Interview with Charlie Marshall, Owner, The Marshal

NYWGF: When was the moment you fell in love with wine/wine industry?

CM: I grew up in the restaurant business, and so from an early age I was been exposed to wine as it relates to restaurants and hospitality. Opening the Marshal in 2013, though, is what made me fall in love with the industry itself. We were the only establishment trying to do a 100% local list and seeing first-hand the passion and excitement local producers have for their wines, their particular cultivation practices, their individual wine making processes, made me fall head-over-heels. So often wine, to the consumer, is just a bottle on a shelf, but in New York we are lucky to be in the center of a burgeoning wine country where the consumer and the maker can have a much closer relationship.

NYWGF: What's your best experience/event since you've been part of the industry?

CM: We do so many events at The Marshal focused around amazing New York wineries, it is too hard to choose just one, but I have the most fun during our Summer and Winter Wine Dinner Series. I work with 6-12 local wineries and put on six course wine dinners, and it is usually a packed house. The series can last for a few weeks, depending on how many wineries are participating, and it gives me a chance as a chef to try new things, adapt old recipes into something new and exciting, and to try lots of amazing local wines. It also gives me a chance to become closer with the hard-working wine makers and their staff, and for their customers to try The Marshal and my cooking.

NYWGF: What's the one wine you can't live without?

CM: I absolutely love the Tierce Riesling, every year. Not only is it always a phenomenal Riesling deeply reflective of the Seneca/Finger Lakes terroir, but the cooperative aspect of using grapes from three separate vineyards (Anthony Road, Red Newt, and Fox Run) is emblematic of the teamwork it has taken over the past decades to make the New York wine industry the award-winning success it is today. Wines like Tierce are wines none of us would be successful without.

NYWGF: What do you think is going to be the next big wine trend?

CM: To me, the next big wine trend is proving to be alternative packaging. We've already seen keg wine take off and cans are making real strides. I think as consumers become accustomed to paying commensurate pricing for wine no matter the container, we'll see other successful implementations of more durable, affordable packaging. Tetra Paks and bag-in-the box are two examples of wine packaging that have struggled to gain consumer acceptance over the traditional bottle – perhaps with cans and kegs making wine more about the wine and less about the bottle, more economical methods will be able to gain traction. Some mourn the romance of the glass bottle as alternatives take hold, but I think economically and environmentally they are proving to be valid alternatives.

NYWGF: What do you think makes New York wines special and/or distinct?

CM: The people! I have never seen so many folks in one industry committed to a common goal as I have with the New York wineries and growers. Because of the hard work, perseverance, and willingness of so many growers, winemakers, investors, and consumers, New York has become a world-class wine region. Consumers are a big part of that... Most New Yorkers *want* to love New York wine as much as the local winemakers want them to love it. Watching the incredible progress, the region has made just in the last few years has been a real privilege, and I am excited to see the future.