

# EPISODE #13 CLAUDE THIBAUT/THIBAUT-JANISSON

## SPEAKERS

Fred Reno, Claude Thibaut

**Fred Reno** Welcome Claude

**Claude Thibaut** Thank you for having me.

**Fred Reno** So, was I accurate you are from champagne?

**Claude Thibaut** I am from champagne. Born and raised in a Gran Cru. So, I'm very lucky. I'm very proud of coming from the Grand Cru village. All my family, you know, my father had his own winery. But he was the first winemaker because before him my grandfather they worked in the vineyard. In fact, my grandfather was a vineyard manager for Moet-Chandon for many years. And before that, they were everybody used to work either in the vineyard or in the cellar. But my father was among what they call the first grower of making their own champagne or the grower of champagne. The first wave of growers back in the 1950, 55,57 I think he stop selling to Moet-Chandon and decided to start his own label or his own brand.

**Fred Reno** Oh, wow. That's amazing. So, you went to University of Reims?

**Claude Thibaut** Yeah, I was. I was not sure at the very beginning that I was going to stay in the winemaking business I went to college study chemistry, biochemistry, which really helps when you later on you get into winemaking. And then I finally passed the winemaking degree in Reims, Yes. And that was pretty recent program because before it was only Bordeaux, Dijon, Montpellier, who will had that diploma Reims was really at the beginning of of the winemaking education.

**Fred Reno** So, what was your first position or job in the wine business after you got out of college?

**Claude Thibaut** My first job was for like a lab, a consulting lab in Epernay a lab like you have in California where they consult wineries. And they train winemakers, too, but most of all, they tell the growers what if they want to make their own wine, how to make it and how to prevent any kind of mistakes. It's a very good training when you you start your career. Because you see and taste so many different wines, of course, or only from the Champagne region. I'm glad I did this because I that really helped me in the future. It's a good basic to have.

**Fred Reno** So, then you went to work for champagne house.

**Claude Thibaut** that was back in the year was in his late 70s. And there was at that time many job opportunities in the champagne houses because they used to have self-made wine maker but not many had college degrees. So, there was a lot of jobs open for guys like me. So that was kind of my plan was to work for the lab for two three years, and then apply for a job for big company for big winery and help my parents on the side on the weekend because my father was making 2000 cases for me was kind of a weekend job. What happened is when I was working for that lab, a friend of mine came to visit and this friend was working in Australia. He was working for a big company called Seppelts in charge of the sparkling wine. And he said to me, he said I need somebody like you because I'm going to start my own. I'm going to partner with a grower in Australia. I have more viticulture experience. Obviously, you have more the winemaking experience. And if you want, I can hire you for for my new venture in Australia and at that time was 1980, 1981, was a pretty big decision.

**Fred Reno** I would say to go to Australia especially in those days,

**Claude Thibaut yeah**, because there I mean, the flying wine makers was not there yet you know, so I informed my parents, I was only 20 years old 21 to tell, especially my mother, I'm going to go and work in Australia that didn't go very well. So, I felt sorry, I kind of turned him down. And I said, you know, Australia is far away and I'm happy here. My family's here. So, but he was pretty, was very insistent. And then he kept coming back every three months with some letter itself explaining to me what was going on. And after a while, I said to my parents, you know, I'm young, just why not? You know, so that's how I left champagne and went to work with my friend also from champagne in Australia, so I worked for Seppelts for a place called Great Western. It was an old gold mine converted into a champagne I mean, sparkling wine cellar so, with all the caves. That like a like a champagne cave really so I worked for mostly as a cellar guy I was not I didn't have a position as winemaker, I was not paid very well. But like I was kind of waiting for my partner to my friend to get into his partnership and work with him. So, I work with them for almost two and a half years but always in the cellar, you know, not only as we used to say there you write the work order, you put it in your pocket and you do the work. And that was I mean it was fun because we young young kid guys you know we another lifestyle, so I don't mind doing this, but after two years I said to my friend, his name was Dominic said you know, I think I need to move on. I mean he either you offer me not your position, but I'm the winemaker, or I'm going to go somewhere else.

