

# **EPIISODE # 20 KENDELL ANDERSON**

## **WINEMAKER, THE WINERY AT BULL RUN**

### **SPEAKERS**

**Fred Reno, Kendell Anderson**

#### **Fred Reno**

Say Hi Kendall. (Hi you all) Well, it's a pleasure to have you here. And of course, as always, we're going to have a glass or two of White Burgundy as we get on to this podcast. So let me start at the very beginning. How does somebody who graduates from William and Mary with a degree in Kinesiology and Health Sciences become a wine maker. What led you down that path? It was a woman. Okay, It's always a woman, right?

#### **Kendell Anderson**

Yeah. So, this was 2015/ 2016 around this time of year, we were on break. The girlfriend I had at the time was into wine, and I wanted to do more of get into farming, because when I got my degree in Kinesiology I developed a real interest in nutrition. This was also the time of the big farm to table local movement that was going on. So having my own farm was like I can know exactly what I'm eating, you know. So how that ties into it was she was going to get me into wine. So, she brought me to a bunch of Loudoun County wineries where we would go to do

the tastings. The first place I ever went was 868, in this state in Purcellville. At that time, I was working as a server and started working as a bartender. I didn't really like wine, you know, I made cocktails and different things like that, but I love to eat, and so they had a pairing there. And I love chocolate, too. I'm a huge chocolate guy, so they had a pairing with chocolate and wine. And that was kind of the first Aha moment for me of oh, this is really cool. Because, you know, you eat, you try the wine, you try the chocolate, and you try both together, and you see how it changes it. So that's kind of how I started associating things with food. So, okay, what wine are we drinking? What food can this go with? And then as we went to more and more, you know, this was still when the Virginia wine industry was still pretty small. A lot of the folks doing the tastings at that time were either the winemaker or the owner or, someone who had been there since day one. They knew the whole story of the winery, and a lot of them were professionals, or they had another career prior. And then they had that similiar aha moment, with their own experience with wine. And then they became a winery, and then were like, we're going to do it. And then they explain, again, I was into farming. And they explain that, like, Yeah, this is farming. This is just not with cows or corn.

### **Fred Reno**

That's why I always tell everybody who's not in the wine business and say, Boy, it looks really good. I say you have to understand, it's farming. Yeah, at the end of the day, it's farming. And it's not easy, so you hit it right on the head there Kendell.

### **Kendell Anderson**

So that's what kind of sparked my interest.

**Fred Reno**

So, what was your first job in the wine industry?

**Kendell Anderson**

I worked for a packaging distributor. We sold everything, glass bottles, all the packaging that is for wine, beer, spirits and food, everything but the label we sold that.

**Fred Reno**

Was this a local company of Virginia or a larger company?

**Kendell Anderson**

This is a larger company. The company name is Saxo at the time located in Concord, California. I had got hired by them in 2019 I was actually living just north of Los Angeles and I was working for Enterprise, trying to network to figure out how to get into the wine industry. Because when I lived in Charlotte, the year before, a lady who worked for some big winery out in Sacramento and Amador County, and she was selling to wholesale and retailers. And I talked to her about it, you know, what I wanted to do, and get into wine. She was like, Well, what you should do is go out west, learn how to do it, and then come back and do it here, because the land is cheaper.

**Fred Reno**

So, you really had your sites focused on the vineyard. Being a farmer.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah. I like the pace of it. It's not the same thing every day. I wasn't a bad student. I got really good grades. Just the concept of sitting behind a desk or sitting in a confined space, doing the same thing all the time

in the same pattern and order, that just is very boring to me. And as a wine maker, I tell people that actually making wines is probably about like 20% of my actual job. I do so many other things because it's a small business. And even when we're doing the wine work, moving the wine exactly the same way that we typically do you always have to go through that like check this, is this going to work? This the same way, knowing that it does. But there's always something that happens so it makes you constantly think on your feet.

### **Fred Reno**

What was the bridge that got you from selling packaging to hands on in the wine industry itself and farming.

