



**NapaLife**  
*For those who live in  
Napa Valley –  
and those who wish  
they did...*

**An Insider's Look at Napa  
Valley**

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**Stephen Spurrier pours English bubbly**

Stephen Spurrier, the English wine merchant and writer most famous locally for arranging the Paris tasting in 1976 that raised Napa Valley wines to the world stage, was in town and at Raymond Sunday to pour his new English sparkling wine.

That's not a joke; "thanks" to climate change, English sparkling wine is real, and in fact, some top Champagne houses are investing there. There are now 502 wineries and 5,000 acres of vineyards, 70 percent for sparkling.

They're positioning it against Champagne – Spurrier's Bride Valley wine sells for \$75 here, but there's very little available.

He cut a deal with Jean-Charles Boisset to market the wine, so he put his wine up against a Boisset JCB sparkler for Russian River among a group of writers, vintners and winemakers and others. The crowd preferred the California wine, but I liked Spurrier's better. In truth, this wasn't typical of most of the JCB sparklers I've had, which I tend to like very much.