



Uncorked: My Journey Through the Crazy World of Wine

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Marco Pasanella's behind-the-scenes memoir through the world of wine will captivate wine lovers with its story of one man who decided, at age 43, to change his life by opening a wine shop.

As *Kitchen Confidential* and *Waiter Rant* explored the front and back of the house at restaurants, *Uncorked* offers a peek behind the curtain of the wine world.

Pasanella takes the reader into the underbelly of his store and the industry, which is steeped in history yet fanatical about technology and brimming with larger-than-life personalities.

Infused with rich details of his historic waterfront building in New York City and his sojourns to Tuscany, Pasanella's memoir is one of transformation through a project many fantasize about but few commit to. A colorful cast of characters rounds out this fascinating journey through the world of wine.

Uncorked: My Journey Through the Crazy World of Wine Details

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Author : Marco Pasanella

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From Reader Review Uncorked: My Journey Through the Crazy World of Wine for online ebook

Richard Sutton says

It should be a Must Read for foodies/wine drinkers that also run small family businesses. It's a lot of fun and there are some really great recipes included!

Karyn says

I received this book through the Goodreads First Reads program. As an amateur wine enthusiast I enjoyed reading about the world of wine. The stories of the various people Pasanella has encountered through his were intriguing-- who knew there were so many diverse characters in the world of wine. If you are interested in the behind-the-scenes look into the industry, this is a book you'll enjoy, too.

Mike McAdam says

* I received this book free through a goodreads giveaway*

I really enjoyed this book. I thought I would be lost because I am wine-ignorant (I know when it is white and when it is red and that is about it) but I wasn't. It is a very interesting story about a man who decides to open a wine shop in Manhattan and very educational about wine in the meantime. I LOVED the writing style right off the bat which can make or break a book. This definitely made the book in this case. There was a time or two when I thought too much time was spent on a subject before moving on with the story but not enough to knock off a star for it. I thought this book was great fun and recommend it highly!!!

Brian says

An extremely fun read, Uncorked is the story of a man who decides to open a wine shop, discovering the passion, frustration, trials, and tribulations of owning a wine shop. At the same time, realizing something that is deeply satisfying and rewarding.

As a wine drinker, it is interesting to read a story like this. While not particularly deep or complicated, envisioning someone opening a wine shop and going through all the various processes of establishing a business, at the same time being passionate about what they sell, is a very fun and enjoyable read. Along the way, many of the missteps are easy to relate to, as well as many of the successes. There is that balance between doing very well, and realizing when things might be going wrong.

Another excellent aspect of the book is that it doesn't get deep in all the terminology. As the author starts his own story, it is as much about exploration and mystery, where you get hints of the wine industry and even just learning about wine. Mr. Pasanella doesn't get deep into all the mumbo jumbo of navigating the legal aspects of wine sales or importing, but there is enough to make sure that you understand just how

overwhelming it can all be.

One other excellent aspect of the book is the various recipes that the author shares. Whether recipes of his own, or recipes he's picked up from various customers or family, each of these offers an insight into the author's thoughts and even relationship with both food and wine. There isn't often one without the other, and so understanding a bit of how the author sees the two interrelate adds greatly to the story being told.

Overall, "Uncorked" is a very quick read. It is tantalizing and interesting, without being so in-depth as to be inaccessible. Truthfully, this is a read for anyone who enjoys a glass of wine and would like to see a bit behind the curtain of how that bottle might have made it to the shelf of the story you purchased it from.

Studebhawk says

A wonderful journey through the world of wine.

And what a journey. I am a modest wine fan and I really appreciated Marco's journey.

Full of colorful characters and funny insights to be appreciated by the most casual wine drinker with the bare minimum of knowledge of the industry.

There were times that I felt compelled to take notes, his observations are that good.

And the Ferrari in the store.

Priceless!

Doreen says

Quite enjoyed this unpretentious account of Marco Pasanella's foray into selling wine, beginning as a retailer before expanding into having his own label. The tone is occasionally harried, but that's understandable given how the entire enterprise often seemed to have much in common with the business of juggling plates.

Fortunately, Mr Pasanella manages with aplomb, making for a book that's as much an anecdotal primer on owning a small, neighborhood-oriented business as it is a guide to wine. Stories of his family life, as well as recipes, add an extra dimension to the tale. Great book for any oenophile or for any lover of Italian culture.

