

WINED DOWN



A selection of odds and ends from the trade

BOTTLE SHOCK

▶ **BECKY PASKIN, WRITER, PRESENTER AND FOUNDER OF DRINK THIS AND THE OURWHISKY FOUNDATION**

I've been writing about whisky and drinks for almost 20 years – first with *BigHospitality*, then as editor of the *The Spirits Business* and *Scotchwhisky.com*, and now as a freelance writer, presenter and founder of Drink This.



But the bottle that started it all? I've no idea. It's not because of one too many hazy nights, but because what attracted me to whisky wasn't the liquid itself – it was its stories.

Us writers are addicted to telling a good story, and as a spirit with hundreds of years of history and the cumulative passion and experience of thousands of people across the globe, whisky is riddled with them: tales of underdogs defeating giants, communities rallying around their local spirit, category-altering innovations.

The best part is these stories won't ever run out. So long as people continue to make and drink whisky, there will be an irresistible tale that ignites curiosity, and keeps writers like me in a job.

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE...

Brighton cheer from Barcelona-based @alealonso. illustrator



IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

Spain's hip islands: Lanzarote, Tenerife, Majorca and Ibiza

A look at the perplexing rosé conundrum

Where next for rum's rolling wave?

South America report: From Pais to Pisco and more

5 MINUTES WITH...



Nick Rowan, founder of Wine Fogg and author of *Japanese Wine*



Japanese wine expert Nick Rowan encourages people to explore the full spectrum of the country's wines and regions

Alder Yarrow @vinography muses on Lebanon's finest
No matter how many times I've had it it's always been phenomenal. Including tonight – my last bottle with one of my dearest friends in the world. I firmly believe 1995 Musar to be one of the world's greatest bottles of wine.

Angels' Share

UK Hospitality @allen_m_simpson responding to the proposed business rates relief for pubs
It's a whole of hospitality problem. It needs a whole of hospitality solution.

@winecon. bsky.social shows French wine policy used to be very different in living memory
In 1956, France prohibited serving wine for lunch to children under the age of 14 in school cafeterias. In 1981, the ban was extended to students over 14 years of age.

Guess who said it?
"The ratio of ego and food was equal and the wine was nowhere to be seen"

There are lots of small producers that really focus on the quality of the grapes – there's a charm and an authenticity, also a subtlety to the grapes, as people know from trying Koshu. It is great what they have done, but it is a shame it has not been taken further – people have started and stopped at Koshu. That's like saying New Zealand is all about Sauvignon Blanc and ignoring Gimblett Gravels or the Chardonnays.

Many people talk about Pinot Noir from Hokkaido. Zweigelt from the island is fantastic too. It's like going to the Loire on a sunny day and having a glass of Cab Franc. It's fresh, crunchy and charming. They have some fresh Kerner up there too.

Because of the heat caused by global warming producers are going to higher altitudes in regions including Yamanashi. They are now going up to 800-900m – where Grace Wine is found, for example. In Nagano further west – famous for Merlot and Chardonnay – they're growing grapes at over 1,000m.

Yamagata is in the north, and is up and coming because it is quite cool and grapes can still ripen well. It is almost like Chile as there are two mountain ranges with a river valley in the middle.

Also, there are a lot of urban wineries starting in Tokyo. What's interesting in Tokyo is most of them are owned or run by women, which I think is fantastic.