

# Introducing Dan Aykroyd Wines

FROM THE MNMO MARKETING TEAM

BY CHRISSY SARINSKE



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As a cast member of *Saturday Night Live*, Dan Aykroyd kept audiences laughing with recurring roles as Fred Garvin, male prostitute, Beldar the Conehead, one of the two “wild and crazy guys,” a Blues Brother, and a newscaster on Weekend Update.

These days, Aykroyd is making his mark in the world of wine and spirits. The actor was a surprise guest at a March 20 World Class Wines sales meeting in Eden Prairie, where he discussed his new line of wines, the Dan Aykroyd Discovery Series Wines, made in collaboration with DeLoach Vineyards in Sonoma County, Calif.

Aykroyd described his Sonoma Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon as “high-premium wines packing a \$40 or \$50 Bordeaux experience in a \$20 package.”

“This wine is meant for that hard-working double-income couple who come home on a Friday night and want to serve their friends good wine,” he said. “It’s a table wine meant to be complemented by food. I don’t

know about you guys, but I start with the wine and then I plan the menu.”

He explained how most people know the story of Napa wines, and that “now it’s time to tell the Sonoma story,” and how his wines will be poured by the glass at Ruth’s Chris Steak House and Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar, and will also be available locally at Haskell’s.

During his talk, Aykroyd emphasized his belief that people shouldn’t have to pay a lot to get a great wine. His own parents, who are now 88 and 91, were government workers in Canada and consumed wine “by the jug.” “We have a saying on our corks in Canada, ‘Snob-free grapes,’” he said. “You don’t have to be able to pronounce sommelier in order to know what you like. And people do know what they like. They’re more sophisticated generally because of Martha Stewart, Rachael Ray, and shows like *Iron Chef*.”

After the meeting, Aykroyd sat down to talk a little more about wine, celebrity, and his appreciation of plaids:

***So what, exactly, does a celebrity know about wine?***

The celebrity name will only get you so far. I've aligned myself with the best in the business. I work very closely with the head winemaker [Brian Maloney]. He's one of the best winemakers on the planet. A celebrity will know what his partners teach him. I'm self-educating all the time. I'm not here to hoodwink people. I wouldn't put my name on anything I didn't believe in.

***Finish this sentence: A good wine is ...*** best consumed with best friends.



PHOTO BY TODD BUCHANAN

***How has your wine been received so far?***

People like it. The story is honest. It's a good price—around 20 bucks—for what's in the bottle. I'm confident I have a winner here.

***After your Discovery Series Wine and Crystal Head Vodka tour in the U.S, what's next?***

I want to go around the world and discover and share wine. We started in Sonoma, we'll go to Chile, maybe Australia.

***Will you continue acting in the future?***

I would only consider it if I could work with Steven Spielberg.

***Would you like to add anything else?***

This new venture to me feels how it did when I was back at *Saturday Night Live*. It feels new — new people, a new business. I'm youthened by this. It's very exciting.

***What are you looking forward to doing while you're here in the Twin Cities?***

I'd love to see the Lamont Cranston Band. They are one of the greatest blues bands in the world. I'd like to hang out in the Prohibition bar at The Foshay. I hope to see my good friend Al Franken. I also hope to drive by some of the old houses on Summit Avenue. This is a great state with great people and resources. I feel a real kinship with Minnesotans being from Canada. In the winter we both wear funny boots and lots of plaid.

For more information, visit [www.danaykroydwines.com](http://www.danaykroydwines.com).

*Dan Aykroyd will be signing his Crystal Head Vodka (available at Lunds & Byerly's) at the St. Louis Park Byerly's Friday, March 20. Saturday, March 21 he will be on the KARE Morning Show at 9 a.m. and will be signing his wine at Haskell's in Minnetonka from 1-4 p.m.*