### **Kendell Anderson**

So, when I worked at Saxco, I was an outside salesman, and we were, a new initiative for that. They started to boost sales. Then they sent me from LA back to Virginia, and they said, a good way to get into with these farmers and brewers and distillers just go up, say hi to them, and then volunteer your time. I knew I wanted to get into wine, so I was like, perfect. I can go to the wineries, try to make a sale, but also get the knowledge. I can help out and still get paid, because I'm going after the sale. I went to Tarra Winery, and I met the wine making team there. There's a guy named Jordan Harris, so he was the wine maker there, and then his assistant was a guy named Jesse Powers. I went there on a sales run, and I met Jesse Powers, we talked for like 30 minutes, I got his contact info, and then COVID happened.

### **Fred Reno**

Oh, my God.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yea, COVID happened. This is probably, I want to say, probably July. I had texted him after being Stir Crazy, right? Like, I can go outside, because we're going to be outside. I said hey, I need something to do. And he was like, you want to come pick blackberries with me and to turn it into wine for the owner. And I said sure. He had left that job and then went to be the head wine maker at Blue Valley vineyard, So I would help him out on processing days. And he said like, if you really want to learn, I'll show you all the things you need. Once you know harvest started, I would come on the Harvest Days. I actually helped during harvest. I had my hand in Muscat Ottonel, that was their first pick, so I got to experience that. And then I helped him process all of the grapes. This was October 30th of 2020, we were outside and processing his Petit Verdot, the last fruit to come in. And then I get laid off from Saxco.

**Fred Reno**

Okay, yeah, COVID. So how did you end up at Stone Tower Winery?

**Kendell Anderson** I was there with Jesse when I got laid off. So I told him and he said I wish I was hiring, but I'm not. He's like, I'm not in control of it. He said I should call Stone Tower. They're the biggest one around, and they might have an opening. And I had made friends with Zephaniah Farm, Bill and Bonnie. I don't know if you have met them.

**Fred Reno** I have not met them, but I'm familiar with them.

**Kendell Anderson**

The farm is wonderful & wonderful people. They were one of the first people that I met in Virginia going out to the wineries, and they were

the first people to invite me to come. If you're ever in town, you know, here's my contact info. If you want to see it, we'll show you. So, super nice folks. They kind of sealed the deal with me, like yeah, I can have a winery. And it could be this, because at that point they were still doing their tastings, at their old house. I think the house is from the late 19th century, but it's basically about the size of your office, maybe a little bit bigger. You're sitting in their old living room, right? So, it's very intimate and casual. Bonnie, she's walking around pouring people's glasses, having a taste, and we just sat by their campfire and had a glass of their Cabernet Franc, and it kind of changed everything. I'm like, Yeah, this is it we can do this. So, I called them to see if they were hiring or needed help. And they were like, No, we're not. But call Stone Tower. I called Stone Tower, left the voicemail, and about a week later a guy was actually handing in his two weeks he worked in the cellar.

### **Fred Reno**

Oh, good timing, yeah. So

### **Kendell Anderson**

So, they got my they got my voice mail an hour after he handed in his two weeks, and I started there as a cellar hand. And then I want to say, within like five months, the cellar Master and the assistant got let go. Then I got promoted. I got thrown to the wolves, which is fun, but I started in December, so I missed harvest of 2020. I had the whole off season to basically learn the cellar, learn all the equipment. I was in charge of bottling and everything like that. I was taking care of 15,000 cases.

### **Fred Reno**

Were they still bringing over wine from Burgundy?

## **Kendell Anderson**

At that point, they were bringing over their sparkling wine, that was still coming from Burgundy. And then we had some still wines from Burgundy in the warehouse. The only amount of cases that I didn't necessarily take care of in bottle was the French stuff. But everything else, we had about 15,000 cases. I was in charge of all that.

## **Fred Reno**

They threw you right into the middle of it.

## **Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, my first bottling run was a 5000 case run where I was fully in charge. So, yeah, I got thrown to the wolves, but I guess I didn't drown.

## **Fred Reno**

Well, no, you ended up at Bull Run. So The Winery at Bull Run. How did that come to be?

