

AUDIO: HosBrutality Podcast Interviews Dave Specter of Bells Up Winery [TRANSCRIPT] Broadcast September 8, 2020

Stefan Czarnecki ([00:01](#)):

Hello, this is Stefan from HosBrutality. And I wanted to take a minute just to tell you a little bit about Anchor. Anchor is a podcasting platform and website, and it's really helped us get our start with HosBrutality. It's easy to upload your audio or record right through the website. You can also set up other podcasting platforms, right through Anchor. They'll even connect you with businesses for monetization. So if you have something to say, consider starting your own podcast with Anchor.

Stefan Czarnecki ([00:41](#)):

Welcome to hospitality. I'm Stefan Czarnecki of Black Tie Tours. With me as always Wesley Jones of Tour Cascadia and local artist Cole Rogers.

Cole Rogers ([00:50](#)):

That's what they call me.

Stefan Czarnecki ([00:51](#)):

Yeah, it is. And we are joined today by a special guest. We are at Bells Up Winery here in the the Chehalem AVA. And, uthis person is a musician,

Dave Specter ([01:05](#)):

A former musician.

Stefan Czarnecki ([01:05](#)):

A winemaker,

Dave Specter ([01:05](#)):

That's correct.

Stefan Czarnecki ([01:08](#)):

And most importantly an Orlando magic fan?

Dave Specter ([01:12](#)):

Oh, it happens to the best of us. Sometimes.

Stefan Czarnecki ([01:13](#)):

David Specter. Well, the worst of us. David Specter's here.

Dave Specter ([01:16](#)):

Thank you Stefan.

Stefan Czarnecki ([01:18](#)):

Why the Magic? Why?

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Dave Specter ([01:19](#)):

See, I have a tortured, tortured soul. I grew up in the Orlando area back in the eighties for years and years. I have family in, in Eastern Pennsylvania. They used to visit. So I grew up rooting for a lot of the Philly area teams, but never really lived there. So when the magic came around 1989, this is like the very first hometown team that I ever had. And a year later we moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, and I haven't been to a game since. It's a story of my life. Yeah,

Stefan Czarnecki ([01:49](#)):

That's sad. But you get what you got, but you were there for like penny and Shaq when they're not there. But

Dave Specter ([01:56](#)):

No, I, I was there for Scott Skiles Nick Anderson I mean, you, you talk Mark Acres. You talk about the dregs of the NBA that first year, that, that was a fascinating team,

Cole Rogers ([02:09](#)):

But that that'd be like start we, you know, started a NFL team in Portland, in the middle of me being in middle school or elementary school, But then moving away. Yeah. But I'd still be hardcore for yeah.

All ([02:19](#)):

Yeah, yeah. Exactly.

Dave Specter ([02:21](#)):

And so they didn't of course get good until a few years after I'd moved. I mean, I think it was the first year they made the finals was 95, six years after the team started.

Stefan Czarnecki ([02:29](#)):

Shaq. Shaq was there. Shaq was there at that point. Shaq and penny down.

Cole Rogers ([02:33](#)):

I never realized there was such a young exhibition team at the time Shaq was in his heyday there.

Dave Specter ([02:37](#)):

Oh yeah.

Wesley Jones ([02:38](#)):

The Magic were the coolest. When I was like that age, they had great swag. Yeah.

Cole Rogers ([02:43](#)):

Uniform pretty much determines which team is cool. I, as like a 13, I liked the Bengals and they were like the worst team in the NFL. I remember I was like, we're going to have to talk about your bangles.

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Cole Rogers ([02:57](#)):

I'm a true chargers fan. But when I like a little, little kid, I always obsessed with, with uniforms and I would draw, I would make up teams and I would draw like you know, Jaguars versus snakes and I'd make the uniforms up. And I thought the Bengals uniforms were so cool. Cause they had the stripes in there.

Stefan Czarnecki ([03:12](#)):

But You were also kind of obsessed with animals fighting each other too.

Cole Rogers ([03:15](#)):

Yeah. That was like a whole nother episode.

Wesley Jones ([03:16](#)):

LikeUh my entire life bull mouse fighting a, you know, like a bull rattlesnake, but the bull mouse has a machine gun, you know, or something like that.

Cole Rogers ([03:28](#)):

These are the questions. My parents grew up me asking rather than like philosophical [inaudible] and say like, man, my sister said something really insightful today. My mom was like, my son just asked me whether a Jaguar could actually be a tiger in a fight. Okay.

Stefan Czarnecki ([03:42](#)):

And then that show came out with like the symbol data,

Cole Rogers ([03:47](#)):

Extreme animal battle or something like flight or something like that. Yeah. Too late, too bad. I was in college and I came back. I thought, I thought for sure it was your idea. I mean

Stefan Czarnecki ([03:55](#)):

A man ahead of your time, but now did you, have you adopted any team? Did you, did you have you

Cole Rogers ([03:59](#)):

Not the for the blazers as they are? My number one Western conference team. I mean, the nice thing is when you're on two completely polar opposite sides of the country, you almost never really have to worry about choosing when you root for two bad teams. Also they very rarely meet in the finals. So pretty much, pretty much absolutely coming from a charger with Leslie. I mean, we don't get into my fandom too much, but

Stefan Czarnecki ([04:22](#)):

All right. So Dave, you, you got an interesting story. You started in in your garage with him.

Dave Specter ([04:27](#)):

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Yep. Got it. Got a home. Why making kit? Did that kit come with the,

Speaker 3 ([04:30](#)):

Oh, it came with, it came with everything. The step-by-step idiot. Proof instructions. Not that I didn't try to screw it up, but I mean you presumably they, they teach you. Yep. Step one do get out.

Stefan Czarnecki ([04:40](#)):

Here's the question. If you get the kit in the mail and you just leave it for a year, just sitting there, will that juice turn into wine?