**Fred Reno** And so is that when you came to California,

**Claude Thibaut So**, when I was still in Australia, out of the blue, I got a phone call from the owner of Iron Horse Barry Sterling. Okay, so very stirring. They were at the early stage of the sparkling winemaking because I think the first vintage was probably 78,79 it was a very small amount like few 100 cases. In 82. They hire someone from UC Davis who unfortunately didn't know much about sparkling wines very stoning called the lab, the consulting lab in Epernay and say what you know, any young winemaker could work for outside of champagne in California. And they said, Well, we Yeah, we have trained somebody who is already in Australia. He called me from California. And he said so I got your name from the station called station in Epernay, would you be interested in in visiting us in Sebastopol, Forestville and see what we doing? So first I said well, how many cases are you making he

say well we're making 1000 cases a year. At first, I say so you know, I think you need a full-time person for 1,000 cases. So, I kind of turned him down. And when I decided to leave Australia to go back to champagne, that was in 1983 when I left in June, so I was going to work out the house in champagne in 1983 for a friend of mine called Cattier, you know Champagne Cattier is making the Jay Z champagne Ace of Spades not at that time anyway. So, I was always set up to work in champagne. But since I had time between June and September, instead of flying direct from Australia to France, I went the other way. So, I went to California called Iron Horse, Barry Sterling. I stayed in San Francisco for a few days. And so, they invited me for lunch. Show me around I met the young winemaker was there, tasted the wine. The wines were very impressed by the quality even early on. And then I went back to champagne. I said thank you nice meeting you. So, I worked in for Cattier the harvest and then Barry Sterling called me again. You know late September he said we had some problem with the winemaker, he, he made a few mistakes. He doesn't know how to fix them. We like you to reconsider the working for us,

**Fred Reno** he was very persistent.

**Claude Thibaut** he was very persistent and then we met Again, I had to convince my parents because my dad was so happy to have me back. So, you know now I have made go back to California. So, I went back to California in 1983. Just after harvest and then stay I stay with them for four years,

**Fred Reno** and it was then did you go the J from there?

**Claude Thibaut** Yeah, I mean, not right away because I again, after four years at Iron Horse, I was not I didn't have the title winemaker Forrest Tancer was winemaker. So, I was an enologist. So, for me, in France enolog mean, winemaker, you know, you should be getting paid as much as a, but in the US if they hire you as an enologist it is kind of a lab, you know, so I, there was no way that Forrest Tancer was going to give me the responsibility of the whole program, because he, he ended up marrying Joy, right, yeah. Anyway, so, then again, I said, Well, I'm going to go back to champagne. So, I told my father, I'm going back to champagne. So that was 1987. You sound like a

**Fred Reno** You sound like a flying winemaker Claude.

**Claude Thibaut** So, 1987 at the same time in May go back to champagne. Work with my parents for a while going back to my friend Cattier who was going to give me another job. But then I had time, so I was I had a girlfriend at that time in California. So, I said well I still have time, so I'm going to go spend three weeks in the summer back to San Francisco, the day after staying in in Hillsborough for a couple of weeks. you know Saying hello to my girlfriend and my friend. The day before flying back to finance the the one week for Jordan winery Rob Davis called me said I'm glad you're still around because Tom Jordan would like to talk to you. So, I met Tom Jordan and he said that's what I'm going to do is show me the bottle of J everything was already set up you know contract the growers, He said we just need the winemaker. And that was Yeah, that was June of 1987. And he said, I mean, I know you I know what you've been doing for Iron Horse. I want to hire you how much do you want? it was a quick conversation.

**Fred Reno Were** you making the sparkling wine there at Jordan at the timer or had they already reconverted the Piper, Sonoma property facility?