## **Kendell Anderson**

I actually met Ashton and Connor when I was at Stone Tower. They came for a Bouchard tasting, and that's when we ran into each other. You know they seemed like really good dudes. They were funny. We talked for a little bit, and then when we saw them again, when we went to the Governor's Cup, the previous winemaker I work for, we went to the Governor's Cup and we saw them. I think they were pouring Petit Verdot and Cab Franc and that's how we met. You know, we said Hi and everything and we briefly kept in touch Connor and I, but when he was leaving Bull Run, He had let me know he was leaving. He said if

you want an assistant job, you'd be great for it. I had just did my review and got a really nice raise at Stone Tower. I kind of had my groove there. So, I was like, ah, you know, I can wait on it. I was like, I can just continue to learn here. And then I want to say, in about October, late October, he messaged me again and said, hey, long story short, Ashton, he's leaving now. I threw your name in the hat to the owner. If they contact you, this is why. And I was like, Oh, okay. And I got contacted at the time by their Assistant GM, her name was Allie. Actually, I went to high school with her. She's the same age as my, my older brother, and her younger brother was my quarterback when we played at Westfield. So, I knew a couple people there, and actually in high school, I lived in the neighborhood that's two miles away from Bull Run. Yeah, I graduated high school in 2012 when they opened, but I had no clue they existed. Okay, no idea, and I didn't find out until I got moved back with Saxco, and I Goggled wineries around me, and I was standing with my god family, and it was like this is two miles away, and they produce 15,000 cases. And I thought, what?

### **Fred Reno**

Well, winery Bull Run is obviously a multi faceted, interesting story, because of all the things that are happening there and the history of the place, I was intrigued when I was reading about the history, and realized that John Hickox, when he bought in 2008 they planted eight acres of Norton. And, boy, that's a that's a stretch. I mean, when you think about it that's a lot of Norton.

### **Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, we definitely have a lot of Norton.

### **Fred Reno**



And not to interrupt you, but I think outside of Chrysalis and Horton, that seems to be the largest planting of Norton that I'm aware of in Virginia.

**Kendell Anderson**

I believe it is. They planted Norton because John's a huge Civil War guy, okay, like, we have a, it's called a witness to history tour that we do at the winery. And it's like he has an actual Museum in what we call it the barrel room, the old production area which is basement level in the main tasting room, but it's a whole museum with thousands of artifacts. He goes hunting and he finds stuff, and, yeah, he's a huge collector. And also, where the winery is, the driveway we're right next to the Manassas battlefield. The driveway right where the driveway is that's an easement into our property. The battlefield owns that right where you turn in, and that's where the first cannon shot of the first battle of the Civil War was shot. That's

**Fred Reno**

That's what I understand. Is this accessible off of a Route 28.

**Kendell Anderson**

No, it's off of 29. We're technically. Centerville, but right in between Centerville and Manassas, so Prince William and Fairfax County.

**Fred Reno**

Before you ended up at Winery at Bull Run? Had you ever had a bottle of Norton or worked with Northern grapes before?

**Kendell Anderson**

No, no, I had not. Even though I've been there two years, I still haven't had to work with the Norton yet. So I've been for the last two years trying to figure out what this wine is. How do I work with it? Because, we had a really good growing season in '23 but we sold the Norton to Harvest Ridge out of Delaware. We sold them about five tons of it. And then this year, with 11 days of rain that we had, it wiped the Norton out. Because it was under really bad drought stress, like one of the sites, because we have two vineyard sites, the entrance vineyard and up on the side hill there. That's the other, you know, but that's more, you know, has more of an incline, so it drains better we got, I think we went like 60 days without rain, and then we got 18 inches of rain.

**Fred Reno**

Well, you're breaking the myth that Norton is bulletproof.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah. it absorbed and it soaked up all the water and the grapes split. It was all split, and it wasn't even close to being ripe? It was only at, like three, five pH, but it was like 17 brix.