Dave Specter ([04:47](#)):

No. Okay. No, because what, what they give you is it's a vacuum sealed and it's just the juice. And then the yeast is in a separate packet. Now I'm scared to think about in some of the cases. I mean, you look on the store shelves when you buy these things and there are expiration dates, but you wonder how long some of those juice packets have been sitting around and especially where we were in Cincinnati at the time. I mean, there was a wine making community, but it certainly wasn't as robust as some others. So, you know, you're never quite sure, but it, that first one, at least as I always say that the very first one we made was a Rioja. I've made worse wines than that. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([05:23](#)):

There you go. You haven't sold worse wines than that?

Dave Specter ([05:26](#)):

No, that's true. That's true.

Stefan Czarnecki ([05:27](#)):

So you started, you started with Kit and then you moved on to grapes and then you got into a wine making club, like a co-op type thing.

Dave Specter ([05:35](#)):

Yeah, we at that time, so there was a, there was a winemaking group in Cincinnati. That I got that I became a part of the, probably the funniest thing about it is I was probably the youngest person in this group by a good 25 years. I mean, we saw a lot of like old guy winemaking in this like, and you kind of, what's interesting about, Oh, well it runs one of the either extremes mean there's almost nothing in the middle. You've either got people that have really honed their craft over 25, 30 years. And they're making some absolutely out of the world phenomenal stuff that you would never expect, but it goes the other way too, man. I mean, then you end up with like the, I can't smell or taste anything and I just threw stuff in there. Well, it's good enough. So we're going to put it in the bottle and it'll get me up. So cork it. Yeah. . Yeah. Well, and you just hope that cork is going to stay in the bottle and not at some point blow up out of it. Yeah. You do learn after awhile. It's like, you know, who's wines are you going to trust and whose wines you just kind of avoid.

Stefan Czarnecki ([06:31](#)):

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So you saw the good, bad and the ugly wines. You were, which one of those? Kidding. Yeah.

Dave Specter ([06:35](#)):

Depending on the batch could be all three.

Stefan Czarnecki ([06:38](#)):

And then, so you, you started thinking you were doing a little tasting going out visiting spots, you came out here and then eventually you worked at, you made your way out here with the purpose, with the sole purpose of making wine.

Dave Specter ([06:50](#)):

One sole purpose of doing exactly what we do.

Stefan Czarnecki ([06:52](#)):

And you learned under Bryan at Alexana, correct?

Dave Specter ([06:55](#)):

He was, he was a wonderful mentor. He's still a great friend. And the thing about Bryan that I respect more than anything is when, when I was approaching him about doing a harvest internship, here's a guy coming out in his mid to late, mid to late thirties. I am not your typical harvest intern. Bryan looked at what I was doing and didn't even bat an eye and said, we'd love to have you in. At the time, Alexana was moving into the new facility that they're in now. So it was the first year they didn't have their lab done there. There was a lot of stuff that wasn't done. Brian did an amazing job of getting us all through harvest that year and getting us through the other great thing about that experience was Lynn Penner-Ash was still consultant doing a lot of consulting at the time during harvest. So, I mean, I got to work directly with these two superstars of the Valley. I'm so thrilled to still be able to, you know, call them friends and folks that have really shaped what I do.

Stefan Czarnecki ([07:45](#)):

Yeah. How fortunate is that? And then you ended up at Adea. And yeah.

Dave Specter ([07:49](#)):

Ended up at Adea. That's where we began our production. We started with exactly what we mean when we started out, you know, w we've always said from day one, we're a small place. That's all we want to be. You know, at the moment we're making 500 cases. We said the max we'd ever do is a thousand. But when we started out, we were even only doing about 250 and we're doing all the tastings on our property here that we're sitting. But there was that point where, you know, you're not making quite enough wine to justify the cost of going out and buying all the equipment and that, and it took about five years to sort of get to that point. And then finally, last year, 2019, we said, you know what, I'm looking at those numbers penciling out. And you know, it was a great time we had Adea, you know, working with Dean was fantastic. UI still work with his daughter, Erica, as a consultant. She's amazing and really keeps us on track and make sure that, you know, we're not screwing anything up. Ubut it was time. It was time to kind of forge our own path and, and do things. And the nice thing is here. We we've

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got, now we do everything except bottling onsite. So, Hey, I mean, during harvest, I can do punch downs in my pajamas if I want to.

Cole Rogers ([08:46](#)):

Well, now we're talking.

Stefan Czarnecki ([08:47](#)):

So that's, so you really kind of worked your way up kind of in your own, your own sort of path. And so I think the, the winemaking lifestyle's enticing. Oh yeah. And we obviously have been enticed as we've discussed. Like what, why not us? Why not us make a little wine? So what, give me a little reality. Give me, give me a little like whether it's advice or warning or whatever, like you have somebody come to you, maybe like me, or maybe like a customer. And they say, Oh man, I want to make some wine. What, what, what do you say to that?

Dave Specter ([09:22](#)):

I always say, understand why you're doing what you're doing, because making the wine is the easy part. I mean, we are blessed here to have a lot of amazing vineyards and access to a lot of amazing grapes. Making wine. It is science, but it's not rocket science. And it can be learned. I mean, I was an attorney before I got into making wine. So I don't have any sort of chemistry training and all of this. There are a few things.

Stefan Czarnecki ([09:44](#)):

Just blood sucking.

Dave Specter ([09:44](#)):

Yeah. Well, other than that, it's exactly right. So, I mean, there are a few things you need to learn, but they can be learned. The hard part comes with the other parts of the business. It's the selling, it's, it's just run. It's a part of any running any business, you know, if you know what you want to be, it's going to be a whole lot easier. I mean, just to give you an example for us, we said, we're a small place. So we scale everything that we do in this operation for a small place. We didn't overbuy. We, we don't have a big space. You know, we, we didn't over spend on the equipment, things like that. We, we say we're going to focus directly a hundred percent on selling our wines direct to consumer. We're not the least bit interested in going into distribution of any kind shops, restaurants, conscious choice that we make in order to make the business something that works for a very small number of people.

