

# HAMPTONS



**Katie Lee**

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# A Nose for the North Fork

Bedell Cellars CEO **Trent Preszler** knows the art of making award-winning wine.



"FROM VERY EARLY IN LIFE through graduate school at Cornell, I have always been enamored by plants and farming," says Bedell Cellars chief executive Trent Preszler. "I grew up on a ranch in South Dakota, and so I guess you could say it's in my blood." Today this natural instinct for wine is paying off in spades. Bedell Cellars is accumulating a laundry list of accolades, including a Best in Class award for its 2005 Merlot at the 2007 New York Wine & Food Classic. Among other career highlights for this 34-year-old: Bedell's 2007 Musée received 91 points from *Wine Spectator*, and its Gewürztraminer has won best in New York state for four of the last 10 years. Preszler has much to celebrate—and with so many exquisite varietals to savor, so do we. 36225 Main Road, Cutchogue, 734-7537; [bedellcellars.com](http://bedellcellars.com)—JILL SIERACKI

Is there one specific wine that's very closely tied to an important occasion for you?

When we hired our winemaker, Rich Olsen-Harbach, a legend in the East End wine business, Rich and I shared a bottle of 2000 Dom Pérignon at his house to celebrate. I still keep the box on my desk.

If you were planning the perfect summer party what food-and-wine menu would you create?

I would keep it simple: a bottle of Bedell 2010 Viognier with steamed lobster.

What do you love most about living on the North Fork?

Easy access to the beaches for kayaking

What does no one know about you?

I once competed in a junior rodeo in South Dakota!

Wines are supposed to get better with age, yet you are one of the world's youngest winery CEOs. Slightly ironic, no?

Well my friends call me an old soul, if you'll pardon the cliché, and life has always been in high gear for me. By the way, young wines are also quite exuberant and complex!

If you won the lottery, what bottle of wine would you splurge on?

I'm not a fan of wines with huge unreasonable price tags, so I'd probably use the money to travel to South Africa to see all the wineries there—I've heard it's a spectacular region for winemaking and has enormous natural beauty.

What are three elements of your idea of a perfect Hamptons day?

Lunch outdoors, kayaking, watching the sunset

If you could have dinner with any famous person (living or dead) who would it be?

The poet Mary Oliver, in Provincetown. Her writing has always inspired me—combining dark introspection with joyous release, and profound observation of the natural world.