

Joe Roberts keynote speaker for Nederburg Auction

Joe Roberts, one of the world's top wine bloggers will be the keynote speaker for Nederburg Auction 2013. As the founder of the award-winning 1WineDude.com, he will be focusing on how South African wine producers can best market South African wines to young US consumers during his address at the Nederburg Auction on 7 September 2013.



Top wine blogger and Nederburg Auction keynote speaker, Joe Roberts.

He rose to fame as a wine writer to a niched, 'intermediate', wine-loving audience since his immersion in the world of wine - an epiphanous moment during which he unwittingly and perfectly matched an inexpensive chardonnay with the seafood meal his future wife Kelly was preparing.

"The light-bulbs went off in my head, and I was totally hooked. From that moment, I started devouring everything I could find on the subject of wine. I'm convinced that experience is what started me on the path of wine geekdom."

Since his immersion in the wine world, he has travelled the world specifically to cover wine, including South America, the US, Australia, France, Germany, Portugal and Greece. His writing focuses largely on information for what he calls 'intermediate wine lovers', consumers who have gone through the introductory elements of wine but who cannot find any resources for wine lovers at that level of knowledge.

Capturing at the till

"They've not spent nights reading the World Atlas of Wine or taking certification exams. They are past the '101' stage but have not yet jumped off the deep end either. There are almost zero resources available for consumers at that level, in my experience. Either you're reading Wine For Dummies or encyclopaedic tomes that weigh several pounds or finding proprietary forums online, where people can be helpful but also can be acrimonious."

Such was the dearth of knowledge at this level that his blog rapidly became one of the most influential in the US and

catapulted Roberts to fame. In 2012, he was named IntoWine.com's 14th most influential person in the US wine business.

Hence the subject of his Auction presentation, which will deal with the impact of the US consumer economy on wine sales and how South African wine producers can best market South African wines to young, internet-savvy US consumers by taking advantage of how these consumers find and purchase wine. His presentation is entitled 'Hustling Wine in the land of Big Hat, No Cattle'.

"We have to remember that as we trend younger, people consume wine information differently and at the point of sale, if there is no tastemaker available (a sommelier or store clerk), people will search the web."

He says generally that consumers will read Cellartracker.com reviews and influential blogs rather than a Wine Spectator review behind a paywall. "That act will influence individual buying decisions. Think about how we shop on Amazon.com with respect to the ratings and reviews submitted by those who have purchased the item already."

Expert columnist

Roberts writes a wine column for Playboy.com, is a wine expert and contributor to Answers.com, and has contributed to The Guardian in the UK and to Wine Business Monthly and the Sommelier Journal in the US. He has spoken on wine and social media as panel member at numerous international conferences and is widely regarded as an expert on the topics of wine and the influence of social media on the wine world, and on the marketing of wine to the newest generation of wines consumers. 1WineDude.com currently sees several thousand subscribers and visitors each month and has served millions of page views since its inception.

For more information, go to www.nederburgauction.co.za. To visit the blog, go to www.1winedude.com.

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