've actually had a day where there's been no rain. And the sky right now is actually blue and beautiful.

Dave Specter:

It's us. We brought the spring.

Wine Julia:

Yes, Dave showed up-

Dave Specter:

We brought the spring.

Wine Julia:

... and the clouds parted, and the sun came through. All right, everybody. Oh, yes. Oh, Barbara [Hevitts 00:17:29].

Dave Specter:

Oh, yes. Hi, Barbara.

Wine Julia:

Barbara is a customer of mine since I had my wine bar in Springfield, a long time.

Dave Specter:

Yeah.

Wine Julia:

So I've known her for a long time. She's fabulous.

Dave Specter:

Well, I hope you're coming back tonight.

Wine Julia:

I know. I hope you can come, Barbara and Don. And I would love to see you.

Dave Specter:

And Shantel, thank you so much. That's very kind of you. We loved meeting you last week.

Wine Julia:

See, people are coming on and watching even that you met last week. I love it. So we have a good audience tonight. So come down to Capitello if you're in the area. If you're not, I'm sorry, you're missing a good tasting tonight. I don't know what else to say. But maybe come to make sure you call Dave and visit the tasting room, because you'll get a great experience there too. So anyway, we better run in because I know when we came out here, we were running a little bit late. And people were already arriving. So it's going to be a good busy night. And I'm excited. So let's get in there-

Dave Specter:

Let's do it.

Wine Julia:

... and get somebody to win this great pie. You're going to love it with the Syrah. All right.

Dave Specter:

All right.

Wine Julia:

Thank you, Dave

Dave Specter:

Thanks, everybody. Good night.

Wine Julia:

Bye.