

July 31st, 2017

Stephanie: Hey, down there!

Cedric: How are you?

Stephanie: Hey! How are you?

Cedric: I'm good.

Stephanie: Good!

Cedric: Good! Good!

Stephanie: Nice to see you. All I've ever seen is pictures of all your FaceBook adventures.

Cedric: No the holiday is over now, so we're all done and that's it.

Stephanie: Excellent!

Cedric: So yeah, it's back to work now, I suppose.

Stephanie: Yeah I know. Unfortunately, that's... But we're still on just getting started in our major summer season here, so.

Cedric: Yeah I see. Obviously, you must be having good weather and everything's good there at the moment.

Stephanie: Yeah, the weather's been great. We had a very slow start to the summer though, so it'll be interesting to see. It was cold and rainy for most of June, where it usually gets quite warm. So it's only been this last week or so, well not week, maybe last couple of weeks where it's been steadily mid to high 20's.

Cedric: Oh Okay.

Stephanie: Yeah, which is good.

Cedric: Look it, we basically got summer weather at the moment, we're in dire strait with water here.

Stephanie: I laugh because I know it's supposed to be your cold season and I listen to Sabine complaining about it online, you know, we're not crying for you.

Cedric: No, no, no. I mean we're at like 25 degrees, today it's 25/26 Degrees Celsius outside.

Stephanie: Wow!

Cedric: But obviously, we're in dire straits, we need water across the board.

Stephanie: Oh, I'm sure. If you don't have any kind of a let up at all.

Cedric: No, not at all. You know we're expecting some rain tomorrow, but you know. Obviously, for tours, it's not ideal, but at the moment this is our quiet time. We probably got one more quiet week, this week, and then next week... but nothing big. And then next week, we got two every day so that's not too bad.

Stephanie: Well, sounds good to me.

Cedric: Yeah, so then we are start kicking off again and picking up from there.

Stephanie: Well, every time that I know that someone's heading down your way, I'm always sending them to you, so. That's my job, "Recruiting 101".

Cedric: I appreciate it. It's going pretty well, but like I said it's really quiet at the moment. A lot of times we go the wine estates and it's just us there.

Stephanie: Oh! But, actually, that might be good news for people who are traveling and don't necessarily don't want to be in the big large groups, right?

Cedric: Oh yeah.

Stephanie: Get little bit more personalized attention.

Cedric: Yeah, perfect for them. But it's obviously for tourism it's not great. But every year it's the same Stephanie, we always complain, but it's exactly the same every single year.

Stephanie: Well, that's what I'm kind of hoping. Since I was there last if you remember, we had such a short list of wines that were available here of the ones that we visited. We just didn't have a great selection. So I don't think that South African wines really got their due or the large range or the varieties of them are the same as they used to. So I'm really kind of hoping that...oops sorry... over the next little while we have as work sort of getting caught up or talking about different wineries and different wine styles and things that are there. It might expose people to try a few other South African wines and if they fall in love with it, it might now be one of their featured destinations if they want to go to a wine region, right?

Cedric: Definitely!

Stephanie: Yeah.

Cedric: I look at that list that you sent me, that website. They got a fairly substantial variety there. Obviously, you got your Two Oceans and your entry level stuff...

Stephanie: That's right.

Cedric: Which extends bucket loads everywhere in the world.

Stephanie: Yes.

Cedric: But there were some really good stuff there. I was quite impressed, I mean, small places, De Trafford and the Post House and a couple of others which I was quite impressed with so. I think there are some decent stuff amongst all of that, definitely.

Stephanie: Yeah, well, I was very surprised to see De Trafford on there as well because I don't believe he had anything here, especially not in Ontario. I believe some of the wines

that we like the most, they might have been available in Quebec in very small quantities, but they certainly weren't available here. I mean I know I sent you a big list and you probably went and took a quick peek ... One of the things I don't think people realize is that you - just like every other wine region kind of focus on particular grape varieties that do very, very well there. And then you may have different styles of it, so of course, the Chenin Blanc is the big white and then... I'm just trying to think. Is there any other kinds that you can think of that people should be experimenting with in the whites?

Cedric: The thing is with the whites - it's been so focused on Chenin and Chardonnay for the last while. Our Chardonnays have been doing really, really well, funny enough.

Stephanie: Well if you could compare them to Chardonnays elsewhere, do you have any comparables that you can think of just in style, the big buttery ones or you find something more delicate?