**Claude Thibaut No**, it was way before Piper because we in fact, the contract for the fruit was already done. I didn't have anything to say the first year, the wine was going to be made at Chateau St. Jean, okay, in Graton because they had a sparkling wine facility. So, the first year '87, I had to make all the wine that Chateau Jean which didn't make me very happy, how they process the fruit was not what I wanted to do. So, I had to go back to Tom Jordan. And I said, you know, if we really want to make a very high end, sparkling wine, we cannot be there for I think out of all the juice I got there, I probably get 40% while the blend of the rest, I don't think was up to the standard that we wanted. So, I said to Tom Jordan, I said first the Pinot Noir, I mean, the Chardonnay is not bad, but the Pinot Noir we need to have the better equipment to press. So, I kind of convince him to buy one of the first automatic Coquard press, 8-ton press which weighed 14 tons. So, I remember it cost him a fortune to bring it from France. But he didn't say anything the same day he says well if that's what you need to make the quality of Pinot Noir, we need here's the check and just order one so that we set up the press at Jordan Winery it was outside and under canopy but at least the second year. I could use Jordan winery which didn't make Rob Davis very happy. Yeah, the Piper I left in 1990 and I think they bought Piper maybe two years later or maybe 91 or 92.

**Fred Reno Then** did you go back to Champagne again or did you end up going working with Jess Jackson at that point.

**Claude Thibaut so** that time I went back. I thought it was for good this time.

**Fred Reno Yeah.** Okay.

**Claude Thibaut So**, I went back to champagne because I had an offer to work for one of the largest cooperatives, they were making at the time five 5 million bottle of champagne they had a brand called Devaux, Veuve Devaux was not in Reims was south the south, south part of the champagne called the now they call the Cote des Bar it used to be called *the haute de trié*, south of trié. So, I was the head winemaker, a production manager for that co-op during the week and making my, my family wine on the weekend because my my unfortunately my father passed away, when I came back from California, it was kind of also the, the reason why I decided to go back because he was not feeling to well. And so, then so I did stay that time in champagne, almost 10 years, you know, working for the co-op, which went from 3 million, I think three or four million to seven millions when I left. So how

**Fred Reno So** how did Jess Jackson recruit you?

**Claude Thibaut So**, Jess Jackson, you probably know Donna Parker. So, she, we knew each other. I mean, she knew me since the Iron Horse, J. She called me once I think was 1998 or 99, early 99. And she said, Jess, wants to wants to talk to you about his sparkling wine or apparently, he had like three different production going on. And there was one in Cambria he had Edmeades, Anderson Valley they were already made some Pinot Noir base sparkling wine. There was a third one. So, he's it's all for the

one brand Kristom? Yes. Oh, yeah. But he said to me, he said, I want you to start a new, completely new project. And if the, what we have been making is no good, you just let me know. We just scratch that and, but you go and pick and choose the fruit that you think. So, I didn't know what to what I'm going, I was going to run into with the other winemaker because of course, when you make sparkling wine you pick first, right? When I started to pick fruit in other guys territory, that didn't go very well.

**Fred Reno** I've been there, I've seen that movie.

**Claude Thibaut**, I got hired by him directly. without going through the regular process that was not that great. that's how Jess worked anyways. And then so I did work for them. I've for, for two and a half years. So, my program was part of Jackson Family Farm, then, but I was working at the Verité you know, with Pierre Seillan, so they had on. On the side, I had my own tanks. And then for some reason, maybe because of the cost. They decided to move my program to Kendall-Jackson, from Jackson Family Farm, and then realize that was probably too costly of a process for them.

