

EPISODE 234

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:10] AVH: Hey everybody, welcome to Paleo Magazine Radio. My name is Ashleigh VanHouten, I'm your favorite podcast host or hopefully, I don't know, top five favorite podcast host hopefully. If you're alive and well and breathing while listening to this podcast which I certainly hope and assume that you are, that probably means that you, like myself enjoy a glass of wine or two or more, every now and then.

But maybe you enjoy it less often because of how it makes you feel the next day or maybe because it just doesn't fit quite as well into your healthy diet as you did when you were in your early 20s and could get away with things like that. I don't know, maybe you still want to enjoy your glass of wine at dinner or on the weekends without feeling like garbage, without derailing your diet and I mean, I think that's a pretty reasonable thing to want and the founders of FitVine Wine wanted that too. They did some experimenting and they came up with a special process I suppose, a way of making wine that contains less sugar and thus, less carbs which everybody wants these days.

And also less tannins which results in a wine that tastes just as good as the stuff you're used to but may leave you with less regret and unpleasant feelings the morning after. I mean, they can exactly put that on the bottle because whatever you get up to when you're drinking wine and thus regret later is not anyone's fault really but your own. But that is another podcast topic entirely which I would love to do one day.

But back to the this one. I have tried FitVine wine myself, I can attest that the wine is very tasty and I guess less hangover inducing for me, I don't have any bad stories to report. But to prove that the company is just as much about having fun and providing a delicious product as well as a healthier product, they've come out with some new offerings in addition to their range of whites and reds, they now have Rose and Prosecco and I know I have a couple of friends in particular who are going to be very excited about that news.

It's all very exciting, we dig into it in this episode, we're going to talk about the science behind hangovers, what makes FitVine Wine different and how it acts differently in the body. Talk about what wine snobs are into, much more.

I hope you enjoy it, that's it, this is my interview with Mark Warren and Tom Beaton of FitVine Wine.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:38.7] AVH: All right, Mark, Tom, welcome to the podcast. Thank you so much for being here.

[0:02:42.0] TB: It's great to be here.

[0:02:43.5] MW: Thank you for having us.

[0:02:44.7] AVH: I appreciate you taking the time, I know you guys are busy, you've got new products, you've got all kinds of new stuff which we're going to get into and I'm very excited to hear all about it, I'm already familiar with your products and a fan you could say.

I guess, before we get into any of my personal questions, I'd love for you to tell our listeners a little bit about your background specifically and how you got into the wine business.

[0:03:07.1] TB: Okay, great. Mark, you want to go and then I can jump in?

[0:03:09.8] MW: Sure, Tom and I both came from technology before we were in wine and was more of a passion how we got into the wine business as we were getting older and into our 40s and trying to stay somewhat healthy as we were, you know, athletes always growing up and trying to stay fit throughout our working careers, we discovered that as we were going into some of these local events that we would do, whether it would be a 5k or go to a CrossFit event or mud run or something that you know, there was always some sort of alcohol at the end but typically it was beer.

More recently, you know, some of the spirits that we get engaged but it was – we saw that there was a need there for wine because not everybody drank beer and you know, as we were getting older ourselves, we stop drinking beer just because of the way it made us feel. The initial mindset behind it was, could we create a cleaner, low sugar wine that we bring to the active community and that was really, you know, the starting point for us to get into the business.

[0:04:11.6] TB: Yeah, Mark nailed it. I think how we got started was, you know, once you get into your 30s and 40s, you start to pay more attention what you're eating, what you're drinking, basically, how you're living because you notice the effects, I mean, we've all had whether a big night out or a big meal and then not know that the next day, we're really not at our optimal level.

We were both reading more, reading a lot of books, you know, being more careful about our nutrition and I just, I noticed myself drinking more wine, you know, also, at these fitness events, as Mark mentioned, wine was never really an option. So it just popped an idea in my head that they, you know what? Why don't we create something that we would like and see if there's a market for it so that's exactly what we did.

[0:04:55.9] AVH: Yeah, you guys definitely hit on something very important which is the stark realization that we all come to when we pass our mid-20s and we're like, wait, we cannot do the things to our bodies that we're used to doing. But you know, as you said earlier, we noticed a need for wine which yes, everyone has a need for wine. Definitely hit on a couple of very important things and I think it's interesting, it's a really kind of cool niche that you touched on that is athletes and people who really are very hyper aware and educated and concerned about the things they put in their body.

