NEWS RELEASE

Winemaker Fantasy Finalists – It's Such A Hard Choice

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THE WINEMAKER FANTASY FINALISTS ARE ALL SO INSPIRING!

The **winemaker fantasy finalists** are in! We spent a whole week watching videos and plowing through applications from winemakers from all around the world.

Over 60 fully developed pitches came in from 9 different countries. And there were all kinds of wine projects to choose from

- red, white, bubbly…
- white wine with red grapes
- 100 year old rose
- sweet wine
- fortified wine
- organic wine
- Missouri wine
- Connecticut wine
- multi-country blends
- something called Melnik
- and virtually everything else you can imagine…

And the winemakers are all incredibly passionate and inspiring. It's really hard to choose the best.

And now we need YOUR help to pick from the final 8

Please vote for your favorite video here.

All 8 finalists are compelling choices. We know this for a fact because thousands of people have voted, but the top two at the minute are only 12 votes apart! It is going to be a photo finish and every vote counts.

Here's a teaser:

The eight choices include:

- an urban NYC winemaker with a world vision
- an Aussie determined to save her wine from near extinction
- an Italian that's going old school… like, Ancient Rome old
- an overlooked farmer tired of selling her fruit to Big Brands
- a Napa winemaker determined to up the Cab Franc ante
- a California winemaker saying "yes way" to 100-year-old Rosé
- a woman pinning Bulgarian varietals on the world wine map
- …or a wine veteran making white wine from red grapes?

How did we narrow it down to just 8 choices?
We recruited some of our favorite people in the wine world to help us sort these videos and determine the best of the best.

The truth is that watching all the pitches and reading all the written applications was very time consuming – and then the debate that ensued – phew! We can't expect everybody to watch 60+ videos before making an informed choice. So we narrowed down the playing field.

I'd like to take a moment to thank these guys for helping us with the selection process (which was not easy at all!!)

- Kent Reynolds, **Archangel** – Kent and our Archangel community went through all the videos and picked out their favorites. We wanted our customers to have a say in which projects made it to the finals so we're really proud that so many of them weighed in and let Kent know what they thought before the deliberation
- Joe Roberts, **1winedude** – Joe is one of the country's top wine bloggers and writes specifically for intermediate wine drinkers – the folks who like wine but would rather enjoy it for what it is than memorize tons of facts and names and regions. His perspective is perfectly suited for this contest because he knows his stuff, but he's not going to act like a traditional gatekeeper in the wine industry that only wants to make wines "experts" like.
- Jeff Siegel, **WineCurmudgeon** – Jeff is more than a self-proclaimed curmudgeon. He's one of the most honest wine writers out there, often flying completely in the face of the wine establishment. And honestly, we just

love his rants. He gets the wine business in a way few people do, and we think throughout the judging he was thinking about customers first. His philosophy is that wine companies and wine writers should be more focused on wines that normal people can drink – that means they're affordable and accessible. I'm glad he leant some of his insight to helping us pick our finalists.

- Tom Wark, **Fermentation: The Daily Wine Blog** – Another of the country's top wine bloggers, Tom has spent 25 years as a marketing and PR consultant for the wine industry, and is an indefatigable advocate for consumer rights. He champions the direct to consumer sale of wine and shares our excitement every time we free a winemaker to follow their dreams and make a wine they actually want to make! Another person who has exactly the right point of view to pick our kind of winemaker fantasy finalists.
- Luiz Alberto, #**winelover** – A quick search for this hashtag #winelover and you'll see the result of Luiz' incredible social outreach and pursuit of friendliness. I've known Luiz personally for over a decade and, in that time, he's built one of the most popular wine communities in the world around this simple hashtag. One more person who I think understands that great wine comes in all shapes and sizes.
- And of course kudos to our own Matt Parish (chief winemaker) and Anne Saunders (US managing director) who participated in the voting deliberation as well.

A big thanks to all of you who have voted so far. And I cannot wait to see who wins $100k in funding to make their dream wine. This has been an absolute blast!

full rules: http://news.nakedwines.com/2016/04/02/winemaker-fantasy-rules/

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