**Fred Reno** Well, he was having trouble selling it any way. You know, given him the price he was trying to get for it on the marketplace. Yes, yeah. And so, so then that leads you to Virginia finally,

**Claude Thibaut** okay. I was not in a very good position. I have to say when I when KJ I mean, Kendall-Jackson told me, we are we are not going to continue the program. They said to me, they say you can, you can, we will give you another position. But if you don't accept this, we have to take you to the airport since your visa has been financed by the company, the H1 visa. So, they told me they say you either find another company who's going to take over the visa or you get married. So, I got married. Okay. That's how I stayed, I got married, but I lost my job.

**Fred Reno** But then how did you get recruited to come back here and help and start I assume you started the program at Kluge.

**Claude Thibaut**, I wanted to stay in California, I have to say there was a couple of positions Domaine Mumm was going to hire, they didn't take me because maybe I was already a bit too old, not to old but maybe too much experience. So, there was didn't work out very well. And so, I was doing some consulting job, some for Gloria Ferrer. I told my wife, I said I'm, going to do some consulting until I find a full-time position. And then I ran into looking on on the internet who was making sparkling wine at the Kluge Estate. Starting a program. So, I did some research. I contacted the owner Patricia Kluge and and she say yeah, we started because that's that was in 2003. She said, yeah, we started a small amount of smaller production in 2001. We have someone from champagne who comes once a year. But if you want to come and take a look at what we do have fine so I can early 2003 I didn't know what to expect, from, from this area here, tasted the wine I think they were very well made. And she said well if you don't have a job right now and why don't you come and help like spend three, four weeks at a time and see where we go from there besides, I started and then 2003 you probably know was probably one of it was not a very good year. Patricia Kluge was very, very difficult boss used to fire at all the time. And she, unfortunately she fired the vineyard manager, just at a very important time where you supposed to spray. So, the when I came, there was not much fruit left. I mean, there was a lot of issue with the disease of fungus, powdery mildew, you name it, everything was in the vineyard. So, she

said, she said I could hire you you're not going to have a lot of fruit to work with but I'm willing to go and buy. So that's how I got to, to go out around Virginia and explore and see, start to learn what is available here. So, what it was very short period of time before you bring your friend over Manual Janisson and you decide to start a brand of your own. I mean, what was the genesis of that Janisson was I mean, we have been, it's a bit younger than me. But we are from the same town, same village. In fact, he contacted me I was working for Iron Horse in I think it was 1985. And he he wanted to find an internship during harvest. So, I got him a job harvest job at Mark West we became pretty good friends. And after that we used to come and visit wherever I was. And he said to me, said one day I like maybe we should do something together. So, we looked at California at the beginning didn't happen. I came to Virginia, he came to visit, we look around, tasted what I've been making, he said that could be a good opportunity for us. That's how we we started. And 2003 as I say was, was a very difficult year, when I saw that. The challenge with the weather, some issues we had on the fruit on the fruit, which remind me kind of remind me of champagne. So, I said okay let's not panic, you know, maybe it's just a bad year. I know how to fix it. You know, I've seen that many times in champagne. fruit that's not perfect. So, let's see, hopefully is is not going to be like this every year. And yea in fact, after 2003 or two that 2004 was much better and 2005 was much better too.

**Fred Reno** What was the first year you released sparkling wine on the Thibaut-Janisson label.

**Claude Thibaut** So that so that's 2003 was with Kluge I started the Thibaut-Janisson, very small amount in 2005. Okay, and we I think we have released after two years on the yeast I think was 2007 (were you still working at Kluge?). No, I got fired from Kluge, which is a, everybody's proud here to be because they all start their own business after that. So was 2005. So, three months later, I started my own, buying my own with Janisson.

**Fred Reno** Let's see here. What is it? 15 years it's been since it's been founded? What were your first production like? And what level production are you today?

**Claude Thibaut** What we decided to do at the beginning is not to, to invest not to buy any, any land in vineyard, because the first I still had to find where the best place was. So, we and we had some good relationship with the grower side, we didn't think there was a was a must to have to have land. And then we find a good agreement with another winery, Veritas winery. They were leasing me space I could make the sparkling wine there. In exchange, I was making sparkling wine for them too. Okay, so that really worked at the beginning. My wife was our distributor, we started that, you know, 1000 cases. Now, we are not quite 4000. So, we could have expanded more. I mean, my partner didn't, you know, really want to invest more than he did at the beginning. So then because we didn't have a direct sale with a tasting room. So, we were pretty limited.