But also, want to enjoy life and want to enjoy things like a glass of wine every now and then. Can you explain a little bit about like the growing, the harvesting, the processing that makes your wine different? Like exactly how it is sort of a healthier, better option for people?

[0:05:49.6] MW: Yeah, for us to – the major component was sugar, you know, there was numerous studies that continue to come out of the negative effects in the obesity levels in the country and you know, a lot of these things that are negatively effecting people's bodies and you

know, diseases and inflammation of the body tends to lead back to sugar and over processed things, whether it's in our food or other things and you know, unfortunately, like many things in the US a lot of things can be over processed like our foods and wine can have the same thing.

You know, additives and other things inside a wine so it can have negative effects on the body. For us, it started with teaming with a partner that's been around for generations that how they raised their grapes and making sure that we have the best quality. Then, our process, we didn't reinvent the wheel, we took many of the processes that have been used in Europe for decades or hundreds of years, an old European approach, the grapes are being picked a little earlier, what's called the [inaudible] level.

Starts a little lower because the sugar hasn't come forth in the grape as much and then we do an extended fermentation to dry. You know, the fermentation processes is being done a little longer, it's going out to 15 days approximately and this helps to reduce the sugar levels but with that is also, you know, everybody is always worried about tasting. Tom and I's biggest concern. Could we do this and still have the great tasting wine, I mean, you can change anything with food or drink but at the end of the day, if it still doesn't taste good, why bother.

It was a lot of research and a lot of bad taste in wine, working with our wine maker and then it was, you know, at that point that we realized we could do it, what else was going on in wine. The government allows over 70 different flavor additives to wine and a lot of times, things are over sulfided because they're trying to rush the process. Those are the couple of the components that we looked at is if we could lower the sugar, if we could use minimal sulfides to stabilize the wine, and then not use any flavor additives. We're not putting anything external into the wine in order to change the taste, you know, everything we're doing is natural with just the naturals inside the wine.

That was really the overall component in being transparent about it. And to be able to backup what we're doing, you know, we work with ETS labs who have been around over 40 years, one of the country's renowned lab testing facilities for wine California. Every batch of wine that is made presented them to verify our nutritional panel, to make sure that there's no pesticides, no molds, no arsenic and everything that we were doing with the wine to give a full readout to make sure that we're staying on compliant in what we're trying to do.

[0:08:38.8] TB: I'm sorry, no, just one thing to add on this and Mark touched on it briefly. It's funny, he talked a little bit about the taste of the wine which is so important. I mean, we've done, gosh, thousands and thousands of events, tasting events all over the US and liquor stores and supermarket, pretty much anywhere, particularly in the early days, pretty much anywhere and anyone would have us. The main thing that we found is when people come up and they see the name and they see our brand and you know, they expect it at first to not taste good.

Oftentimes, there's a big wow moment or an aha-moment where they taste in wine and some people will be pretty blunt about it and say, "Wow, I thought this would really taste bad and I'm particularly surprised by it". We kind of stumbled into it but our main goal of making the best wine we can make, as well as the great tasting wine, obviously, it needs to taste good because without that, there really is no brand, there is no business. So it is super important.

[0:09:42.3] AVH: Absolutely. I mean, I understand the skepticism too because I think that consumers are so used to either making concessions for healthy foods so saying, "Okay, this tastes all right for a healthy food but it doesn't taste like my first choice," right? People are used to that and then they're also used to, when things are taken away from food like sugar or fat namely, stuff has to be put in to make it taste good or it doesn't taste the same or - you know what I mean? I think people are very used to that.

I have a couple of questions from what you guys were just talking about and I think one thing I guess, not a question, it's more a comment is the idea of really understanding what the word processing means because I think that that word does get a bad rap a lot of times in the healthy food world because – and especially in paleo, we're so focused on having the least amount of processing possible, right? Like unprocessed foods, vegetables, meat, things that do not have an ingredient list, all that stuff. That's great.

It's also worth noting, I think that some food and a lot of food and a lot of healthy food needs to be processed and that word, in that case simply means, I mean, meat is processed because you're not eating a live cow straight from the farm, right? It has to be processed so that you can eat it. If you don't want to process wine, you're eating a grape, right?

I think people need to know that some processing in some cases is inevitable and it's necessary to create the food that you want, right? Is that a fair thing to say?

[0:11:12.8] TB: Definitely.

[0:11:12.6] AVH: Yeah, okay.

[0:11:14.4] MW: It's also not the negative connotation of crossed thing. I think it's how something maybe processed like you're saying. You know, meat is processed to be from an animal to be consumed but if it's going through unnecessary things within that process, it makes it unhealthy.

