

Wine on the Web

Spokane wine enthusiast Josh Wade of DrinkNectar.com combines the ancient passions of wine and coffee with modern social media

by Kirsten Harrington

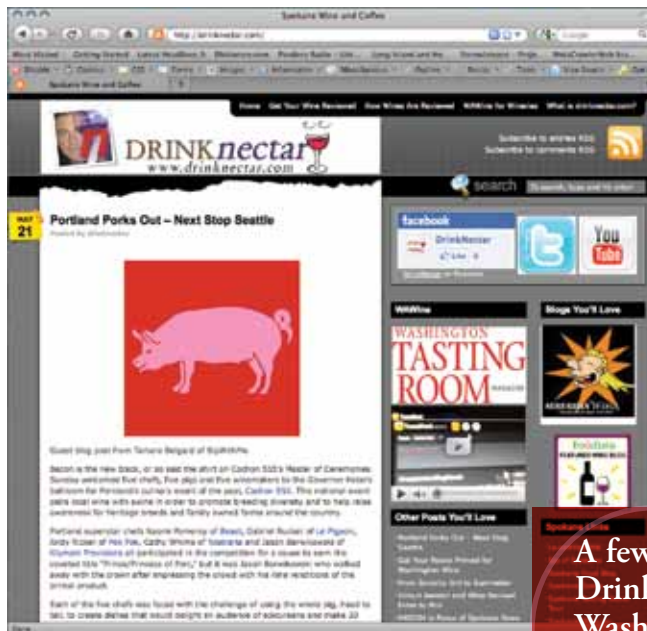
“I’M A CHAMPION AND AN advocate of the Spokane wine scene,” says Josh Wade, the mastermind behind DrinkNectar.com, which he describes as an online interactive outpouring of his passions for wine and coffee. The website contains wine and coffee reviews, video interviews with local winemakers and a calendar of local wine events.

Wade, who blogs under the moniker “drinknectar,” combines a sophisticated, engaging writing style with witty prose that will likely inspire you to uncork a bottle of local chardonnay or head out to the latest coffee bar he’s reviewing.

“I never intended this to be where it is. I thought my mom and sister would read it,” says Wade, who started blogging about wine and coffee last November. Now wineries send him wines to review, he gets invited to winery-sponsored functions and he has over 2,000 followers on Facebook and Twitter. “It shows the power of social media,” he says.

Wade is almost as passionate about social media as he is about the 2006 Nodland Cellars Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. He encourages Washington winemakers to use the social media sites Facebook and Twitter to promote their wines, and DrinkNectar.com includes tutorials on how to use these sites.

In March, Wade organized WAMerlot, a virtual wine tasting which encouraged wine lovers to buy a bottle of their favorite Washington merlot, drink it and then share their thoughts on Facebook and Twitter. Over 80 Washington wineries partici-



A few of DrinkNectar’s favorite Washington wines, along with some notes from the reviews:

pated, by hosting on-site events and encouraging their customers to tweet along. “It allows people across the world to experience wine together, and brings exposure to Washington wines,” explains Wade, who plans more “drink and tweet” events in the near future.

Wade, who works full time for a bank, spends about 20 hours per week of his free time on wine and coffee related projects. With a dream of opening a coffee and wine bar in Spokane, the blog was a way for Wade to create brand recognition for DrinkNectar and develop a customer base.

But so many opportunities have arisen along the way. Invitations to write for other wine sites, sponsoring events, social networking consulting and possibly writing a book. “I’m trying to figure out how to piece it all together,” says Wade.

“I think the next step is going to be a collaborative tasting room in downtown Spokane,” he says. Wade envisions bringing wineries from across the state together in a single tasting room that he would operate, allowing smaller wineries from Prosser to Walla Walla and beyond to showcase their wines, at a much lower operational cost. So far, several wineries have expressed interest. “My goal is to have the place open by November,” says Wade. With his passion, energy and enthusiasm, I have no doubt that he will meet his goal. **■**

For more top wine picks, reviews and events go to www.drinknectar.com, www.facebook.com/drinknectar, or [@nectarwine](https://twitter.com/nectarwine) on Twitter.

Lone Canary Bird House Red (Spokane)

“Solid quality with good flavor characteristics, smooth finish and good structure.” Pick of the month for wines under \$15 for December. (\$10-12).

2006 Kiona Lemberger (Benton City)

“A sweet wash of cherry, vanilla and some cola flavors. At \$11, this is an incredible value.”

2006 Fielding Hills Merlot (Mattawa)

“Overwhelming hints of cherry, smoke and hints of spicy bacon. The balance between complexity, flavor and drinkability are impeccable.” (\$36).

Desert Wind Sauvignon Blanc (Prosser)

“This wine instantly transported my nose to Hawaii with guava, peach and pineapple aroma....a wine that will provide a fantastic drinking experience in summer.” (\$15).

Barrister NV Rough Justice (Spokane)

“Amazing fruit and spice nose.... impressive structure” (\$20).