Stefan Czarnecki ([10:31](#)):

And you see everything through that lens.

Dave Specter ([10:32](#)):

Exactly, exactly. But we've seen, and, you know, we all see it in the Valley. You know, we've seen folks that kind of started that way. And then at some point they have to make a decision, you know, things grow, they become successful, and then they start doing other things and start chasing other, other ideas.

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Dave Specter ([10:49](#)):

One of the things I was so lucky when I first got into this business, I got to sit down for about three hours with Myron and Vicki Redford. And you know, they were so generous with their time. And one of the biggest things that Myron told me was he said, you know, the thing that I most regret is I would get into these situations where, when something happened in the market, I felt this need to chase it as opposed to saying, you know what, this is what I'm good at. This is what I do. This is who we are. And just being really, really focused on that says he chased so many things down that he felt he wasted his time over the years.

Wesley Jones ([11:27](#)):

That sounds like me! It's shiny!

Dave Specter ([11:27](#)):

You said it. I didn't.

Cole Rogers ([11:32](#)):

That's really that's really good advice. And I think probably a bit, especially in this industry, when you can, you can go so many different directions, right. Something we briefly talked about. But you'd have a lot of experience with this. Is, have you ever, did you ever, when you were first starting out have that feeling, they call like imposter syndrome where you question yourself a lot, because you're around so many wonderful winemakers and amazing minds.

Dave Specter ([11:58](#)):

Certainly when we, when we first came out here absolutely. I mean, you, you go through that, that whole confidence period where yes. You know how to make wine, but it's obviously you're, you're in a whole different ball game when you're here. I think the thing that benefited me the most was before we spent a dime, getting into the industry out here, I spent three years working for an, in the cellar for a little urban winery in Cincinnati. So I really learned when you talk about from the ground up, I mean, it's from the basement up, of course, all the things in winemaking that I do now here, but you're actually doing it. You know? And, and I think so when we came here, when people started hearing our story and hearing how we prepared ourselves, how we built that sense of that, that knowledge and that experience folks went out of their way to help us and to say and give advice. And I'll tell you too, you know, the industry here has been phenomenal about sharing their successes, their failures, their what they wish they had done. Ubecause we asked a lot of people, a lot of questions, you know, and I think I can tell you that from what I've heard from other, from some other winemakers, they're actually shocked that people actually, somebody actually listened to them for a change.

Stefan Czarnecki ([13:07](#)):

Interesting. so we're drinking a tasty ass wine right now. Tell us about it.

Dave Specter ([13:15](#)):

Yeah. So this is the wine is named Helios. And we can get into all the naming conventions later, but this is made from a grape called Seyval Blanc, S E Y V A L, which is a grape that good luck finding it in Oregon.

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Well, with one exception, but other than us, we are the only planting in the Valley of this particular grape. And it's a hybrid grape. It is a crossbreed between a traditional French grape called Siebel and a native American grape. It was developed up at Cornell up in Western New York. The reason that grapes like this exist is because if you're growing in the Midwest or on the East coast, you've got something that we don't really see much of here on the West coast, really cold freaking winters. So what you're trying to do with this breeding process is build in some of the cold hardiness that these native American grapes have.

Dave Specter ([14:03](#)):

So of course, every time you do something like this, you're going to get a grape with very unique flavor and aroma profile. This absolutely has that. And I would say about 80% of the grapes that you end up with are really just weird, especially for folks that are kind of more used to traditional varietals, either the vinifera type of grapes. What I love about Seyval Blanc is that it retains that traditional French parentage on specially on the flavor. It's not derived from Sauvignon Blanc, but the thing I think it will remind most people of is Sauvignon Blanc. We just don't have enough of that planted here in the Valley.

Stefan Czarnecki ([14:40](#)):

I know I'm a huge Sauvignon fan, but when it's really pissy, it can go bad. I'm not interested in that. Gimme, gimme, gimme the tropical sauv blancs. Those are, are the best . Absolutely. No, it's delicious. Now, you also sell well and make Syrah, so you've got so Syrah typically grown in slightly warmer. I know yours is a cool climate Syrah.

Dave Specter ([15:06](#)):

Well, it's, it's coming from Milton-Freewater. So Northeastern, Oregon, right across the state line from Walla Walla. But I make it essentially the vineyard that I'm sourcing the fruit from is very unusual and makes it more like a cooler weather Syrah. Cause it's up on top of a mountain as opposed to being down on the Valley floor.

Stefan Czarnecki ([15:23](#)):

Gotcha. Do you, I mean, there's Syrah popping up kind of everywhere. Like there's a lot of people doing, doing a little bit of Syrah, everybody, everywhere you go, you talk to winemakers, the climate is warming right here. I mean, you see, I mean, you see the same things. What do you, I mean, do you think Syrah is going to be the next big push or is it kind of, are we like 20 years out from that?

Dave Specter ([15:42](#)):

I think we're a good 20 years out. I do think that we're going to be doing some pushes for some other things. I mean, Tempranillo would be an example of something I think we're going to start to see more and more planted. One of the fun things I think that I'm seeing happening in the industry now that I'm really excited about is folks are starting to find some other varietals to plant. We're actually going to start doing that here. We've got about three acres on the lower part of our field and we're going to start planting some more obscure Northern Italian, red varietals.

Wesley Jones ([16:10](#)):

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Good, good, good.

Dave Specter ([16:11](#)):

And, and just sort of go from there and start small, but you know what, the reason that we do Syrah the first place was I wanted to have a red that was just not Pinot in addition to what we do. Yeah. and so that, I think that's just really, really important for just the, the idea of saying, okay, it's obviously pinot country, but we have so many visitors who tell us my God. I've had like 25 pinots today. Thank God. You've got something else.