That's the same thing with wine. You know, if we have to process the wine in order to turn the grape into wine but does it need unnecessary things inside of it? Like flavor additives, other things that add to the process that then have you know, negative effect on the body.

[0:11:44.3] AVH: Right, that's actually the next part of my question was, I think a lot of people don't know that there are so many additives that are allowed to be added into our wines that we aren't thinking about and I guess one of the things that you touched on specifically as it relates to your wine and how it taste better and is better for you is the sulfides. Can you talk about what those are and what they do?

[0:12:10.3] MW: Sulfides are added into wine to stabilize the wine. You can purchase wines that do not have sulfides added. I mean, they're naturally occurring just as they are in many foods but for shelf-life, if you do not add sulfides to the wine, your shelf life is approximately 75 to 90 days. Then the wine will start turning to vinegar.

You know, in the united states, that measurement based on the government is wines that have less than 10 parts per million for sulfides, typical wines will average somewhere between 75 and 150 part per million with sulfides added. Some can go all the way up to 350 parts per million. Ours are all less than 35.

We typically sit in the mid-20s so it's a minimal amount, it's less than half of what average wines are but it's enough to stabilize the wine so that it can sit on the shelf for two or three years. You know, a common theory is that people think sulfides cause headaches and it's not the whole answer, you know, they can have a negative effect.

Some people who have a sulfur allergy, they definitely will have an issue with it and you know, there is a difference between a wine than they have again 75 or hundreds parts per million and one that has 350 or more that you're going to feel that wine. But it's not so much sulfides that are causing all the negative reaction to people, A lot of times, it's some of the flavor adders or the tannins or histamines or the sugar levels.

Those things combined can be what causing people to get flushing the face or their hands swell when they have a glass of wine and then they have headache or GI issues or something. It's usually a combination or one of those things that is affecting someone.

[0:13:54.9] AVH: What are some of these additives that are being added to wine, literally, is it chemical flavors, what are people adding to wine to make it taste better?

[0:14:04.6] MW: It's usually some sort of flavoring or you know, a very common one is what's called super purple. Super purple is something that's added to get a deep bright color of red wine and add to the complexity of it. You know, a lot of times, it you know, some of the large brands and we never call out names because it's not a smart business move but you know, if they want to keep vintages tasting the same across many years, they use additives to do so.

Your 2015, 2016, 2017 wines should not taste the same, it's like picking up two different pineapples, they should not have the exact same taste because one's naturally going to have a little more sugar in it than the others. They'll be using additives like that to try and balance out flavor and/or, a lot of times they're trying to speed up the process so if they don't want to wait, you know, seven, 10, 12 days for fermentation, there are things that can be done to the wine to speed up the process and a slow back down so they can turn wine over in three days.

These things, you know, in order to produce wine faster for mass consumption, there's things that's added into the wine to – as almost like a science project in order to do so. Those things, you know, remain in the wine and eventually make it to the body.

[0:15:21.5] AVH: They don't have to - no wine manufacturers have to put on their labels that they add anything to their wines, right?

[0:15:30.3] MW: With the exception of sulfides. Per the federal government, you have to list on there, it contains sulfides or if it's a wine that you're not adding sulfides and will say, no sulfides added.

[0:15:40.9] TB: Yeah, exactly. You know, as Mark mentioned, it's just a yes/no answer so it's a little bit restrictive in some ways but on the other hand, you can't, it's not a full sort of nutritional readout like on a food product.

[0:15:53.7] AVH: Interesting. Okay, I have a lot of questions here. All right, I guess one question I have is because your wines have less sugar than typical wines, how do they taste different or do they taste different and how do you balance that sort of less sugar, less carbs but they still taste like wine that people are maybe used to or want to drink?

I guess, you know, a lot of people are like, well if you take the sugar out, isn't that what's making it taste good? Talk about that a little bit.

[0:16:24.1] TB: It's just a couple of components. One, we really do this without lowering the alcohol so alcohol does have an impact on taste of the wine so our wines are you know, typical alcohol levels are white wines, are 13.4%, the red wine's a 13.9 Our recent releases, our rose is 12.4 which is an average for rose and we just launched our Prosecco which is 11%.

Prosecco average between 11 and 12% alcohol.

[0:16:49.9] AVH: Very excited about these new launches by the way, we're going to talk about that soon.

[0:16:54.3] TB: Sorry to jump the gun.

