

DENISE DePAOLO and KARA SWEET: *South Dakota Wine: A Fruitful History*. American Palate, Charleston, SC, 2017, 142 pp., ISBN 978-1625858436, \$21.99.

Thomas Jefferson loved wine and famously believed that “the United States [could] make as a great a variety of wines as are made in Europe, not exactly of the same kinds, but doubtless as good” (Gabler, 1995, p. 205). Jefferson’s concept of American wine has become a reality today, with thousands of wineries all over the United States, including places with long modern traditions—California, Oregon, Washington, New York—and more modest beginnings of grape growing and wine-making (Catell, 2014). Denise DePaolo and Kara Sweet’s story of the South Dakota wine industry is living proof that Thomas Jefferson’s dream has been realized, almost 191 years after his death. *South Dakota Wine: A Fruitful History* is a succinct, yet detailed examination of the founding of South Dakota’s wine industry, the challenges it faces, and its ability to flourish.

DePaolo and Sweet organize their discussion of South Dakota wine by focusing on the pioneers of the wine industry, the cooperation of science and politics to push South Dakota winemaking, and the importance of tourism. Overall, they develop a compelling narrative that successfully blends the stories of individual wine-makers with the day-to-day realities of running a luxury good business.

Wine in South Dakota, like so many other American stories, is about immigrants who bring their knowledge and passion to the new world. DePaolo and Sweet begin with the story of the Vojta family. Immigrants from Moravia in what was then Czechoslovakia (and today the Czech Republic), the Vojtas settled in South Dakota and began making wine in the traditional way, with “all production ... done by hand, from the planting, the pruning and the picking of the grapes to the stomping, the pressing, the fermenting and the bottling of wines” (p. 18). The Vojta family tradition was passed down from Grandma Frances to current-generation winemaker Sandy Vojta, who founded Prairie Berry Wine in Mobridge shortly after the South Dakota Legislature passed the Farm Winery Bill in 1996.

The Farm Winery Bill was a watershed moment for South Dakota wine. With its passage, for the first time, farmers were allowed to sell wine at their farms. The bill also defined a farm winery “as any winery operated by the owner of a South Dakota farm and producing table, sparkling, or sacramental wines from grapes, grape juice, or other fruit bases, or honey” (p. 48). This bill opened up new potential not just for grape-based wine—which was often hard to grow in the harsh South Dakota climate—but also fruit-based wine using native produce. These wines have been made from dandelion, rhubarb, chokecherry, black chokecherry, cranberries, and other fruit.

The quest for grape-based wine was expansive and brought together some of the best minds from the University of South Dakota, the University of Minnesota (where many hybrid grapes were developed), and the South Dakota Department of Agriculture to introduce grapes that could survive South Dakota winters. These

included “the red grapes Marquette and Frontenac and the white grapes Brianna and Frontenac Gris,” among others (p. 67). These hybrid grapes, grown by wineries including Old Folsom Vineyard are designed especially to thrive in cold weather climates that traditional *vitis vinifera* grapes cannot tolerate.

By the time *South Dakota Wines* was published, more than 30 wineries were growing grapes and making grape-based and other fruit-based wines. The result is a boom in wine tourism in South Dakota. The number of visitors stopping at wineries while touring traditional destinations like the Black Hills has increased, as has the number of visitors making wine the central focus of their trip. In fact, “as more wineries pop up all over the region and country, more tourists want to enjoy wines while on vacation. In fact, travelers are even coming to the area for wine alone and then seeing the usual attractions after wine” (p. 108).

Ultimately, *South Dakota Wine* shows that wine can be made anywhere. For South Dakota, however, it is not just about making wine, but also providing a high-quality product that people want to consume. As Americans continue to seek out locally-based products and experiences, the success of South Dakota wine is likely to increase, as the quality of the wines continues to improve.

Jacob R. Straus

*University of Maryland Baltimore County, Shady Grove*

[jstraus@umbc.edu](mailto:jstraus@umbc.edu)

doi:10.1017/jwe.2018.21

## References

- Catell, H. (2014). *Wines of Eastern North America from Prohibition to the Present: A History and Desk Reference*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Gabler, J. M. (1995). *Passions: The Wine and Travels of Thomas Jefferson*. Baltimore, MD: Bacchus Press.

ANNE FADIMAN: *The Wine Lover's Daughter: A Memoir*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, NY, 2017, 272 pp., ISBN: 978-0374228088 (hardback), \$25.00.

My informal survey of friends has led me to surmise that those born after about 1950 have no idea who Clifton Fadiman was. This is regrettable. He lived from 1904 to 1999 and was an American author, public intellectual, and editor, as well as a radio and television personality. Though most of his books have gone out of print and his radio and television appearances were in their heyday in the mid-20th century, Clifton Fadiman is remembered fondly by many who enjoyed his unwavering adherence to the King's English and his adoration of fine wine. Eighteen years after his death at age 95, Anne Fadiman, an acclaimed author in her own right,