**Fred Reno**

Oh, my God. And this was obviously October.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, we were in October. So, with the drought and then all the rain, it also wiped out our Petit Verdot. So, we have three vineyards for Bull Run, our Petit Verdot we have in our Rock Mills vineyard. It's about 36 acres, but that's in Rappahannock County. So, the Petit Verdot that we had there did not do well with the drought, and then once it rained, the same thing happened there the grapes just split. So, we lost everything

else. Everything else was fantastic, but we lost our Petit Verdot and our Norton. So, I haven't had work with the Norton.

### **Fred Reno**

What's the last vintage of Norton, the winery at Bull Run produced under its label? You brought me to 2020 here today.

### **Kendell Anderson**

I believe '21. Yeah, 21 because I got there after the harvest. And in '22 Ashton he sold some of it to Harvest Ridge, again, out in Delaware. And then the Norton that he brought in, he turned it into a port wine. In the past we would make a still wine, a dry red and a port style. We made the port out of Tannat in the past too. I tend to like it with the Norton, though, because of that acid that comes with Norton, it does well when you stall it fortifying it with brandy, right? It kind of blends really well. Doesn't taste as sweet.

**Fred Reno** Well, I haven't had any Norton from Bull run recently but I had some Bull Run Norton a few years ago, when I moved here, I bought some online, and I was impressed with the quality. I can't recall the vintage, but I'm going to guess that was probably somewhere between the '17 or '19 vintage.

### **Kendell Anderson**

When I first started there, we were still selling the '17, and then we just started selling the '19, not too long ago.

### **Fred Reno**

Let me change the subject for a moment from Norton, this Chablis is starting to taste pretty damn good, isn't it.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, yeah, that's a well-made wine there.

**Fred Reno**

Yeah, you're getting a broader expression. So, you haven't had a chance to make Norton yet, but you've watched it. You've seen it. Have you tasted a number of other Norton's from other producers to get a better idea?

**Kendell Anderson**

Well, last year John Hickox said he wanted to figure out what to do with the Norton. I mean, we're paying the money to farm it and grow it, so you have got to make something out of it. We have, like a cult following, essentially, for the Norton. But other than that, it's not a real mover in the tasting room.

**Fred Reno**

Yeah, those are the market challenges that I saw, and I wanted to really address, and to understand, okay, how do we get this iconic Virginian grape to the level that people understand what it is. What type of trellis system do you have your Norton on?

**Kendell Anderson**

We have it just on high wire? If you don't take care of it, it turns into a jungle. I mean, yeah, we just have it on high wire. We do probably half the sprays on it. It's a very easy vineyard for them to kind of manage. You know, they could kind of take their time, because they have so much other stuff an hour away. The fruit that it produces is pretty good. I want to say John planted the first Norton because of the history of the

grape and everything that tied into the property. But then we were buying grapes from Chrysalis too. And then I want to say, a couple years later, he planted that second half on the hillside site.

**Fred Reno**

So, he realized, let's put it on a better site, and we'll see what we can get.

**Kendell Anderson**

So that's the one that drains better so in a normal year it's the better site for it. So that's more of, like, the best pick. And then this is like, an insurance pick kind of feel to it. But yeah, like I said, we've sold it, and then I lost all of it, so I didn't get a chance to work with it.

**Fred Reno**

When you get to work with it in the cellar, they tell me it's a bear.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, that's all I've heard. It's the worst thing to work with in the cellar, which is kind of funny. Well, that's a good challenge. Yeah, it gives me another thing to work on.

**Fred Reno**

What is the Rock Mill Vineyard, which is part of the winery at Bull Run, but it's up at Rappahannock county. Why did they plant that? How did that end up coming to be for them?

**Kendell Anderson**

John was looking at places to plant a vineyard, because he had been buying fruit from other vineyards. And as you know, he bought that

property and started building a winery and planting a vineyard. But he picked Rappahannock because he looked at the history of what the agriculture in that area had been and where stuff was growing around in the different counties. And he found that Rappahannock county used to grow a bunch of apples and orchards everywhere. So, he knew that something would grow there, and then the cost per acre was significantly less than having it closer to the winery. It does add a little bit of logistical challenge to harvest and timing. But its metaphor behind it is, you know, you have your gas station and then you have the oil rig which is away from all the people, and it's where all the work gets done. But where are the people? That's where you want your gas station. So that's why we're located right here so we hit all the people who come to Bull Run for its historical value.