[0:16:55.6] AVH: Continue, no, that's good.

[0:16:56.8] MW: Another component for taste is your PH levels. The PH of the wine has a huge impact on the texture and the feel in your mouth so those are being monitored throughout the fermentation process and being optimized. It does have an impact on the overall feel and taste of the wine. The sugar level being lower is going to make a difference within, if you have to drink a sweet wine, if you're used to drinking sugary drinks, whether it's our wine or another drier wine, you will definitely taste the difference if you know, if your pallet is someone who is used to drinking soda or a lot of sugar in their coffee and stuff like that.

But if you're an average wine drinker and you taste our wines, you're not going to notice the difference in sugar because what the PH level is being balanced out, they're not – I call it the jolly rancher effect, they're not pucker dry so it's not a dry wine where I feel like it pulled the water out of the back of your cheeks, they have a nice finish to them, a smooth after taste, they're not bone dry or tasting like this less sugar in them. But, they are approachable wines.

Our wines are not big and bold and like a heavy cabernet that's – let me have this cabernet with a cigar or steak or something, they're approachable, easy drinking wines, we call them, you know, Sunday to Thursday wines. A glass of wine you'll have on a Tuesday night and want to have with dinner and still have to get up at 5:00 in the morning, head to the office and feel great.

[0:18:23.7] AVH: Okay, that makes sense -

[0:18:24.5] TB: One more point on that, that was you know, back to our origins, I mean, I can't get with one of our main goals, I didn't want a, what I call, diet wine, I mean, if you're going to have a glass of wine, it should be full alcohol.

[0:18:38.2] AVH: Yeah, diet wine just sounds depressing right off the bat.

[0:18:40.6] TB: Yes, it does, it really does.

[0:18:43.0] AVH: Even those skinny girl, okay, sorry. Now I'm the one calling names, that's my bad. I guess, you know, I'm the host so I'm allowed to be incorrect there but like, that as a woman, that stuff kind of turns me off. I don't want to buy a product that has like skinny in the name, you know? I don't want that again, the concessions for me, it's like, if you're marketing it to my – I guess, insecurities and then also telling me like right of the bat, this is a diet version of what you already like, I'm not into it. Anyway.

[0:19:12.4] TB: That's exactly how we felt, we wanted full alcohol and thankly, we have it. That's I think, that's you know, back to these tastings, I mean, it's another thing that comes up immediately, people that are aware of alcohol content almost always ask and they're pleased with it because if you go to the trouble of opening a bottle of wine, I feel like 90% of the people want the alcohol and that's why they're opening it.

Because for whatever reason, it helps them or it's a part of their life. Yeah, that's why we made it that way.

[0:19:41.9] AVH: I think that is accurate. We definitely want the alcohol without – yeah.

[0:19:46.9] MW: With that athlete, you mentioned, you know, it's a name that's always thrown out against us, hey, you guys, another skinny wine or you know, something similar and we need to have looked at that product and other products that are lower alcohol, their objective is to be low alcohol and low calorie and as we know, aside of water, everything has calories and carbs and stuff in it. It wasn't for us to make a low cal wine or a low carb wine.

It was more about the sugar and about the cleanliness of the wine. We have done AB testing against some of the lower alcohol wines and for example, the one you mentioned, you know, the sugar content is through the roof. 10% alcohol, you know, this 15.9 grams of sugar per liter and their pinot grigio or close to ours has .6 grams.

[0:20:36.3] AVH: Yeah.

[0:20:37.1] MW: It's a drastic difference. You know, we have the alcohol there, the taste there but without the unnecessary sugar and still maintaining you know, grape flavor.

[0:20:45.5] AVH: I think that some of this comes down to really knowing your audience as well because if you are, I want to talk a little bit about like the different sort of audiences that you have but knowing that you sort of started with a lot of like CrossFitters and fit people and people who are athletic but you know, still wanted to kick back and have a drink at the end of the day, you'd know that a lot of these people are not out for low calorie and again, because we're educated people who know that when you take all the calories out of something that's probably doing something not so great to the food or the thing that we're consuming, right?

But we do know that in general, less sugar is better across the board, right? We don't necessarily want to be on a diet or getting skinny or whatever, we want a healthier, better quality way to enjoy our lives, you know? Be healthy and still have a good time. I think that you really kind of got to the heart of what this audience wants which is not a diet food, it's good food that's a healthier option, right?