Kristi | Hidden Staircase | says

This was an enjoyable book following Marco Pasanella's journey of opening his own wine shop. I liked the way the chapters were set up: Plow, Prune, Harvest, Crush, Ferment, Bottle, Age, Drink. Each chapter started with a brief description of that piece of the wine making process, and then the rest of the chapter was devoted to his wine shop tale. By the end of the book I found myself wishing this wine shop was near me, he has built a wonderful business. Great read.

John says

I admired that the author keeps the book down-to-earth for readers like me, although the references to his family in Italy came off as slight bragging (Manhattan didn't have that issue for me). Wasn't sure if I'd really be able to get into the book, but found the style enjoyable, with details rarely seeming bogged down (and even then it wasn't too bad). Recommended for those who are interested in learning more about wine, as well the frustrating, though sometimes funny, truth about running a business in Manhattan.

Karen says

The author in mid-life, made a life change - he got married, bought a house, left a successful career in industry design and jumped head first into the world of wine. The chapters, with such titles as Prune, Harvest, Crush, take us along on his journey to transform a vision into an extremely successful wine business. He shares many stories of hits and misses along the way. Anyone contemplating a life in this industry or if only a wine enthusiast should read this book. So much information including historical information about the early pioneers who revolutionized wine sales and wine bars. We learn about biodynamics of wine making. There are even some recipes sprinkled throughout the book. An enjoyable read.

Darren says

The world of wine is often clouded by an air of mystique, a feeling of exclusivity and the presence of many virtual question marks due to the plain uncertainty of it all. The average wine consumer might know that they like a certain white or red wine, maybe vaguely know the theory of it all but still it can be a closed little world.

Here Marco Pasanella will give you a helping hand and a better introduction to the world of wine through his "mid life" story. After all, he has probably had to learn much more than most wine drinkers already and the learning process will never truly end. Pasanella, at the age of 43, decided to open a wine shop for the first time and he had to suddenly discover what really goes on in the world of wine. The little wine shop that Pasanella opened has become a favoured fixture in New York, a quirky place with a great reputation. So maybe he does know a thing or two...

Despite giving an air of timeless change, the wine industry is quite advanced, using the latest technologies to help make and produce wine, to sell it and even research a better product to boot. Of course, for many wine making is still an artisanal process where time and change has effectively stood still, yet for others they stand on the bleeding-edge of change and development.

This book follows the trials and tribulations of Pasanella's wine store from conception and planning through its development and set up and post opening. It has now been going strong and winning acclaim for several years, so he must have done something right. Although it has not been plain sailing! Here you get an intense first person look at the whole process and, understandably, pick up a lot of interesting knowledge and insider tips about the wine industry at the same time.

This is not a "(Brand) Tasting Guide to Wine" where you just get book learning by rote but a meander

through the world of wine when you are not particularly expecting it. Unfortunately there is something about this book that made it a little too easy to put down, despite the subject being of interest. The book received for review was a "proof" copy in an electronic file, so it was not possible to determine if the finished article was full of pictures and typographical tools to make it read less like a long, tiring academic text book (as that is how it feels now, just acres and acres of text... it feels very enclosed!). Usually such proof copies are "the finished article" bar the final check and there you can see how the design has taken shape.

If, and it is a big if, the book does look like the proof copy then it gets a big thumbs down on the readability front. You would be strongly advised to check the book out physically and see if you gel with the style before you hand over any money. This reviewer also found the self-referential tone a little too excessive, even for a book that is looking at what the author did in his own words. It just did not gel. It could be a personal thing... or not, as the case may be. The scope and theme of the book is interesting, the content has the potential to be compelling, but the road to reading pleasure was saddled with a few rocks and holes along the way this time. Maybe your journey will be smoother. Perhaps the reviewer needed a glass or two of wine to make the book more palatable!

Uncorked: My Journey Through The Crazy World of Wine, written by Marco Pasanella and published by Clarkson Potter/Crown Publishing. ISBN 9780307719843, 224 pages. Typical price: USD25. YYY.

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Andrew Malkin says

While I wouldn't necessarily say this revealed the wine world as "crazy", it did make me want to visit the store to meet the knowledgeable staff, buy some wine, see the Fiat on the floor and check out the enoteca. I give him credit for boldly taking on this building to renovate, live in and produce a wine shop in lower Manhattan with a creative, design sensibility. The book was a quick, short read more about taking on the risk of opening a small business in a new industry and the challenges therein. He adds some relevant recipes in the book (which I didn't feel were necessary but others may feel differently) and some useful nuggets/tidbits in the end about wives tales or myths re wine.