Wesley Jones ([16:36](#)):

You it every time, every time.

Dave Specter ([16:38](#)):

Yep. Yeah. I pour it every time.

Stefan Czarnecki ([16:38](#)):

That's good to know. Yep. Yeah. I think you're totally right. And I'm loving this Syrah, tasted the Brittan one. We should do a Syrah list. Yeah. There's nothing. Yeah. Good. All right. Well we gotta take a little break but we will be back in just a moment.

Stefan Czarnecki ([16:52](#)):

Welcome back to HosBrutality. Now is the time of the podcast where we make a little top five list. Really? It's like a top 15, top 14. We're cheating. We do our own top fives. And tonight we're talking about top five downtown wineries. Dave, you said you worked in kind of an urban, urban winery setting in your earlier days and they are, Are downtown wineries under appreciated? I think they are by me because my guests typically like they're hiring a driver to go out to the vineyards and everything like that, but there's so much good wine in downtown tasting rooms that I don't get to take people to. And it kind of kills me. It kind of kills me.

Wesley Jones ([17:34](#)):

There's so much value in offering folks a list when they're on their way back to Portland to catch a flight, or they have an extra day they're out with the driver when they're paying hourly to be with the driver, they want those unique experiences, but there's some killer tasting rooms.

Cole Rogers ([17:49](#)):

Like when he was talking about back in the day in a lot of like nice food places, they talk about hole in the wall. You don't find a lot of hole in the wall, places that are sitting on beautiful vineyards. So you're trying to find like an up and coming or a young winemaker who potentially is making this awesome something new. Right. And downtown place is a good place to look because they're not going to be able to afford a beautiful, site.

Wesley Jones ([18:10](#)):

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Well, and some just have vineyard sites that are so far away from the main tourist areas, they're still making great wine. They still want to capture that downtown audience. Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([18:20](#)):

And actually, as far as like, up-and-comers, that brings me to, Oh, you're Nope. Wes is going for it. Come on, come on, get it together. I'll get to mine.

Wesley Jones ([18:28](#)):

I got to crane my neck to see my list. That's a good one. Abbey Creek is my favorite. They just opened a downtown Portland tasting room, but they've had one out past Hillsboro for quite a while. And I'm forgetting the name of the little town it's past Forest Grove. Anyway, Cornelius or something or what's out there. I don't know what's out something. Well, we'll make a note in the Stefan. That's your job. You get to make notes. Abbey Creek. It's out. It's on Abbey Creek, just fall Abbey Creek Evening land. Definitely. the downtown Dundee tasting room, Alit another downtown Dundee tasting room. Well, Alit's great for buyers of the entire spectrum, whether you're trying to get something that's affordable, grower champagne for \$35 or \$150 Rose and Arrow. Yeah. Which they're all fantastic. And Paul does a great job with their tasting room. Our Stuart McMinnville. Cute. Some really good little bubbles, little bubbles. That sounds condescending. I'm sorry. That's bubbles. That's my mouth was, my mouth was moving faster than I little bubbles. More desirable though. They are I digress,

Stefan Czarnecki ([19:39](#)):

But that's downtown McMinnville. Yeah. You're just strolling around, right. Oh, I just had a little lunch. I could use a little right now.

Wesley Jones ([19:46](#)):

Downtown McMinnville has closed down the entirety of third street for outdoor seating for restaurants. So it's just like a big festival almost. Yeah. Yeah. Allow those restaurants to have a little bit more seating. Another McMinnville tasting room, Elizabeth Chambers, which I'm a huge fan of. We've got a beautiful old historic building that they sort of repurposed. Yeah. Just one more from the Pinot ghetto coming back towards the, the grainery districts were beautiful though, that they partnered with food trucks too. So for a long time, they were doing pizza like on Friday nights and it's yeah. Special little spot.

Cole Rogers ([20:23](#)):

I did it again. And if you're in light of recent events, if kind of sport black, local black business owners, right. Um Bertony at Abby Creek is a place that we find, we think we want to, you know, make it work.

Wesley Jones ([20:38](#)):

It's one of those Vibes too. That's just inclusive to everyone. Yeah. Like he has a DJ that spins Friday and Saturday nights and it just feels like family, you show up and he's in, he's also the only wine maker. I know that's sponsored by Carhartt. Like he has a shoe deal and a clothing deal brand. It's, it's him. And you walk in and there's, there's paintings of like biggie on the wall is DJ's going and there's a vibe. It really, it really feels like family.

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Cole Rogers ([21:05](#)):

Yeah. Highly recommend all the places Wesley talked about. But definitely that's something I want to make a point of. Yeah, absolutely.

Stefan Czarnecki ([21:12](#)):

Up and coming wine makers. I was going to mention Will over at Violin Wines, his wine and downtown Amity, I got to never get out there hardly ever, but it's those wines are dynamite and is, is a lower price. Wines are a steal. And, and Will's a great guy super down to earth. He looks like he's concert sponsored by Carhartt, just, you know totally cool guy, great wines Methven, downtown Dundee. They have done such a great job of making that tasting room, like a scene. Yeah. Because they're done even during COVID right now, they've got that lawn and they're doing music like Wednesday through Sunday or something and they're there and they're doing it.

Wesley Jones ([21:54](#)):

Well. And they had the Kopitos truck right there too. You can get gorgeous Mexican food and go eat, listen to some music.

Dave Specter ([22:01](#)):

And you get one of my favorite people in the Valley. Shana Ellis is the tasting room manager. She's awesome

Stefan Czarnecki ([22:07](#)):

Yeah. You're going to have some fun. If you show her a little spunk, she'll give you a lot of spunk over.

Wesley Jones ([22:13](#)):

Yeah. And she has a story for everything. It's Dinner and a show.