[0:21:45.4] TB: Yeah, you nailed it. Also I just wanted to point out we expected, we both – Mark and I both done CrossFit for years and all kinds of other things that just, you know, are great and we love it. We kind of expected initially that that would be our core audience or someone that watches every macro or someone who does name another thing an Iron Man Triathlon or triathlete or a super runner or whatever.

It turns out there is huge audience that we stumbled into we didn't realize and that's the people that are just trying to make better choices, right? So they are out there, they're in the supermarket they know they are trying to stay around the edges. They are staying away from the middle section and then the super processed stuff that we don't want to bash but that's something that people are fully aware of now.

And these are the people that are trying to make generally better choices all over their life but they're not doing a triathlon or they're not going to the CrossFit games but they are just regular people that are out there that have heard enough, listened to so many podcast or read books and realize, "Okay I want to make some changes so I can live my best life," and that is what they are trying to do and hopefully we are a part of that.

[0:22:56.2] AVH: Yeah, I think that that makes a lot of sense. I was going to ask you about this too because like you said, starting with CrossFit but you are obviously pretty big with the paleo and keto crowd now and I would imagine, I have to say it as stereotypical as it is, women tend to - I would guess be sort of a bigger audience and maybe for wine and we are to a certain extent sort of calorie conscious as women, who are in this world of like overabundance and we want to balance enjoying our lives and having our wine with our friends and whatever and not going totally off the rails with health.

So I think that it's cool that you almost started with a niche audience and now, I mean really there isn't any group that this wouldn't appeal to but I guess one question that I have is a specific tough group might be, wine snobs right? So do you try to reach out to wine snobs? Do you have a pitch for them specifically? I am not one of those people so I can't really speak to it but I know that there are people out there who take their wine very seriously and is that a group that you are trying to reach at all?

[0:24:01.4] MW: Well hopefully we reach everyone but I mean I don't know. It is such a big – the wine world is vast and –

[0:24:08.9] AVH: It is very vast.

[0:24:10.3] TB: Yeah, I mean we are not saying we really try to be careful about saying, “Oh this is what you shouldn't do or these guys suck or that or they're snobs or whatever. We are just trying to do the best that we can so -

[0:24:24.8] MW: So the short answer to your question is no, we're not directly going after them. We're not trying to go into Wine Spectator to get points on our wines but inadvertently as Tom mentioned earlier, we've done personally thousands of events ourselves and tastings and even if we were in a CrossFit gym or the yoga studio or somewhere, there is someone who always comes to proclaim they are a wine guru and that they know a lot about wine.

They have a wine cellar and this and that and those are the hardest people to win over but those are the ones we get as Tom has said, the biggest reaction is, “Wow, I was expecting this to taste like crap,” and they're like, “Oh I'm pleasantly surprised, this is actually good,” and you

know we are not trying to win them over to take them away from a Silver Oak or something that they're collecting in their basement but they're like, "Oh this is a nice every day drinking wine."

And they are pleasantly surprised by it and they're like, "I would drink this," or I would take this to a party or I'll put this in a dinner table with a bunch of my friends or family and again, we are not trying to knock off the special occasion wines that people say, "Okay I am going to spend 30, 40, \$50 and go get a small vintage release," or something but we do want to get in front of that, as you come to wine snobs or more further into wine or maybe collecting wine, once they taste it, they are pleasantly surprised.

So they are a little harder to win over until they have the wine in their hand and then the old saying inside the industry is lips to glass and you know that is what we started from day one. It's been very grassroots is we have to be in front of people in tasting the wines because if they just read about it or look about it, their initial thought as you mentioned, "You took something away. So you took away my taste, you took away what I like."

So we have to be in front of them and educating them that hey, we didn't strip the wine down of anything nor did we take away the taste and once they are able to taste after themselves, you know 9 out of 10 times they're good. I mean we say that we're not for everybody and we are not going to win over every wine drinker out there and you know, no wine does because you have such vast arrays of tastes.

You know some people do like sweet wine and stuff like that. So obviously, if you're are drinking Moscato and heavy sweet wines, we're probably not the wine for them.

[0:26:43.6] TB: And that's one other thing that you talked about sort of women definitely our core audience but I just did a tasting the other day where I am standing in the store and a lady goes, "Oh FitVine, I love you guys," then she says, "I buy this for my husband every week." Or whatever it was, within two weeks.

So you know it is sometimes hard for us to tell who we end up engaging. There are a lot more ladies in retail environments but you know a lot of times wine is a shared thing and if it is a husband and wife thing, a lot of times they have shared goals where they are saying, "Okay, you

know what? Let's do this. Let's make healthier choices or maybe better choices." And we are psyched to be a part of that.