### **Fred Reno**

Well, I find it fascinating when I think about, historically, at least in my experience in business, some of the best vineyards, putting the varietal aside for a second, happened to be planted on old apple orchards. I mean, you got Linden up there which is at an old apple Orchard site. I remember in the early part of my career when Bill Hill told me, and this is back in the middle '80s, he said Fred, the best site for Pinot Noir, is going to be out in West Sonoma County where those old apple orchards are, damn if he wasn't right. I don't know what it is about the soil that apples grow really well, and grapes grow well too.

**Kendell Anderson** I think it's just because of the type of fruiting tree that they are. Like with wine, you get a lot of the similar acids and different fruit flavors, especially white wines. I don't know if there's any truth to that, but to me, that's kind of like it's going to produce something similar in its flavor profile. If you have good dirt and you can

grow good a real fruit tree, apple tree, or a pear tree, or anything like that. However, You a wine grape is more susceptible because it's grapes, not a hearty apple, but you can kind of take care of them similarly, too. And it should produce something very good.

### **Fred Reno**

The Winery at Bull Run owner John Hickox what's his sort of mindset now, where he wants to see the winery position, and what he's trying to do with his brand?

### **Kendell Anderson**

We've been updating efficiencies, updating our labels, we've really been trying to push to because the business has been open for 10 years, actually 12, going on 13 ish, he's at that point where it's like, okay, the industry's changed. COVID accelerated that. Now we have to catch up with the times, essentially. And our tasting room right now is all getting renovated and on the production side of things we've bought a larger format, tank fermentation, not so many T bins, because of how unique our business is with the amount of traffic and events and everything that we have. We also now have concrete tanks. We're dabbling into sparkling wine. We just purchased some Charmat method equipment, to do sparkling and forced carbonation. We're just trying to basically refresh everything. I'm relatively young. I guess there's maybe a couple wine makers who are right around my age. I'm only 31 so I'm kind of the same age as the consumers that we get. So, how do we capture this new consumer that is now our new foot traffic? Because wine clubs are going up, but that's because the older generation, they'd much rather stay at home than do something. They have enough space to where they can store all this wine. They much rather come out occasionally, but for the everyday foot traffic, how can

we appeal to them as well and invite them into the industry, and then also still have that Wine Club member,

### **Fred Reno**

You touched on something I'm curious about, because I'm an old Guy. The younger generation, what is it that they find interesting about wine? There's got to be a hook here that's going to have them say I want to drink wine instead of that alcohol over there. It might be a hard question.

### **Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, that's a tough question. It's a great question. I would say, like for me, personally, I'm probably one of two of my friends that drink wine. Either they never drank wine before, or they never saw their parents drink wine, or they were like me, originally, they just hadn't found that wine that's changed their mind yet. And then also the perception of the industry is a lot snootier, right? That's kind of the what a lot of people tell me they're like, wine is snooty, and no it doesn't have to be. I mean, even fantastic wine doesn't have to be snooty.

### **Fred Reno**

That is a bit of the bane of what I've seen in my career, is how all of a sudden, this became about somebody's credential as opposed to somebody's intellectual curiosity.

### **Kendell Anderson**

Right, at the end of the day, a Winemakers job is to make wine that is great, but also people enjoy it and Yes, you can make specific types of wine for a specific crowd, but if we're making wine for everyone else, because there's a lot of times we make decisions in a cellar that aren't



necessarily what we prefer in a wine, but we have to think of, it's still a business, so we got to sell it, that's the goal, right? We're trying to make great wine for everyone to try. You can't be snooty and keep out everyone. That's not good for business because you want more customers.

**Fred Reno** Well, yeah..

### **Kendell Anderson**

But also you're trying to get people to understand that this is a cool, fun lifestyle. You know, you don't have to go crazy and drink cases of it. You can come have a relaxing glass of wine, there's no pretentiousness behind it.

