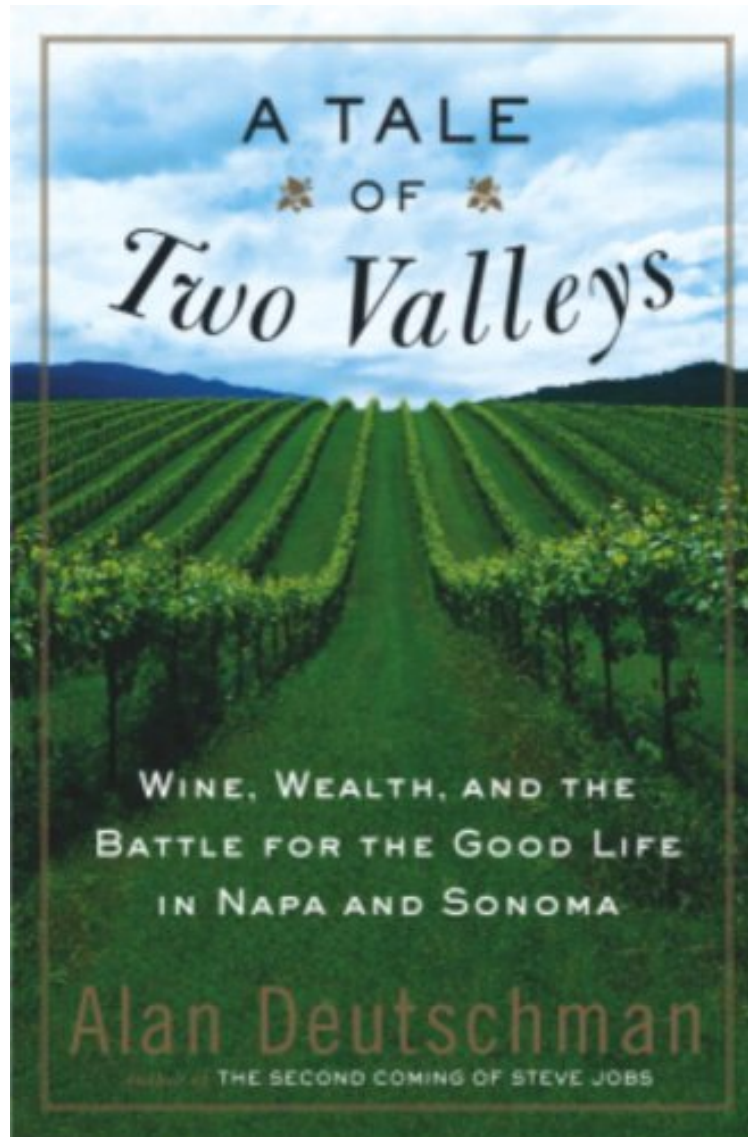


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A Tale of Two Valleys: Wine, Wealth and the Battle for the Good Life in Napa and Sonoma

Alan Deutschman

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Alan Deutschman : A Tale of Two Valleys: Wine, Wealth and the Battle for the Good Life in Napa and Sonoma before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Tale of Two Valleys: Wine, Wealth and the Battle for the Good Life in Napa and Sonoma:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Luke WarmBy Dan C. Boutwell(Possible Spoiler)Granted, I entered

into this account with an agenda of my own. Being a city planner, I was curious as to how the two cities would react to the development pressure forced upon them. There was nothing new here. Even in California you find 'good ole boys' holding onto the way 'we always done it.' The sides were drawn between the "environmentalist" the "historic group" and the "developers." I have no idea who the winner was in this book. Greed, avarice, and pompous attitudes appeared to be the winner in one area and the 'status quo' the winner in the other. The author bounced between the two seeming to favor the 'status quo' supported by the environmentalist/historic group. The developers are always the bad guys. However, the author did not hesitate accepting the hospitality and favor of the 'bad guys' in his quest to tell the story, which was interesting but not at all compelling. The author did a decent job of holding the two communities side by side for a comparison. However, that was all that seemed to be accomplished. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Book if you love Wine Country By William B. Having visited wine country on several opportunities, my wife and I favor Sonoma side of things. I love the history and contrasts between Sonoma and Napa regions that are outlined in the book. The quirkiness of Sonoma and extravagance of Napa really come out in the stories that Alan relates to the reader. I've read the book twice now so for me that makes it a winner! 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Great read! With only one questionable item..... By Charles W. Clowdis The book is GREAT! I have visited Napa and Sonoma frequently since 1968 and Alan tells this absorbing story in a fascinating and entertaining way. Only problem I have personally is his assessment of "Baron" Hazrathy. WHO convicted him of embezzlement? He was vindicated and his cost of the trip to Europe to bring back great vines was NEVER reimbursed as promised by the CA legislature....which seems to indicate this austere body was as duplicitous then as they are now!

When acclaimed journalist Alan Deutschman came to the California wine country as the lucky house guest of very rich friends, he was surprised to discover a raging controversy. A civil war was being fought between the Napa Valley, which epitomized elitism, prestige and wealthy excess, and the neighboring Sonoma Valley, a rag-tag bohemian enclave so stubbornly backward that rambunctious chickens wandered freely through town. But the antics really began when new-money invaders began pushing out Sonoma's poets and painters to make way for luxury resorts and trophy houses that seemed a parody of opulence. A Tale of Two Valleys captures these stranger-than-fiction locales with the wit of a Tom Wolfe novel and uncorks the hilarious absurdities of life among the wine world's glitterati. Deutschman found that on the weekends the wine country was like a bunch of gracious hosts smiling upon their guests, but during the week the families feuded with each other and their neighbors like the Hatfields and McCoys. Napa was a comically exclusive club where the super-rich fought desperately to get in. Sonoma's colorful free spirits and iconoclasts were wary of their bohemia becoming the next playground for the rapacious elite. So, led by a former taxicab driver and wine-grape picker, a cheese merchant, and an artist who lived in a barn surrounded by wild peacocks, they formed a populist revolt to seize power and repel the rich invaders. Deutschman's cast of characters brims with eccentrics, egomaniacs, and a mysterious man in black who crashed the elegant Napa Valley Wine Auction before proceeding to pay a half-million dollars for a single bottle. What develops is nothing less than a battle for the good life, a clash between old and new, the struggle for the soul of one of America's last bits of paradise. A dishy glimpse behind the scenes of a West Coast wonderland, A Tale of Two Valleys makes for intoxicating reading.