Stefan Czarnecki ([22:18](#)):

No, it's a good spot. For sure. Then let's see Eyrie down the Pinot ghetto in McMinnville. They always pour something from the library. So if you want to see how Oregon peanut ages, they love giving you that poor, you know, an 86 or 93, whatever, you know, just like, Hey, check this out. And they they have that huge deep cellar library program where you can, you can buy those older bottles that they actually like test. They, they extract some of the wine and test it and make sure that it's still kicking so they can guarantee like this rock, this wine still rocking, and we'll sell it to you. I mean, it ain't cheap, but . I mean, it's good stuff.

Wesley Jones ([22:58](#)):

Any other places though? Are you going to get bottles from the eighties? Yeah.

Cole Rogers ([23:01](#)):

Yeah. It's worth a stop, definitely.

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Stefan Czarnecki ([23:03](#)):

Yeah. Especially, yeah. If you're staying in downtown McMinnville and you're walking around and it's a little bit more of a hike going out there, but the history there is awesome. Yeah. Flaneur. Downtown Carlton. One of the coolest little towns in the area, probably the coolest little town I mean the money that they put into fixing up that that grain was a grain elevator grain elevator, and they've got a beautiful patio. The wines are really good, nice Chardonnay program going there now they have a Pinot Meunier, I think good wines. They're good atmosphere. It's a,

Wesley Jones ([23:39](#)):

And Grant's just dynamite as a wine maker, lights out. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([23:44](#)):

And then another downtown Carlton place, Tendril. Different different vibe, but they're Tony's wines are very, very good. He's got the two different flights. He's got the Child's Play flight kind of the, the, the, the cheaper wines, but still very good. And then he's got the Tendril wines along. Some of them are pretty pricey, but also good. You can do, I will picnic there on the lawn. It's right there by Ken Wright's winery and they're super chill. They've got I love the warmth over there. Like you feel like, well, like they're just happy to have you there. Yeah. You know, and, and please, please keep that in the Valley. I think everything so hard. Okay.

Cole Rogers ([24:29](#)):

Just to be welcoming and kind. Yeah. I don't take care of half the problem.

Stefan Czarnecki ([24:31](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Maybe it's just me that people just getting tired of me. All right, cool.

Cole Rogers ([24:38](#)):

I'll start off with purple hands. Of course. I'm a big fan of that tasting room. The building is really cool. Yeah. during harvest, you can often go back and have like a little tour of what they're doing. The winery is so close to the tasting room. It's, it's a cool experience. Argyle, because I mean, the bubble, the bubbles are, you can get a flight of bubbles, like no nowhere else in the Valley. Beautiful space. Yeah. The, the, they redid their tasting room a few years ago and it was a beautiful space. Dobbles also redid their tasting room there. They have a really nice garden in the back. It's a good place to bring lunch. You can bring food there. Yep. Alit, Oh, I agree with everything once said about the place. It's it's just a, it's a small space, but they've done a really good job with kind of everything that's there is, it looks like it's where it needs to be, where it's supposed to be. Right. And then Ken Wright he took the old train station in downtown Carlton and renovated it, made it into a really cool little space. So I love Ken Wright.

Stefan Czarnecki ([25:41](#)):

The wines are pretty good too. Yeah. They don't suck. Well now, like they put out the little mat place mat for you and they, you know, have everything labeled of what you're drinking. They pour them all at the same time. So you can taste them side by side.

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Cole Rogers ([25:54](#)):

It's educational.

Wesley Jones ([25:55](#)):

Yeah. Well, in education too, if you go to their website and you want to learn anything about the history of their vineyards Ken put together where you at the, I went with you, I think, to the Linfield lecture that Ken gave. Yeah. And he did all of the lineage as far back as records exist of who owned, what are now his vineyards, what was planted on them? The family history pays homage to all those families and you can go to their website and pull it all up. Yeah.

Speaker 4 ([26:19](#)):

Ken's a great educator in general. Yeah. He's a, it does not hold back on his opinions and it's kind of refreshing too. Yeah, it's really cool. Yeah.

Dave Specter ([26:27](#)):

At this point he's earned the privilege.

Stefan Czarnecki ([26:30](#)):

What are you saying about us though? Last true. We honored it. Yeah. Do you have any favorite, Dave?

Dave Specter ([26:37](#)):

You know, there are, there are some that I really liked that I would add to that. One is kind of in the, in the same area that Evening Land is Le Cadeau, Um owned by a good friend of mine, Tom Morter, where he is. Well, before we moved here from from Cincinnati Tom had brought his wines to the Cincinnati International Wine festival. I went to meet, I didn't know who he was, but we, at the time we were just trying to connect and, you know, network with any winemakers we could. Yeah. And Tom doesn't make the wines. He owns the place, but absolutely one of the nicest, most genuine individuals, his, his presentation that he has on how his vineyards are over, up on Parrett Mountain, his presentation on the boulders that he had to dig out in order to get that vineyard up and running is just crazy to see in, in person. So yeah, they're, they're absolutely. And their wines are fantastic, definitely worth the visit. Another one Fox Farm right in downtown Dundee is my buddy Dave Fish. Dave. Dave's a great guy with there and he's there and that's the thing. And he's got a really diverse selection. And he has, well, I don't know what they do with live music anymore, but pre COVID, he had a good amount of live performers in. And the other thing, nice thing is they tend to be open later. So they're open till seven, I think Methven was open till eight. So if you know, folks were in a place when you were asking, you know, Hey, where can I hit, you know, one last place, like either right before, right after dinner. That's another good spot.

Cole Rogers ([28:02](#)):

When Alit is open, they're right next door to him, they're open till seven as well. It's a good corner to be at if you're going to end your day somewhere.