So it really is an interesting thing even in our online sales when people go to our website and buy wine and it is a lady's name and wherever we're sending it to. We don't necessarily know that yes, she is the one doing the buying and we take the current name or a credit card. But it's we really don't know if it is just for her. Yeah, she'll probably have at least a glass or two and hopefully enjoy it but it's likely for a group often or someone. So yeah that's an interesting point.

[0:27:55.0] AVH: Right, one group that I was interested to see that you really are growing with is the keto crowd. So I know I listen to Ben Greenfield's podcast all the time and he loves you guys and talks about you guys all the time and I think that that's kind of an important group too because a lot of people see keto people as being very dogmatic and very anything with carbs is the devil and I mean people think that about paleo too.

It is like, "Oh you can never eat like a piece of bread ever again and who would want to live like that." And I think it is good to know there are some basic tenants of paleo but really it is about personalized nutrition and figuring out what works for you and balance and all of those things. It is good to see that somebody as intense as Ben Greenfield still enjoys a glass of wine and that there are ways you can work around and have some hacks and having this lower sugar lower carb wine works for him. I thought that is cool that that is a growing group for you guys.

[0:28:51.6] MW: Yeah. I mean we love that and Ben is definitely a unique character. When he came to us he's like, "Look there is no BS, I need to know what's in it. I need to see a lab report. You know if I get behind something I want to know what's behind it." And then as he read everything he's like, "Oh this is great," and then he goes, "But you've got one more test." He goes, "My wife stopped drinking wine years ago and she gets massive headaches even from one glass." So he said she got headaches from one glass. He forced her to drink a whole bottle so she passed. She was able to drink all of it.

[0:29:19.4] AVH: Of course, Ben Greenfield and his experiments, right?

[0:29:20.7] MW: Yeah, that's Ben, you know?

[0:29:21.6] AVH: Like drink this entire bottle of wine. I think there are worst experiments.

[0:29:25.1] MW: Yes, so he turn to his wife and she had no negative reactions and that was kind of the final win. But to your point, you know there is always going to be the small percentage of people that take - whether it is keto or paleo or any other diet or the thing that they are following to the extreme where it's whole 30 or whatever and that is going to say, "Okay zero alcohol." I mean if you go true paleo or true keto you are not supposed to have any alcohol because the alcohol itself has sugar.

But that's not the majority of folks and for us it is more about balance as we watched I mean what really started to drive us about where we thought this could go is the movement that people were shifting and you could see this in your grocery store. When you go back 10, 15, 20 years and you'd walk in and the coolers would be loaded with sugary drinks. You walk in today and there is a 60 foot cooler of Kombucha and coconut water and fresh squeezed juices and different types of waters and then there is this little square of soda.

So in the shift in foods as well as they are becoming less processed and how big organic has become. So that is more for us as this kind of the "aha moment" of that. People are shifting what they're trying to do with their bodies because they are realizing that, "Okay, I want to live longer and when I get into my 40s, 50s and 60s I want to be healthier. I don't want to be in pain or I don't want to be on medication." So it is about balance and you know for balance really is more mental than it is physical.

And when you talk to any trainer whether they train yoga, CrossFit, cycling, dance, whatever it is, any of their clients the hardest thing is if you tell them "No-no-no-no-no," they fall off in three weeks. If you tell them they can't have any sugar or any alcohol or any of this, so it's about balance. So if you can bring some balance to people's lives and that is really their goal is if, "Hey, you want to have a glass of wine on a Tuesday night at dinner. And it can minimally affect you because it is still alcohol," then that is what we're trying to do.

If we can bring some happiness to you and that balances out and it allows you to have a little less stress because you are able to enjoy your glass of wine while you are trying to eat a little

healthier and maybe trying to walk a few days a week or go to yoga a couple days a week then we want. I mean that's really truly our goal is to help people live a balanced life.

[0:31:50.8] AVH: What your saying is so true because I am obviously a huge advocate of, in general, paleo style eating but as lots of people have said in the past, the best diet is the one you'll stick to and the best exercise program is the one you'll stick to and if people feel like they are being deprived and restricted permanently that's not a fun way to live. It is not a sustainable way to live and I think that that's why having companies like yours and products like yours that are trying to help people enjoy their life while still being healthy that's super important.

