



The English Wine Diaries

The English Wine Diaries is a weekly interview series with Rebecca Pitcairn, editor, journalist and founder of The Southern Quarter, an online lifestyle magazine about English Wine. Each week Rebecca is joined by a special guest from the world of wine (and beyond) to talk all about their English wine journey. From sommeliers to vineyard owners, hoteliers and some rather familiar faces too, discover how a love of wine – particularly that made on British soil – has helped shape their lives and careers. www.englishwinediaries.co.uk.

Joining me on today's episode of The English Wine Diaries is Sandy Booth, life-long farmer and owner of B58 Winery in Beaulieu, Hampshire.

Sandy founded the B58 Winery off the back of his hugely successful soft fruit farming business, after realising that his knowledge and innovative approach to growing fruit in polytunnels could also be applied to growing grape varieties that aren't usually, successfully grown in the UK climate.

Growing up in St Andrews, Scotland, Sandy learnt about farming life from his father, who worked on a cattle farm looking after Aberdeen Angus, but honed his skills in plant propagation, irrigation set-up and the nutritional needs of plants when he moved to Kent when he was in his 20s.

In 1997, he joined tenant farmer John Boyd in Beaulieu and played a significant role in quadrupling the farm's strawberry business. As well as growing strawberries, Sandy has trialled crops such as artichokes, apricots, melons and asparagus.

Recent innovations include a vegan friendly snack made from wonky' strawberries, otherwise destined for food waste, and Japanese strawberries – a ground breaking first that may lead to year-round production of strawberries on the farm.

Growing vines in tunnels has enabled him to explore growing grape varieties such as Shiraz and Gewürztraminer, and together with Hampshire-based Swiss winemaker Guillaume Lager, Sandy launched his first wines to market in February 2025.

"My long-term goal is to break away from conventional approaches," he says "Challenge the status quo and pursue innovative paths to achieve something truly unique and impactful."

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