**Fred Reno** You don't have like a tasting room or anything like that today do you, no, no, not everything is going.

**Claude Thibaut** which is what's what's missing. Here., We didn't need it at the beginning. But now I have more and more people who really wants to, to come and visit, and see the place. I mean, of

course this year it's not easy with a COVID-19 too, it's another game, but the next step would be to have a taste of our own place, you know people can see and the operation and visit and taste.

**Fred Reno** I'm curious about the branding in this respect, right? I can't be the first person to bring this up, I would think but I'm looking at your label, and it sure looks a lot like UVA logo. Is that by accident, coincidence? I mean, you can see I have a saber right there. So, I understand the saber thing. But to me that looks like the UVA logo. How did that come about?

**Claude Thibaut** It's for customer to know that, that we are from we started in Monticello, in Charlottesville. Look, I don't know the color was probably by accident that we got close to the, the orange of the UVA, the swords. That's another story. The two of us, we kind of like to compare ourselves to The Three Musketeers. We were only two and of course champagne. They like to saber champagne. So, I remember one conversation I had with Janisson, he said, as a logo while we just put the two swords; we didn't hire any market marketing firm to find this.

**Fred Reno** Well, no it looks really good. I mean, I like it.

**Claude Thibaut** So, it's like, the TJ you know, of course the Thibaut-Janisson. Oh, like I didn't mean to, but eventually, you know, it's people like to shorten things. Yes. TJ initial, TJ Thomas, Jefferson. So, it's, the whole thing came along very well.

**Fred Reno** Oh, that's perfect. It's really perfect. So, your current portfolio, you have Blanc de Noir you have Blanc de Chardonnay, you have a tete the cuvee as well correct?

**Claude Thibaut** Yes. Not every year

**Fred Reno** And then what was the inspiration for the Virginia Fizz?

**Claude Thibaut** You know, in champagne they have when they press the grapes, they have of course, different fraction. I mean, like, just like in champagne, you have the free run, which is the main fraction of the juice. And if you look at how many gallons per ton, we get it's, it's about 150 gallons a ton altogether. The first, the main fraction called the free run or called cuvee, le cuvee in Champaign is about 100, the first 120 gallons a ton. And that's the fraction that is, has the best balance between acid Ph. It's what you really want to use for sparkling wine that's going to be age on the yeast for a long time. So yeah, we get 60.

**Fred Reno** No, I meant tete de cuvee.

**Claude Thibaut** Yes, 120 gallons per day, okay, out of the 150 it's about 80% of that of the yield is the free run and then when of course, when you start to squeeze more, we get to what we call the press, press fraction. The press fraction is of course, much less acid, it's fruitier it could be presser or greener some years. So, it's not a fraction that you really want to use for your high-end blend so, a lot of

wineries in champagne sell the fraction to other so for me the press fraction as long as you can blend it with some of the free run could be interesting in a young sparkling wine, that's what I use in the Virginia Fizz. The idea is to have a first tier and the name Virginia Fizz was, I don't we tried to find a English term for sparkling you know, I thought that sparkling bubbly or I like Fizz because that's what fizz the crémant is it's a little bit less pressure than the standard than a normal champagne so it's more creamier so it's fizzier than Champagne make with the standard of champagne, you have about six bars of pressure, 90 psi. A crémant or fizz are more around five, so I have a bit less pressure to start with. So, it gives that creaminess more texture.