Dave Specter ([28:08](#)):

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So, cause you got all those restaurants right. In downtown Dundee. So that's, that's a nice one. And then the other one I really also like is Artisanal right down here in downtown Newberg family owned and operated. They've been, I mean, they've been there forever making really, really great stuff. You know, it's, it's interesting. I mean, Newberg kind of has a downtown Newberg has that different vibe than, than downtown Mac. So, you know, it's, it's not quite like, you know, tasting room, restaurant or so on. And you know, it's not always as obvious, but you know, when you find those little hole in the wall, places, you just get that vibe of like, you can just go in and relax and you just feel like you're at home. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([28:44](#)):

There they're there for, for Newberg not being as nice as third street, you know, the downtown there are some good wines, like Anam Cara has good wine. I like the Longplay wines. Et Fille has solid wine. So you can spend the afternoon down there.

Dave Specter ([28:58](#)):

I should have mentioned Et Fille by the way. They're fantastic.

Cole Rogers ([29:02](#)):

Chehalem, no, wasn't even on the list, but Chehalem often has food carts and does music and live events.

Wesley Jones ([29:05](#)):

And their food program too. Even when there isn't a food truck, their charcuterie program is top notch.

Dave Specter ([29:08](#)):

And they're right next to the food cart pod.

Cole Rogers ([29:13](#)):

Yep. Yeah. So if you live in, if you live near any of these places, don't change, don't drive through a vineyard on your Saturday and just go to your neighbor and, you know, see what they're making.

Stefan Czarnecki ([29:23](#)):

I know, for fact, Chehalem, they also will do blowout sales, like on stuff that they're like, Hey, we're getting in the new, rosé this stuffs, you know, 15 bucks a bottle or whatever it's gone. Right. And you don't get wind of those deals unless you're there. So, you know, you got to, and, but they've pretty, pretty robust wine club and everything.

Dave Specter ([29:42](#)):

And great people in their tasting room as well,

Stefan Czarnecki ([29:44](#)):

Except for Daniel. F*ck that guy. We love you Daniel. Don't leave us. Don't leave us.

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Wesley Jones ([29:53](#)):

Dave, did you ever entertain the idea of a downtown tasting space, particularly when you were getting started or was that always off the table?

Dave Specter ([29:59](#)):

You know, I don't know that it was off the table. I think my wife in some ways would have been much happier to have not had a vineyard to worry about. I think it just, you know, when you're, when you're in Ohio, it's sometimes easier to kind of visualize just having a retail space, just to be able to sell wine there. But then when you come out here, there's just the feel of being at a vineyard. There's so much about the experience and you know, one of the things we always say is, you know, we've got, you know, what, 600 some wineries here in the Valley darn near all of them make really, really good wine. What is going to separate you as, you know, as a business. And so in addition to that, you know, so you've got to have the experience, well, a big part of the experiences, that sense of place. And you know, when folks are here or, you know, kind of wherever, and you've got, you know, you've got the vineyards right here, you're physically that close to the vineyard. It just changes so much of your perspective about, you know, what you're experiencing with the wines themselves.

Stefan Czarnecki ([30:53](#)):

Have you ever had anybody lean over the rail there and go, I'm the King of the world because it's almost like that's the ocean and you're on the Titanic. Like you're so close to the vineyard. It's right there.

Dave Specter ([31:03](#)):

Dang it. Now, now I guarantee you, the next 10 people that visit here are going to try to do that. I'm going to do a little stairs and they can go right in there. We take people down in the vineyard. I mean, that's, that's kind of one of the fun things too, because a lot of folks that see us well, a lot of folks that see us, you know, this may be as physically close as they've ever been to a vineyard. And so we'll have a lot of questions to ask and, you know, rather than just, you know, show them pictures sometimes we'd say, well, would you like to just walk right down and we'll show you exactly what's going on in real time.

Wesley Jones ([31:30](#)):

Right. This is what veraison looks like in real life.

Dave Specter ([31:32](#)):

Exactly, Exactly. See all these ugly little bugs. Yeah. Sometimes they happen. You know what I mean? [inaudible] Yeah. There's lots of fruit flies too, but we filter them out.

Stefan Czarnecki ([31:47](#)):

All right, that's going to do it for this segment. We will be back in just a moment.

Stefan Czarnecki ([31:52](#)):

Welcome back to HosBrutality. Now is a time where we tell you what's been brutal and what's been beautiful here in the Willamette Valley. And what's brutal.

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Wesley Jones ([32:02](#)):

Brutal is all the restaurants that are going under right now? Yeah. Like some of our favorite chefs, you know, and I'm new to the food scene. So for me, this is a sort of a big deal yeah. As a new follower, but watching PokPok closed the majority of their locations, blue star donuts, closing several of their locations,u

Cole Rogers ([32:22](#)):

Places you would not expect to have gone under at all.

Wesley Jones ([32:24](#)):

Montage montage has been a staple in Portland for years underneath the bridge. Yeah,

Stefan Czarnecki ([32:30](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Just gives you perspective on how tight the margins are, right?

Wesley Jones ([32:36](#)):

Yeah. You don't make a ton of money in restaurants and, and isn't like a ton of staying power when things go South, especially if you have limited indoor seating and don't have the access to pivot, right. Yeah. It's hard to watch.

Stefan Czarnecki ([32:50](#)):

Here in the Valley. Did you mention Valley Valley Commissary. Yeah.

Cole Rogers ([32:54](#)):

I mean, that's one of my favorite places for brunch and lunch.

Wesley Jones ([32:58](#)):

And their catering side was incredible too,

Cole Rogers ([33:00](#)):

It was a very, one of the closest things to Red Hills Market that people could go to, you know, for fresh, delicious food that they knew it was going to be an awesome cooked meal. Yeah.

Wesley Jones ([33:08](#)):

Well they were super reliable. It's really, really hard

Cole Rogers ([33:12](#)):

Hopefully they find another spot and open back up.