To me, the best wine books reveal the personalities in depth such as K Lynch's TRAVELS ALONG THE WINE ROUTE or BILLIONAIRE'S VINEGAR. I will say that Marco is candid and honest about himself so you get to know him through this memoir of sorts as well, what matters to him and where his passions lie. I just think some of the situations could have been fleshed out more (Janet the imbalanced employee, dealing with the Liquor Authority, importing wine and dealing with the producer in Italy etc).

Adrienne says

Marco Pasanella's book, Uncorked, is a fast paced education into the world of wine. From the first chapter, the reader is able to step into his world of frantic stress, anticipation and excitement he describes as he began transforming a former fish-market into his vision of a local wine store and ultimately experience. He

describes in detail the risks he and his family took financially as well as in their lifelong dreams while vividly telling of the various “characters” that came to work with them throughout the creation of their store. I couldn’t help but put myself into his wine tasting (ahem..dinner) parties. I was fascinated by the portions of the book spent describing wine making processes, theories and the dedication by many of the power house wine producers worldwide. His Italian roots took him to Italy several times in his tale and he gave accounts of various vineyards visited there. As the book progressed, I found myself, with the help of google, learning more and more about the processes, biodynamic wines and other aspects that he wrote about. Through the last few chapters of the book the pace progressed rapidly and it became difficult to put down. His wine-world view of the changing face of the American drinker as the recession began hitting in 2008 struck close to home. Because despite hard times, myself, and apparently many other Americans, still sought to afford this \$10 luxury.

Pasanella's book entertained the reader along the way through his experiences, as well as left us more educated in the wine world. (The book includes a handy wine guide at the back and various recipes throughout the book.)

Bravo to Mr. Pasanella, you candidly shared your story, your love of wine and the culture it entails, and like your favorite Bordeaux, it was well worth the wait.

I received this copy free as part of the Goodreads first reads promotion.

Jen says

I had hoped that his "journey through the crazy world of wine" would be educational and interesting. Instead, it was about a rich guy opening a wine shop. The best thing about this book was the appendix, the rest of it was a huge slog to get through, despite the fact that I like wine, I like Italy and I like learning about new things.

My most cohesive criticism other than "I don't like it" is that the flow is terribly off. He randomly puts recipes and other nonsense in the middle of a chapter so you have to read around it. This could have used a very thorough editing.

Egh says

Oh man, this book is HORRIBLE. It pains me to have to give bad reviews when I feel the author is trying but failing. Which is why it's so pleasurable to feel no guilt about saying this is a badly written, whiny pile of garbage.

Reasons to read this book:

You love boring name-dropping. There's about 500 names per page, of random and semi famous people. Don't worry, you learn nearly nothing about any of these people, except that the author has met them. The only people you'll learn anything about are the people he's miffed at. He has a lot of shit to talk about his former wine buyer, and his other employees and lawyers. He likes to call people alcoholics and reveal their personal lives. ugh.

If you like to read about a rich dude whining about how hard it was on him when he made bad business decisions, like doing unpermitted work and then being made to get a permit or not paying his taxes and then being fined for not paying his taxes (which he blames on his employees he's talking shit about).

You like paragraphs that start out with a premise and end up going nowhere. Man is this the book for you then.

If you want to know the minutia of Marco Pasanella's life down to his exact travel schedule, how long he rode on a bus to a winery, how many trips he made to deliver wine purchased by his clients, what color ribbons he ties wine with, etc. Excessively dull.

If you don't enjoy being bored out of your skull to no purpose may I suggest reading any of these excellent food and business memoirs instead:

Blood, Bones, and Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef

Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly

Heat: An Amateur's Adventures as Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta-Maker, and Apprentice to a Dante-Quoting Butcher in Tuscany

My Korean Deli: Risking It All for a Convenience Store

Season to Taste: How I Lost My Sense of Smell and Found My Way

Seriously this is a pile of hot steaming garbage. Also the dude is obsessed with comparing himself to Thomas Jefferson. In case you couldn't tell he was overly in love with his own importance by the rest of this review.

Chip Averwater says

Nicely done! Who can't relate to giving up the safe and known in mid-life to set out on one's own course with lots of uncertainties, risks, and challenges? A great writing style, nice choice of words, informality, and sense of humor make this a very enjoyable story. Educational for those with an interest in wines or opening a wine store, but inspirational for everyone. I'm not a cook but I'm sure the intermittent recipes will appeal to some. A fun read with useful lessons. If Mr. Pasanella writes more I look forward to reading them.