**Fred Reno** How many markets are you in around the country? How can people buy it?

**Claude Thibaut Well**, it's mostly Virginia and DC.

**Fred Reno** Can people buy it online direct from you?

**Claude Thibaut no**, not direct from me. I have a partner, I had a distributor in New York, Frederick Wildman. Okay. We were only two wines from Virginia, Boxwood winery. In fact, Rachel from Boxwood, she's the one who introduced me to the Frederick Wildman New York, New Jersey and did pretty well for a while its but we find that outside Virginia. It's not easy. I mean, so like, you know, I

**Fred Reno Well**, the champagne market, as you know, is a very tough market. I've always wondered why the champagne houses in France specifically, but just in general terms, and this is my opinion now but didn't capitalize on the opportunity to get the Americans to understand that champagne was a far and away better accompaniment to most food, appetizer and first courses, then California Chardonnay. Quite honestly price wise for a very long period of time. It was more than price competitive. And I just always wondered why they always had to play the luxury angle as opposed to the angle you should be drinking this every day.

**Claude Thibaut when** I started to work when I was making champagne like in this 80s 70s 80s nobody was communicating. I mean sparkling wine was still wine to use for celebration. And even the whole region the CIVC didn't communicate champagne as a wine as we said could pair with food because the big Gran Marc you know many of you mentioned Veuve Clicquot, Moet-Chandon, I mean they were more interested in blending from different region and then marking for celebration for the holidays. It's only when you had this grower of champagne coming on that because they only make champagne from their own like in burgundy from their own terroir that people realized that there was not just one style of champagne there was you could be as diverse than any other wine region. So, the grower started to communicate about their terroir, the soil. And now if you want to make a good champagne, you have to have a good vineyard and good fruit. Because for a long time, even when I worked in California, sparkling wine was not considered as real wine, you know, when you had to pick and choose which grapes or which juice was going to go into sparkling wine. Oh, we are not going to take to give you the best because it's sparkling wine. And that's the main mistake. If you want to make a good sparkling wine, all you have to think like it's a wine and you have the same demand for the high-quality fruit and so on. And then after the process is something else. So, the grower of champagne are really the one who will make people aware that there is so

many different styles of champagne that it can pair with different food, Blanc de Blanc, Blanc de Noir, Blend or oak or no oak or older champagne.

**Fred Reno** What do you think? You know, you've been here to Virginia now, not quite 20 years, but you've watched a lot of change here. You've seen quality evolution, I'm sure what do you think about what's taking place here in Virginia? And where do you think this thing is going to end up? 10, 20 years from now, at this point,

**Claude Thibaut** it's amazing when you see what has been going on even the last 10 years and how creative some of the winemakers winery can be, you know, when you come from the old world, you know, it's not easy to see that you can change quickly not because there is a demand from the marketing side but because you find that maybe certain variety that you haven't tried before is going to do well. So, you keep changing the landscape of the region. there still some of course, some key variety that have proven that they do well in Virginia, cabernet franc or viognier. But beside this now, especially my segment, sparkling wine. People call me a traditionalist you know because I could use other varieties or make Pet-N or make other style, but I just want to focus on my own and it's never going to be perfect, but I really want to make sure that I use what I've known to try to reach that that quality.

**Fred Reno** Well, there's no question in my mind. Sorry for the interruption, but there's no question in my mind that what you produce is as high quality as almost anything I've ever had from around the world. Thank you, I mean really seriously the first time I opened a bottle when we moved here; I went WOW, this is really really good. Yeah,

**Claude Thibaut**, I think you know, it could be I mean, you have to quantify, saying twice better, or third time better, three times better. But once you start to really focus on your product and say okay, as you said there is an area in the Shenandoah Valley where there is limestone or it's rare. Maybe I should go there and then and then the process can be imposed so it's not finished yet so I'm not going to go and try other style until I can make sure I have; I may not be able to do it. I know exactly. If I had as you say free reign or unlimited funds. You know, I know where I what I could do you know and what you taste now you would taste later would be you'll be amazed.