### **Fred Reno**

Wine is supposed to be a social interaction. One of the things that I see is missing and this is my personal opinion, people don't dine anymore. And I don't mean dining out. I mean dining at home. And wine is part of the dining experience. And that's how you get introduced to wine, right? And you get attracted to wine when you're like, oh, this wine, this food, that person, the whole experience, every piece of this thing fits together. With people eating on the run, and not necessarily sitting down at a dinner table at home and having a dinner, wine kind of loses its place a bit. It's struggling to find its footing a little bit, and then we're now in the new neo prohibition movement, which scares the Hell out of me. I'm a student of the history of prohibition. I've been doing a lot of deep research over the last two or three months for my book about the origins of prohibition and the forces that brought it. Now, the forces today are not religious like they were back in the late 1800s. And they're not the women's movement like it was, but the

forces nevertheless are as powerful to potentially be able to get people to be against the idea of alcohol in general. That's a bit scary to the wine industry, because last time prohibition happened, the wine industry, which was very immature at that time in this country, didn't think it applied to them. And they were surprised.

**Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, it's a bit scary. It's one of those things I know there's a big movement on like lower alcoholic wines and the non-alcoholic wines,

**Fred Reno**

I have a hard time calling non-alcoholic wines, wine.

**Kendell Anderson**

It's wine because of the alcoholic percentage in the solution.

**Fred Reno**

As I tell everybody, and this probably applies to the spirits as well as beer, but alcohol in the wine, that's the SOUL in the wine.

**Kendell Anderson**

It's the reason for it. It lifts everything else up.

**Fred Reno**

It's the soul in the wine. It brings it together without that alcohol, it's just grape juice.

**Kendell Anderson**

It's basically the sugar in the grape turns into the alcohol and the wine. So that's basically taking all of the sugar out of a ripe grape. That

doesn't make sense to me. To me why would I eat that? Because that's like me eating grapes when they're going through the growing phase, little green rockets of sour apple, you know, that are the grapes before they start to hit veraison and everything. Why would I eat that? Nothing good is going to come of that? Because it's not. It has no sugar to make wine into it. So why would I use that sugar to give, you know, process that get it to this, you know, have a soul, as you say, and then just strip it out of it. You should just drink the grape juice.

### **Fred Reno**

Good point. I agree with you, I think another thing that I sort of lament from my vantage point, wine has gotten really great wine, okay, it's gotten so expensive that the younger generation, your generation, hasn't had the opportunity that I had 3040, years ago to drink some of the greatest expressions of wine in the world to get me to realize, oh, yeah, there's this, there's levels. How do we get to that kind of thing?

### **Kendell Anderson**

Honestly, that world is controlled by the distributors and the wineries they their ideal clientele. But like I said, that's not the clientele, necessarily we have. Per the data that we've shown, is those coming to the wineries, and experiencing that. You know, I do understand the economics behind it. About, you know, the cost of everything has gone up, inflation is this. I understand all of that. But if you want people to be able to come to experience your product, you have to put it in a place that's approachable. Especially because they're coming out, you want them to come back. And nowadays, a lot of the experiences, because you can do so many things at home.

### **Fred Reno**

Yeah, well, the thing about Virginia wine that I've been preaching to people in the wine industry that I've known for years, and they aren't familiar with Virginia wine because they've never been here. I'll hear this thing about Virginia wine is too expensive. And I'm like no, the sweet spot for Virginia wine is \$25 to \$35 a bottle. The equivalent of that quality, for the most part, from California, is \$45 to \$55 a bottle, if not upwards. So, it's actually a bargain from a qualitative standpoint, in my experience. The quality of the wine has grown exponentially here in Virginia. And unfortunately, the awareness of it in the wine world outside of the confines of the Commonwealth has not grown as exponentially.

### **Kendell Anderson**

Yeah, when I lived in California, I have friends that still live out there, and I actually shipped them some Virginia wine because I'm like, here try some good stuff from Virginia. I bet it surprised them. Yeah? They're like, Dude, this is really good. Yeah, I told you.

