

# Wine lovers sip, taste and tweet on Twitter

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'Virtual tasting network' has held more than 150 events and won 75,000 followers at one-to-many text messaging sensation Twitter since its debut 'Spit and Twit' gathering in November of 2009.

Stephen Gilberg sipped a glass of wine in renowned Napa Valley and Twitter users around the US swished, savored and swallowed along with him.

By the time he was done sampling the [vintages](#) and varietals at a [Wine Industry](#) Technology Symposium soiree on Tuesday, his startup WineTwits led the list of trending topics at Twitter.

One of the wines, a Magnificat Bordeaux-style red by Napa winery Franciscan, was nestled between US national baseball and popular television show "Real Housewives of Orange County" on the Twitter hot topics list.

"We've got hundreds of people across the country joining in on this tasting," Gilberg told AFP.

"They are in homes or restaurants with these wines in front of them talking, tasting, and tweeting," he continued. "It is fun to watch; as the night goes on the [tweets](#) get racier and racier."

Slightly more than 500 people fired off barrages of terse text messages about the tasting on Twitter, reaching 2.8 million followers, according to figures provided by Gilberg on Wednesday.

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WineTwits has a hand-selected network of approximately 5,400 people who host tastings, but events are heralded beforehand and vintages can be bought by those interested in adding opinions to the Twitter conversation.

"I look at Twitter like a [roller coaster](#)," Gilberg said. "There can be no conversation about something one moment and then it can just take off."

The WineTwits platform was built to organize [Twitter](#) conversations around wine. Its website is designed to make it easy for people to comment on and rate wines, as well as find deals on bottles of wine.

WineTwits collaborations include a "Burgers With a Side of Beaujolais" online [food pairing](#) with Georges Duboeuf winery. A celebrity-chef style show was streamed live online in harmony with the WineTwits feed.

"People across the country were cooking burgers and pairing them with Beaujolais," Gilberg said.

"Wine is one of the most social products on the market," he noted. "So social media is perfectly made for wine."

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