**Fred Reno** right, because it you know sometimes, I hear people and winemakers say, you know, sparkling wine. It covers up a lot of flaws. But what I'm hearing here is, the better the quality of the grape, the better the quality of the sparkling wine.

**Claude Thibaut** There is, no no growers going to say to me, I'm growing my fruit for sparkling wine production. So, you already have to adjust to a to adapt. You know, for me, the last adjustment I have to be at to do at the winery, the better I you know, that's why I think in the future, if we could find a place where the buyers of the fruit or because of the site or because the vineyard management, if I get close to the balance, I need it in I don't have to do much in the winery. That would be great. Because that's what my father when being from a Gran Cru my father used to say to me, so you know, you can, you can always argue, if you are making the Gran Cru that you just have to guide the, you don't have to

adjust too much. In the cellar, the fruit is already there. You just have to make sure you have a good guide and make sure it's going to be what you need.

**Fred Reno besides** your brand, Thibaut-Janisson, and Trump right now, are there any other commercial, let's just say people who make sparkling wine, that's what they do here in Virginia?

**Claude Thibaut**, I think I'm the only one to make 100%. I finally sparkling wine days nobody else.

**Fred Reno** a special, specialized business. There's no question about that.

**Claude Thibaut Because** when you make a very ripe fruit there is always a way to adjust this, but the sparkling wine is very, how you say subtle, it's the aroma not. So, if you make a mistake in the winemaking it shows right away, and there is no, you don't have any oak to hide this. It's not enough fruit. So, you even for me now after 40 years, I still run into some issues. I say when is he going to stop?

**Fred Reno** Are all of your wines non-vintage?

**Claude Thibaut** In some years I had some time I have a small, limited release of a vintage but yeah, most of the time, it's a non-vintage because I keep reserve wine. I like this, this option. I didn't make any wine this year. Because early on. I didn't feel right about the year, and I and now I'm in a position I really want to make wine when it's a good year. It's not I mean, it's not possible for some wineries, they have to make wine every year. But I remember champagne called Salon. And they used to sell to restaurants only and they used to say we only make champagne when it's a vintage year. The option to have reserve wine, it's I mean, it's not only allows you to make a very consistent style from one year to another. And then like a year, like 2018 was a very difficult year in Virginia. I'm glad I had some 17 in the tank.

**Fred Reno That's** the champenoise method isn't it, is to have a house style. Yes. Well again, I'm drinking half a dozen bottles of your wine. But I've never been disappointed. wines are really good. And Oh, Claude I appreciate your time here. This has been fascinating. I'm continuing to learn so much from the Virginia vintners. We're in the embryonic stages here, but I've just been so impressed with everything I've seen here in Virginia and what the future holds. Yeah, you're the only one here doing sparkling wine solely.

**Claude Thibaut** You know as I said, when I was in California, I had no idea what to expect. I mean, in California when you mentioned East Coast, they will they're all afraid of going here because and when you look at the map, I mean Virginia is not Champagne but it's not just the latitude or the soil. It's after it's when you went you have to taste the wine. My worry at the beginning was to say is that wine, sparkling wine, is it going to hold three, four years on the yeast, or after two years is it going to collapse and now the nonvintage I'm selling is mostly 2015 I have another blend 2016, I still have 2014 and I'm really happy to see that the wine is holding together that shows that you know when you compare to the champagne in France some time because of the demand that they over crop their, their vineyard you know and they don't have that fruit base and the wine. They don't last you know. I

mean the top one they do last cause they pick and choose but not all the production in Champagne is Dom Perignon. So, but here yeah eventually is not going to last 10 years like a, like like a Dom Perignon or Cristal because we are not talking about the same but this it shows some unique qualities that are different from champagne. You know, obviously the wine from California,

**Fred Reno yours** seems to be a bit more refined than most sparkling wine I've had over the years from California yours seems to have a bit more precision and a precise flavor profile. Again, Claude. Thank you for your time. Thank you bring this to a bit of a close