

The Most Interesting Man in the World: Q&A On Why He Now Only Drinks Tequila - Nightlife

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The Most Interesting Man in the World: Q&A On Why He Now Only Drinks Tequila

SUZANNE KOCH, OCTOBER 24, 2017

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If you visited the AZ Taco Festival this year, you may have sipped on *Astral Tequila* in between bites of pork and chicken tacos. The spirit, which recently won *The New York Times*' highest rating, a Double Gold medal from San Francisco World Spirits Competition and was named one of the "Top 10 Blanco Tequila" by *Food & Wine* magazine, made its stop at the taco festival as part of its launch tour. Bottled at 92 proof (most tequilas are 80 proof) in hand-blown recycled glass, Astral takes things back to basics, with production taking five times longer than industrial tequilas. Roasted in a traditional stone oven, fermented with bagazo (agave solids) and double distilled in traditional copper pots, Astral has no additives, autoclaves, or diffusors, resulting in one seriously smooth spirit. And to make it even smoother, they brought on Jonathan Goldsmith (you may know him as The Most Interesting Man in the World) as the face of Astral.

We had the chance to catch up with Jonathan at the festival to ask him about his transition

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from beer to tequila and what makes this one so different from all the others, or in his words, "too good to mix."

AFM: How did you become associated with Astral Tequila?

JG: Through a friend of mine Richard Betts who created Astral, he is a master sommelier. I met him years ago and he is an incredibly talented guy. He was making spirits on three different continents and he was telling me about Astral and how he makes it and I realized, listening to him, not only was he an incredibly talented man, he is a guy who has a wonderful heart. He is a purist; he is a renaissance man in many ways and in this bottle is a lot of love. He makes this tequila in Jalisco the old fashioned way with all kinds of concern for the environment. He has a very very deep concern for the earth. This tequila is made very slow. It's all organic and there's no diffusers; it takes a long time to make it. It's got such incredible quality and a lovely story to it and I was intrigued and we talked some more and I tasted it and it's very special.

AFM: How long have you been with Astral?

JG: Since that first meeting with Richard that was over a year ago. It's not just another spirit. It takes five to eight times longer to make this. There's no sugar, fillers, or shortcuts; nothing is added, it's all organic. They also use all parts of the agave plant whereas some other companies throw the other parts away. I'm very proud to be involved with Astral. I love the product. This is a Double Gold medal winner. At first, I didn't know what that meant but it means in an international competition [San Francisco World Spirits Competition] that 50 out of 50 judges have to pick it as No. 1 in a blind taste test and this is the one that was picked out of more than 100 tequilas. Only one or two are picked a year. It is highly competitive. There are 380 that have never won.

AFM: Have you been down to Jalisco?

JG: No, we're going down in November and I'm looking forward to it.

AFM: How long has Astral been around for?

JG: It was introduced a couple years back through the specialists and the high end restaurants. It was first introduced to mixologists so they could get behind it in the hopes that they would and they have so the reception has been wonderful and I'm thrilled to be with them. But this is really the launch right now. So we're on tour going right across the country. My partner and I have been in 30 cities in 10 states. We were mobbed in Toronto as we were in Milwaukee, Chicago, San Francisco and twice in Georgia. We've been busy.

AFM: Where are you headed next?

JG: I'll be going to England in a few days to do a picture with Meryl Streep but when I come back we're going to a couple of very big venues back East in New Jersey and then we're going to Miami and then other major cities after that to be set. It's a big tour and it's very exciting to be in the beginning of something. This is going to be a very famous tequila.

AFM: Have you always been a tequila fan?

JG: No, I was a martini fan and I also drank a lot of beer as you may know. I can't even drink a gin martini anymore. I think the reason I like this [Astral] so much is you can kind of taste the earth. This does it all for me. I have found that I drink this a lot on the road and I don't get drunk, it is an upper and I do not have hangovers.

Astral Tequila currently only offers a Blanco, but stay tuned; the brand is working on getting more varieties ready by April, just in time for Cinco de Mayo festivities. Enjoy Astral at Valley favorites like The Valley Ho, The Gladly, The Foundry, Barrio Queen and other spots that focus on tequila.

For more information, visit: astraltequila.com

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