Cedric: Yeah something a bit - for people a little bit of these big buttery Chardonnays. Well, a lot of the winemakers are really focusing on... they're all obviously withered, but only a portion of it will be put in new French oak barrels and then the rest will be put in huge barrels. So it's not over the top, it's quite complex. [cat enters screen] Ahhh... As soon as someone comes online and someone's talking she's yeah. So in any case, it's slightly in a lighter style, if I can put it that way.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: There's still people, especially for food, for food, that are big into these heavily oaked Chardonnays, but in general, people are going for more the lighter style you can actually just drink every day if you chose without any food or having the food it still pairs well. Chardonnay, Chenin, obviously - has been around forever, South Africans loves Chenin because basically, you can have it in a very easy style where they just put it in stainless steel tanks, especially with our weather, it's perfect. So they almost make it like a Sauvignon Blanc, it's got maybe a little bit more of a backbone than a Sauvignon Blanc but it's got good acidity on it, it's a good, easy sipping wine and people tend to drink quite a lot of it.

Stephanie: Well, I know I do.

Cedric: Obviously with a bit of wood. On the red side... actually there's... you are familiar with Cinsault, are you not?

Stephanie: Yes!

Cedric: Cinsault has a thing going on around there at the moment. At one stage it was the biggest planted grape in this country.

Stephanie: Wow!

Cedric: It was. Basically, it's a grape that does really well in hot climates and they were using it for bulk wine and for blending for the most part, especially with Cabernet Sauvignon.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: They get huge amounts of grapes off it, they just used as many as they possibly could, and it kind of got a bit of a bad rep. And then as the wine industry started evolving in this country, what they were doing is they were pulling all of these things old vines out, okay.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: And then they started planting the cab's and the shiraz's and so on. And they kind of forgot about it, they always use it in a blend, put a bit of Cinsault in a blend. But there's a couple of guys doing really good Cinsaults now. And these are vines that kind of got overlooked, never all got pulled out obviously - older vines. And the cinsault that you're getting off these older vines is really good stuff. In the Swartland area, and parts of Stellenbosch, the guys are getting very excited about it. It started by big players, the Saudi family, etc.

Stephanie: Wow!

Cedric: You know big players, they've been making it for a while, but it seems almost like they've kicked up a notch, they're calling it the "Pinot Noir of the Swartland".

Stephanie: Wow! There's a title for you.

Cedric: Yeah there you go. And it's getting a bit of a cult following, it's almost becoming with the young winemakers, especially small boutiquey places; it's like a hipster wine. Every young wine maker wants to make a good Cinsault now.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: I think that if there is a bit of a change, we still, only 1.8 % ,I think, of our vineyards are Cinsault, so it's minute.

Stephanie: So I guess it's one of those things that if we happen to see it popping up on any of the blends or as a single varietal here, that must mean that that one particular winery is probably doing a higher production of it specifically for...

Cedric: Yeah, yeah. Especially as a single varietal, I think that the guys that are doing it as a single varietal, it tends to be a bit made in a slightly up-market fashion, if I can put it that way. And it's really versatile because it's not a full bodied wine, by a long stretch of the imagination, but it's good with food, it's a good summer red. So I think it's got a lot of potential and I've had a couple recently that I've been really impressed with. Stellenrust and obviously I'm a big fan of the old wine estate called Pella.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: You remember I took you there?

Stephanie: Yes! It's just that I've got my list stand by, yes.

Cedric: Yeah their super singles... and every year it's getting better. I know I actually opened up one of their first vintages and it really drank well. I think that's, out of our red wines, definitely that's something to look out for.

Stephanie: Okay. So that be good for the... especially for the fall season here as the temperatures drop just a little bit, I think that'll be... right, it will start to go with a lot of foods.

What's happening with any sparklings or anything like that, is there anybody new or is it the same producers?

Cedric: It's the same players. Yeah, it's really the same place, we're exporting all over the world with out bubbly now, especially to Russia.

Stephanie: Oh, okay.

Cedric: Yeah, exporting a lot of our bubbly to Russia. It's the same players, you know you've got your Simonsig and these guys that have been doing the same stuff for a very very long time. There's a couple of guys up Colmont, 1 or 2 other's that are... the smaller guys that are doing more, almost like hand crafted stuff you know really. A little bit more up-market, but the volumes are so small. And like I say, I think... I don't want to say we've been in the record probably, but there hasn't been big movement with it.

Stephanie: Well I guess with the few players that you have and if they're having great success with it, especially with their exports, there's no real motivation for them to expand at all, right? I'm surprised you're not getting in more competitors if the export markets are that good.

Cedric: Yeah, we're ok you know, we're actually exporting more than we are actually.... more than for local consumption now, but it's the same. I think it's...we're nearly making, I think its 900 million liters a week.