One of the things I wanted to touch on too that you mentioned with Ben Greenfield's wife and her amazing drink a whole bottle of wine experiment. And the fact that the hangover piece is as probably as important to people as the less sugar piece and they are connected. But why does your wine with less additives, less sugar all of that stuff, how does that cause less of a hangover? What's the science between your wine being less hangover inducing?

[0:32:48.4] MW: So you know legally we are not allowed to say that we can cause less of a hangover. They will come shut the doors on us and if we talk to a doctor or a scientist on the real reason why people get hangovers, there is a multitude of things and it's not always what they're drinking. You could have ate a bunch of food that was loaded with sodium and sugar and stuff like that and then have one drink no matter what that drink was and you're going to feel horrible the next day.

So unfortunately the hangover piece is not a black and white answer but what we do know that our wines have less of that do have less of an impact on people and you want to relate it to the word hangover, another component that people don't realize about wines are called tannins . So tannins have an impact on the boldness of a wine. So if you are looking for what they call a big, bold, fat wine they tend to have a lot of tannins and the tannins can be that impactful piece that do cause people to have some inflammation issues.

Inflammation can lead to headaches and whether you want to relate that to hangover. So you know part of the tannins also have to do with the longevity of the wine. So if you are looking to

store wine in your cellar and build up a collection, most of the time those are bigger, more tannins wines because they'll have that shelf life for 10, 15, 20 years.

All our wines are very low tannins. Our wines are not meant to be stored for 10 years. They're meant to be drunk. We tell or say that they should be drunk within two or three years. So the lower tannins and a lower sugar and a lower sulfides all combined, do have that impact on less of a negativity or less inflammation to the body. My wife for example will go out and she'll know immediately if she orders a glass of wine and her hands will start to swell. She can't get her wedding ring off and that is within an hour of drinking one glass of wine.

So those kinds of things that - as the wine is cleaner it is not a matter of you are saying other wines are dirty. We are talking about the fact of less of these things inside the wine that could be impactful to the body where people are sensitive. As we get older, you can get allergies starting in your 40s or 50s.

So as we get older and get more sensitive to foods and other things, these are the kinds of things that can have the negative effect on people and we are not proposing or saying, "Go on and drink a bottle of our wine, you'll feel great," by any means. So you always talk about doing things responsibly just like you don't sit down and have a gallon of ice cream because that is not as good as having a small cup of it. So it is more about if I have one glass of wine, I shouldn't have a negative impact on that and that's really about what we are talking about.

[0:35:37.7] TB: And Mark let's talk more about your wife trying to get her wedding off immediately after going out with you.

[0:35:42.5] AVH: All right let's keep things friendly here. All right, so okay I would love for you guys to – since we have been talking about wine for half an hour now and I know all of our listeners are starting to get thirsty including myself, talk a little bit about the blends or the types of wine that you have and I'd also like to know what's your biggest seller and then talk about those two new products that you have launched that I am very excited about.

[0:36:07.9] MW: So we started when we launched the company in 2015 with just two and it was our cabernet and our chardonnay and to this day, our cabernet is our number one seller around

the country. It does fantastic and since then, we've launched our pinot noir, sauvignon blanc, pinot grigio and as recent this past spring we want a rose and then just a couple of weeks ago we launched our Prosecco.

[0:36:33.6] AVH: And where those two last products were they a response to fans who were asking for it was this just seeing what was going on in the market? Like I know for example a lot of my friends are like real Prosecco fans like rose in the summer and they're all about it. So was that you seeing what was going on in the market or was that people specifically reaching out to you and saying please make a rose version for me?

[0:36:55.9] TB: Yeah, we get a ton of feedback from our FitVine fans and they are very vocal about what they want almost since day one. So as Mark mentioned we started with the cab and the chard and people almost try it and buy it multiple times and then say, "You know what? I like this but my favorite is a sauvignon blanc." So we made one and then a pinot grigio and then it went on and on. So to answer your question directly, absolutely so.

We don't tend to do any sort of market data polling or anything like that. We just respond to what our customers want and if it is possible for us to make things we will and what we'd love to do is as we continue to grow maybe even make sort of special one off varieties. We started for idle, so we started with a special holiday blend that we came out with last year and we came out of it after the bottling was done pretty close to the end of the holiday season but people loved it.

And we are making that again this year. So we really listen to our customers, we listen to what they want, what they want to drink and then we try and deliver on it. So absolutely.

[0:38:05.4] AVH: Okay since I have this platform to give you my own personal feedback, I am a bit of my Malbec girl so I don't know if that's something you want to look at?

