

# A 'rebel winemaker' says this is the biggest mistake you're making with your wine

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"Rebel winemaker" Charles Smith.

We've all done it. You have friends coming over dinner, and you want to make sure your wine is chilled in time, so you stick it in the fridge before heading out to work in the morning.

But then you forget about it, and before you know it, that bottle of wine has spent a week in the fridge.

According to Charles Smith — the so-called "rebel winemaker" and founder of Walla Walla, Washington-based [Charles Smith Wines](#) — that's a big mistake. Temperature is,

by far, the most important thing to consider when storing wine in your home, but most of us are doing it wrong.

"Never keep your wine in the refrigerator," Smith told Business Insider. "It seems really convenient because you want to keep it cool, but it only takes about 20 minutes in the freezer to do the same thing."



The ideal temperature for white wines, Smith says, is a cool 55 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit. An hour or two in the fridge — or about 20 minutes in the freezer, as Smith pointed out — should be all you need to cool your wine to the right temperature.

Red wines, on the other hand, should be kept around 60 degrees. Go any warmer, and you risk spoiling the flavor of the wine.

It's a common misconception that red wines should be served at room temperature, but Smith says that can be misleading.

Charles Smith Wines' Kung Fu Girl Riesling.

"Let's say you live in Phoenix, Arizona. What's room temperature there? And if you live in New York, what's the room temperature?" he said. "So does room temperature really work? Not really."

Smith added that storing wine in a dark place is also important, as too much light exposure can alter the flavor.

Smith, who was named Wine Enthusiast's "Winemaker of the Year" in 2014, recently opened Jet City, a 32,000-square-foot facility in Seattle that's considered to be the

largest urban winery on the West Coast. His Charles Smith Wines is the largest winemaker-owned winery in Washington State.

His most famous wine is the [Kung Fu Girl Riesling](#), which has been named to Wine Spectator's lists of the top 100 and best-value wines. It retails for \$12. He's been called a "rebel winemaker" because, in part, of how much cheaper his wines are compared to other award-winning wines.

"Everyone should have access to good wine, no matter how much money they have. Good wine doesn't mean expensive wine — it means good wine," he said. "Making something that's highly drinkable, super delicious, and affordable? Then I think I'm doing my job as a responsible winemaker, because if you have the skill sets to make really high-end wine, you have the skills to make accessible wine, too."