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- Big Blog
- Garage & Updates
- Play**
- Workspace
- Tips & Tricks
- Social Good

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- 0

Skype and Metro Wines share a taste for success

12/09/2015 in Play Blog by The Skype Team

Travelling to France, Italy or Napa Valley to sample the world's most renowned grands crus is certainly a highlight in any wine enthusiast's life. But what if travel isn't an option? John Kerr and Gina Trippi, owners of **Metro Wines** in Asheville, North Carolina, have the solution: Skype.

Metro Wines, a small wine shop with a surprisingly wide selection, offers creative promotions like "Side by Side Sunday" (wines made from the same grape but grown in different counties), and the **Blind Tasting League** – a fun interactive experience in which participants are led through a deductive process to determine what's in the glass.

It is also the venue for regular Skype calls with winemakers around the globe. John and Gina set up virtual "tours" where visitors sample a certain wine in the store, while talking to the vintner over Skype.



In the past, Metro Wines have led virtual tour groups to Walla Walla, WA's **Dunham's Cellars**, Umbria, Italy's **Giampaolo Tabarrini's** vineyard, and Bordeaux, France where they spent two hours touring the chateau of **Michele d'Aprix** – all with the help of Skype.

During the calls, the virtual tourists got to see the wine making process, the soil the grapes grew from, the machinery, and even got insights into the naming of particular wines.

Reminiscing on the Bordeaux experience, Trippi explains: "After walking us through the **process in great detail**, at nearly 2 am Bordeaux time, we saw a very hard working Michele sit down against the stone wall of the chateau cellar looking very tired but with the unmistakable look of joy in her eyes. At once, we all realized how dedicated this winemaker was to her art, to her gift to the world, to winemaking. It was a meaningful and memorable moment. And that could only happen because we could see her!"

Metro Wines' most recent Skype call led its customers to a Sicilian vineyard, where they met winemaker **Gaetana Jacono Gola** from **Valle dell'Acate**.



Valle dell'Acate @VdaWinery

#live #winetasting from #Milan, and a little bit of #Sicily to #NorthCarolina @gaetanajacono @metrowines #Cerasuolo

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"Skype allows us to talk directly with the winemaker in their environment," Trippi says. "Our winemakers are all over the world from Europe to South America to South Africa to New Zealand to Australia, even Lebanon. Many rarely travel to this country. Often, Skype provides the only opportunity to talk with them face to face."

While wine lovers can currently only join the Skype calls from the shop itself, Metro Wine is working on a plan to go global. And we've heard they might even ship remote callers a bottle of wine ahead of time to be enjoyed over a Skype call with its maker... from the comfort of their own home.

For more details about upcoming wine tasting events over Skype, make sure to check out **Metro Wines' website**.

Picture courtesy of Metro Wines.

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