Wesley Jones ([33:15](#)):

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Well, to you think about the number of folks that work in the restaurant industry as their profession. Yeah. Right. I know professional servers. Yeah. Line cooks. Yeah. Like this is what they do. And with everything closing and not a whole bunch of stuff opening up again, you know, in the foreseeable future, you run into a lot of uncertainty for a lot of our friends, you know,

Dave Specter ([33:37](#)):

And customers too. We have a lot of customers in that situation, it's just heartbreaking. You know, you, we, we find ourselves a lot of times on our side of the table, just trying to be that, that shoulder that they can lean on. And that's just somebody they can listen to. Right.

Wesley Jones ([33:51](#)):

Yeah. It's hard too, because I think all of us did as much as we could with eating takeout, you know, all of our paychecks went into the pooper, but it was still like three nights a week. We're going to eat out where we normally wouldn't eat out just to keep some of these folks alive.

Cole Rogers ([34:04](#)):

Yeah. The numbers just like severance in the margins are so tight on food as it is, right. That to cut back 45% even or whatever. It's like, well, there goes any profit we were going to make

Wesley Jones ([34:15](#)):

Any restaurant that serves alcohol you're banking on folks staying and having two or three beers, having a couple of cocktails, opening a bottle,

Stefan Czarnecki ([34:23](#)):

And now, places have to close early by 10 or 10. I think that's right.

Cole Rogers ([34:27](#)):

Everything's closed at 10, in Portland, all the bars. Right.

Wesley Jones ([34:30](#)):

So take out, you know, your, your profit margins were low to start with and you made up the rest of it on your alcohol sales. Right.

Cole Rogers ([34:36](#)):

Take out at this point is basically marketing, keeping your weird doors open. Right. Keeping reminding people, your food is still good. I mean, it's so that's a drag tough. Yeah. But what's, there's a flip side of that. Yup. So we were, we were talking about it and we just think that the fact that people do have to stay home and that people are being forced to learn, to make recipes and go on YouTube and learn, you know, how to make something they really enjoyed maybe eating at a favorite restaurant that they can't go to anymore. Hopefully that has the effect on the kind of people that we all hang out with your customers and our friends and our coworkers and whatnot, that they become more interested in what's what's going on in their backyard. Right. There's a lot of people in Portland, a lot of people in Beaverton

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and even Dundee, Newberg, who don't even realize what they have right behind them. When they planned a trip to France, they plan a trip to, you know, California, maybe Napa and they have their, they have their thing, but they don't even realize what they have in their own backyard. Right. So maybe COVID is going to help point the light on, on, on this area a little bit more and just get people more in touch with what's coming out of the ground in the, in their own Valley.

Wesley Jones ([35:41](#)):

Yeah. This is a Garden of Eden in so many ways. You go to a farmer's market or even any of the like semi-permanent stands, you can get fresh beef and pork and chicken and eggs and any vegetable, you know, for months.

Dave Specter ([35:56](#)):

There's a reason we have have three freezers in our house, right. You've got to have a pork person, an egg person, a chicken, you, you, you've got all that stuff covered and it's all right here. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([36:05](#)):

Yup. Exactly. And we've got all these people who are cooking at home and maybe realizing, man, I'm, I'm pretty good at this. So, you know, yeah. It sucks that some of these restaurants are closing, but is this ultimately 10 years down the line? Is this going to make our industry stronger? Because now we've got a new crop of people who are invigorated with, you know, their own cooking. I mean, look at all the people making bread, you know, you go look at all. I've got friends back East too, are, you know, you, you wouldn't think like, you know, six months ago that they were obsessed with making sourdough pizza dough, you know, or whatever. And then somebody else is doing it too. And it's like, so that's, that's kind of cool. You know, you never know, maybe they'll open up a bakery cause uyou know, when this is all over and,uyeah. It's kind of interesting.

Cole Rogers ([36:52](#)):

Yeah. There are positive things that come out of horrible situations.

Wesley Jones ([36:57](#)):

You can cook alongside John legend and Chrissy Tiegen in your own, in your own kitchen.

Dave Specter ([37:01](#)):

Ohio's finest,

Wesley Jones ([37:05](#)):

And who better to learn cooking from, Right? Yeah. They're famous and they must be good at cooking. Yeah, exactly.

Stefan Czarnecki ([37:09](#)):

Now something else that's beautiful of course, is our guest today. David Specter, who is famous,

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Dave Specter ([37:17](#)):

Oh, infamous is maybe more like it.

Cole Rogers ([37:17](#)):

No, no, no. Celebrity status.

Stefan Czarnecki ([37:19](#)):

Celebrity status. Or at least you've been dubbed a celebrity by celebrity. Dave, what happened? Tell us about the Tony Kornheiser Show.

Dave Specter ([37:28](#)):

Well, this, this is, this is what happens sometimes when you just have a moment of weakness. So I th those of you that are in, into with any sort of sports journalism probably heard the name, Tony Kornheiser. And if you've watched ESPN, he's done a long running show, Pardon the Interruption with his former fellow writer Michael Wilbon for 20 plus years at this point. And so what many people don't know is that Tony has also done a local radio show in DC, in various formats over the years. And a few years ago, he converted that over to doing a podcast. And for many, many years I have been, I've been streaming, even back when I was working as an attorney, I used to stream his radio show because Tony is sort of like your old grandpa that you just, you hear him tell stories. He's a phenomenal, of course. He was a great writer. So he's a phenomenal storyteller and just the kind of guy that you're just, you just love to listen to. And it's, yeah, it just can't help, but smile. So this was a few months ago back in May Tony's a big golfer and Tony on the podcast was talking about one time back, going down to play golf down at Bandon Dunes. So there was a, there was a nice lady named Duska Jensen who works at Willamette Valley Vineyards who had heard this sent him an email basically saying, Hey, you know, we apparently thought he was actually going right then and invited him to come taste in the tasting, you know, to taste at Willamette Valley Vineyards. And I, at that moment just said, Oh, I've been listening to this show for years. I'm not letting this go.

Stefan Czarnecki ([38:57](#)):

You can't just jump on! He's Mine!