### **Kendell Anderson**

I've been going to a lot of festivals. I'm a member of the African association for African American Vintners. So, I brought Virginia wines out to California and poured them at the festivals and the symposiums and different things like that. I've gotten outstanding feedback on the wines that I brought out there.

### **Fred Reno**

Well, Norton is interesting, because when I got infatuated by Norton back in 2019 when I first moved here, I started talking to these folks that I know on the West Coast, especially those that I respect. They have great palates and lots of years in the business, and they've never

had a bottle of Norton, as I've never had a bottle of Norton after 40 years in the business, and I never had a bottle of Norton. So, I moved to Virginia, and I sent them Nortons, and I'll get this feedback, like, wow. What is this? Yeah, this is amazing. And then unfortunately, they haven't had the experience I've had to be able to try Nortons that are 15 or 20 years old. It changes so much at that point in the bottle, like a really high-quality Classified Bordeaux growth, and they're just stunned. Have you read the book *The Wild Vine*?

### **Kendell Anderson**

I'm about halfway through it. I get about an hour when I get home, because I have two young kids, and before they go to bed I have an hour to just sit and read. But no, I mean, in my journey to figure out about Norton, I have access to the Bull Run wine library. And they have Norton all the way back to when they opened in 2012 so in my journey to figure out, okay, what can this turn into, I've tasted some at that point. They were actually, you know, they softened, they mellowed out. And then I'm like, okay, so this thing just needs time. Yes, we're going to make it into a dry red and it needs to sit for years before you even touch it. I kind of like in my thought process of how can make this wine? When I was at Stone Tower, they grew Nebbiolo, you know, Barolos, they them down for at least five years. But if you've ever had Nebbiolo, that is a couple months old, it is so hard to drink because it's so tannic. And it's like, oh, okay, so if you let it sit long enough, and then it'll soften. If you think about it, and kind of treat your Norton like you would a really tannic wine you got to lay that down for a while before that's even worth your time, because it's not going to be what it's supposed to be, right? That's another thing with educating the consumer is, trying to explain to them, okay, this bottle of wine you just leave there and don't touch, right? It's a lot harder because the data

shows a bottle of wine lasts, like two years. People send a house so trying to, you know, sell that like, no, just buy this and then let it sit. You know, that's another thing. That's an education.

### **Fred Reno**

You're right. Kendall, I have, probably, conservatively, now, an assortment of different Nortons. About eight to 10 cases in my cellar, just an assortment of three bottles of this, four bottles this. And every now and then, now they're getting old enough where I can go down and grab a bottle like, say, 2017 and start to see something that's eight years old, what it's going to produce,

### **Kendell Anderson**

And, that was probably the biggest eye opening thing that I experienced with Norton. Tasting the one that they were serving in the tasting room. I think at that point they were serving the '19 trying that wine, and then trying the '15 and the '13 and '12. It's like, Oh, if you just give this thing some time, you know it'll chill out and become a very nice glass of wine.

### **Fred Reno**

I tell everybody, when you have a young Norton decanted for at least an hour before you serve it, it just needs to have that aeration for that Malic Acid to soften up a bit. When I started in the business, Kendall, we decanted all of our Classified Bordeaux Growth wine. I am talking about the late 70s, and '66 vintage Bordeaux. Oh, we would decant them. That was just normal procedure, right? But now that they make Napa Valley Cabernet in Bordeaux they don't have to do that.

### **Kendell Anderson**

And it's back to what you said, it's the whole experience of dining. And because it seems like we're, everyone's always running around on the move. There isn't that sense of slowing down and dining and enjoying the moment, the people, the conversation, the experience, the glass of wine, yeah, you know the food. And I think at some point we got to get back to that, to where everyone just relaxes a little bit.

**Fred Reno**

That would be really nice. I couldn't agree more. Well Kendall Thank You again. I am going to close this down on that note, and then we'll enjoy a little bit more of this Chablis, which is really tasty. Damn good, right now.

**Kendell Anderson**

That's a good Wine right there. Thanks for having me.

**Fred Reno**

You're welcome.