Stephanie: Wow!

Cedric: I don't know, I think it's something like 450,000...450 million liters of it which is getting exported. It's mainly landing up in Europe - the UK, Germany, okay now Russia's coming into play for us. We do export to the States, but it's like 1 % of 1 % kind of thing.

Stephanie: Yeah, it's not really significant as it is over there. That makes sense. So, if you can just go off the top of your head so certain producers that maybe export here, aside from the usual entry level ones, that you just recommended, but now you just mentioned Stellenrust. Is there another couple that you would recommend that are just having good consistency, like I just said, an all around winner that you can just go and pull off the shelf.

Cedric: Are you talking across the board or are you talking...

Stephanie: Yeah I think so, I mean just off the top your head like if there were certain ones that people should be shopping for - as opposed to me telling them my favorites.

Cedric: No, No, I saw you got Rijks on your... they got Rijks.

Stephanie: Sorry, what's that?

Cedric: If you want to get really, really... Rijks, R-I-J-K-S.

Stephanie: Oh, yes okay.

Cedric: In the Swartland, they got a Chenin Blanc there which is outstanding, it's called a Touch of Oak, I think it is.

Stephanie: Yes, okay. I think I remember seeing that.

Cedric: That's really and that's a keeper and it actually gets better when you hold it back for a little while. It's more and it's a food Chenin, if I can put it that way, they're doing some really good stuff. We carry... the Swartland at the moment is the "in" place. But having said that, our top ranked wines, over the last year or 2 years, I would say Chardonnays.

Stephanie: Wow! Okay.

Cedric: Especially on Decanter and these guys up there and they're the...is kicking that up. You got a wine estate there that is on that list - Sumaridge?

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: They really, really good stuff. And obviously your normal guys Hamilton Russell, they're doing good stuff. I'm not a huge Ken Forrester fan, but their Chenin Blanc are outstanding, he's got 3 outstanding Chenin Blancs there, but they're more top level stuff that they're doing really good stuff with. I'm just trying to think of a couple, the Post House - I'm a big fan of the Post House. Did we get to the Post House?

Stephanie: No I don't think so. I remember seeing it, but I don't believe we went to the Post House. I mean, I'm going to have a link in the show notes for this show, I'm going to actually have a link to... because I remember I did a whole couple of pages of just a chat of all the places that we went to, links of what I tried that was available here in Ontario. So all those details will be on there for the show notes. So I'll just add any new ones that you say we should have got to or my Plan B for when I come the next time.

Cedric: Look it, I don't know if you got to the Post House, but the Post House is a little bit of an eccentric winemaker, bit off the wall, Nick Gebers, really nice guy. But he's not shift chief and bottle washer there, so when he's not there it's kind of closed because he does everything, he does the marketing, he does the winemaking, everything. It's all hand-crafted stuff, you know how labels all get done by hand, stuff like ... and it's also got a good story because it was an old Post Office. So all of their wines are named off the famous stamps, but he's got very, very, very intense reds and his Chenin Blanc is off the charts.

Stephanie: Wow!

Cedric: Their Bush Vine Chenin Blancs, also look out for Bush Vine Chenin.

Stephanie: Okay.

Cedric: The Chenins that they're doing with Bush Vines and obviously some Pinotage they're some good Pinotage's out there at the moment. But again people tend to focus on your usual suspects there like your Kanonkops and your Els, there's a lot of good stuff outside of that that's... If you see Bush Vine, Bush Vine Chenin, or Bush Vine Chardy and Pinotage.

Stephanie: Pinotage okay.

Cedric: I would look at it; they're some guys doing some really good stuff, small volume stuff. I don't know if it's getting out to Canada.

Stephanie: I'm going to list what the links are in Ontario, but depending on if we are getting listeners from elsewhere in Canada, I do know that usually, the other provinces that get the

lot of the big exports would be Quebec, Alberta, and BC. I'm going to be heading out to Alberta this fall, so I'm going to take a quick peek and see what they have out there.

Cedric: Okay.

Stephanie: Yeah. Basically, I'm going to be traveling and just wine shopping, it's not a bad thing, right?

Cedric: Oh, no. I wish I had your job. I'm also a little bit spoiled, and really peeves my friends off. I have stopped posting stuff on FaceBook when I'm on tour because they're sitting in an office or they're sitting in a factory or whatever the case is and they're really jealous - I understand this. So, yeah.

Stephanie: Well, I know, I mean it's just... yes it's one of the things that we've been lucky that we've been able to take one of our passions and turn it into a career which is... it's not a bad thing. It's not a bad thing.

For show notes and wine lists, please visit:

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