Speaker 3 ([38:58](#)):

So I sent an email and basically, you know, said, Hey, look, you know, gave him my 30-second elevator speech said, you know, we're a mom and pop shop. We're a small little place we're in the heart of the Valley. And you know, honestly at the time, never in a million years thought that I would hear anything back at all. Well, I'm standing in the shower the next day, seven in the morning. And all of a sudden I hear him start to read this email out in its entirety. And I'm just, my jaw is on the floor. And I'm like, Oh my God. Well, that was the beginning of something.

Stefan Czarnecki ([39:37](#)):

SARA!

Dave Specter ([39:37](#)):

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Yeah. Well, my, my lovely wife Sara who does our marketing, you know, I didn't intend this as a marketing play, but Hey, I'm not stupid enough to turn down something that's in my lap. Right. So I then went to her and said, Hey, you know, I, I, you know, I guess I could, I guess I can market a little bit too. So, but what I didn't realize was now, I mean, Tony has a nationwide audience and I've known this for years and, and his, his his listeners tend to be relatively, well-educated, tend to at least have a little disposable income, but I had no idea how interested these folks were in wine and how just any little connection that I could make. All of a sudden I was getting emails and phone calls from all over the country. People who have never heard of me prior to this mention in the show. And all of a sudden, it's like Tony mentioned, you I'd love to have your wine. And these weren't people buying like a bottle or two, this was like six bottles, a case. And I'm like, Oh my gosh. And it's, it's not, you know, and this is now, this is the middle of May. So we'd been two months into COVID shutdowns and all that we're freaking out about, are we even going to make any wine this year? Because you know, sales, God only knows what's going to happen with sales. Yeah. This saved our year. I'm not going to lie. This thing saved our year. And I've since sent him a couple of cases as thank yous. And he continues to every so often. He'll he'll ding me, but I'll, I'll now get visitors here. I've got people that have, that have like turned, you know, you know, made special trips on their vacation just to visit us for no other reason. Other than we got mentioned on the show, love it.

Cole Rogers ([41:14](#)):

There's a sports show locally.

Dave Specter ([41:17](#)):

What, what he, what he says is, and it's true. It's, it's nominally a sports pocket. Exactly. It's mostly, it's mostly focused on DC. We'll talk about national things, but he's based in Washington DC. So he's, I spend a lot of time there, but it almost doesn't matter when you're listening, the guy talk. It doesn't really matter. You just find yourself, what's your take on this? The guy talks about local traffic in and around Washington, DC. All right. That makes it interesting. Exactly. It shouldn't be somebody who has zero connection to it. Yeah. And that's, it's, it's such a rare ability to find somebody who can just tell a story in such a way that it does not matter what your own personal connection is. You are brought in and you are enthralled and it just makes you feel like, you know, you're, you're welcomed to that. And I think that's his secret. Cool.

Wesley Jones ([42:05](#)):

That's how I feel about Cole's awful dating life. Yeah.

Stefan Czarnecki ([42:10](#)):

Well, a nice segue, Wesley Cole it's it's it's Storytime David. Storytime with Cole.

Dave Specter ([42:18](#)):

I've heard about this.

Stefan Czarnecki ([42:19](#)):

Okay. Let's go. Lay it on us Cole. Okay. We got about five minutes. Yeah.

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Cole Rogers ([42:23](#)):

Five minutes. So there's a story about admitting when you're wrong. I was fresh out of college and driving my super nice Honda Prelude, 1989. Washed it all the time. It looked good. So I was in a two lane highway in the fast lane, somebody comes up behind me zooming, right. And I'm young and an asshole . So I take a longer than I should to get over, but I was going over the speed limit. So he zooms by me. I get behind him. I'm tailing him we come into 25 mile, an hour zone. He brake jacks me, obviously. I don't know how I hit him. I was at least six inches behind him when he hit the brakes, but I hit him. So, you know, I haven't ever been in an accident. I'm freaking out, but I'm also a young guy. I'm trying to be tough. So I get out of my car. This guy gets, he's an older guy. He gets out of his car, he's driving a brand new Lexus. So in the back of my mind, I'm like, I am f*cked , but I'm still gonna like, hold my own. So he says, Hey asshole , you're going to owe me a lot of money. And I just said, you know what? You're right. I probably do. But you're being an asshole too. And he was just like, I don't really give a damn dude. I went back and forth and I just, I was, I was not being super calm and the way I'm talking now, But I did say, I said, you cut me off. I was being an asshole. I admit it. But you didn't have to cut me off. You didn't have to break check me. We were both trying to get here fast, dah, dah, dah. So he ends up leaving really pissed. I give him my information and I just say, I'm a poor college kid. Like I know. Yeah. But please consider. So this guy calls me that night and he just says, you know what, Cole, I thought about it. You're right. I was being an asshole. And you you're right. You're being an asshole too, but I'm a dentist. I can, it's a barely scratched up. I'm going to be able to afford to fix it. There's no need for it to go on your insurance. You know, like, h apologize for my behavior. And it was just like this awesome. That's nice restore of humanity, you know? Yeah. It restored my faith in humanity. Yeah, exactly. But anyway, Lexus's yeah. Shout out to this guy. Awesome guy. Honestly, Tom, it's done on your last name, but the dentist that I think from Washington. Okay. If you're listening. Tom respects me, man. It really did. I hope it was taught me a great lesson. Yeah. So that's, that's the story.

Stefan Czarnecki ([45:02](#)):

All right. All right. Well, that's gonna do it for tonight. Thank you, David, for being our guest today. Really appreciate that.

Dave Specter ([45:09](#)):

Thank you for having me.

Stefan Czarnecki ([45:10](#)):

And if you all enjoyed today's podcast, please like follow, share, shout from the rooftops, how much you enjoyed it and we'd greatly appreciate it. And that's about it for today. Thank you.