[0:38:16.3] MW: Yep so that would be our holiday red. So our holiday red is completely opposite of all of our white. It is big, it is bold, it is higher tannin, it is one that you would store in your wine cellar. You know we do that and as Tom mentioned a limited release last year and we only did 3,000 cases. This year we are doing 6,000 and last year was a Malbec and Petite Sirah and

part of that was also a test because many of the red blends that you see out today are on the sweeter side.

You know there is a lot of ones that are very high on the sugar level and we didn't know if our customers would like a bigger bolder dry blend and because we've gone – we have stayed on our path of low tannin and low sugar and easy drinking wine, this was more of you know a special occasion wine and a little more expensive because it's a different packaging and stuff like that. So it was a test that was not something that customers were asking for and as Tom mentioned, it was received extremely well.

We brought it back this year but if you are a Malbec drink our holiday red is definitely something you will greatly enjoy.

[0:39:26.1] AVH: Awesome, okay I don't think I even knew that you guys did a special holiday blend but I am definitely making a note of it now and I'd pick myself up some because that sounds very exciting. All right, so I won't keep you too much longer. I really appreciate your time and also kind of explaining some of the science and some of the background of how this stuff works because I think that all of us enjoy a glass of wine.

But some of us like you said, it's not the same as it was when we were in our 20s and we don't really care and we pick up whatever is on the shelf and we dealt with the consequences later. Some of us have to be a little bit more concerned and I think that this is kind of the best of both worlds. So I appreciate that and I know you guys had said earlier that you were going to give our listeners a little bit of a deal if they want to try some of these wine themselves.

[0:40:07.8] MW: Yeah, so we greatly appreciate having us on the show and all of your support. So we do have a coupon code that they can use. It's just "paleomag" so short for magazine. So "paleomag10" which will give them 10% off their order and on all orders we give a 60 day 100% money back guarantee. We even pay return shipping because that's how confident we are in our wine. I mean we have very, very, very few. I mean at this point, I think it's like .01% of our orders are as a return.

And we get free shipping on all case orders and you can, we do have a wonderful option on our site that you can mix a case anyway you like. So we have now eight varieties on there. You can mix that case with all the varieties made different combination.

[0:40:51.5] AVH: Okay, that's amazing. You can do a variety pack on all of your wine that's perfect. It makes everybody happy at the party. Okay so it maybe Wednesday at lunch time while we are recording this but I feel like it's probably rose time somewhere. So on that note I am going to go but thank you again and I am super excited to see what you guys come out with next and yeah, thanks for doing what you do.

[0:41:14.7] TB: Oh thank you this has been so much fun. Thanks so much.

[0:41:16.9] MW: Excellent, thank you for having us.

[0:41:18.2] AVH: Take care.

[0:41:18.9] TB: Bye-bye.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:41:23.1] AVH: All right everybody, thanks for listening. I hope you caught that discount code at the end there so you can try out some of their wine for yourself, maybe pair it with a delicious steak or some dark chocolate. Now I am just making myself hungry so I am going to stop but if you have tried FitVine especially any of the new ones like the Rosé or the Prosecco, which I actually haven't tried yet, it is definitely on my short list but if you've tried it hit me up on Instagram @themusclemaven and let me know what you think.

I want to hear your feedback. I want to know if you have significantly less hangover, less regret, more enjoyment, I want to hear what you think and if you are loving the podcast, don't forget to show us some of that love with a rating and review on iTunes. It really makes my whole damn day when I read your reviews but it is worth noting that you don't even have to listen to the podcast on iTunes anymore. You can listen directly from our website paleomagonline.com/pmr. You don't have to subscribe, you don't have to listen on your phone.

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You don't have to buy anything, just check out the website. Maybe read some of the online exclusive content that they are always posting like new research articles, recipes, fun stories and check out the giveaways, maybe win some free stuff. So that is my advice for today. Join us next week because I am doing a special all gut health episode of Paleo Magazine Radio. So I am going to pull together some of the best advice and words of wisdom from the various digestive health, autoimmune health and nutrition experts that I have interviewed.

So that you will be your own gut health expert and know pretty much everything there is to know more or less. So that's it, join me next week. Thanks for listening and have a great day.

[OUTRO]

[0:43:32.8] AV: Paleo Magazine Radio is brought to you by the Paleo Media Group and is produced by We Edit Podcasts. Our show music features the song *Light It Up*, by Morgan Heritage and Jo Mersa Marley, and on behalf of everyone at Paleo Magazine, thank you for listening.

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