



BRIE MALARKEY

SWITCHIN' IT UP FROM THREE-BUCK CHUCK

Wine 101: A course for the newly legal BY KATIE CORNELL

As a newly legal rookie in the game of alcohol consumption, I am the first to admit that my knowledge of the finer alcoholic beverages out there is limited. Until recently, I've been content with drinking my PBRs on the weekend. I have been equally pleased to dine with an all too familiar friend to many of us — his name is "Three-Buck Chuck." In case you're already lost, let me put it plain and simple: Hello, my name is Katie, and I am a college student on a budget who is looking to expand my wine drinking horizon.

As I walked into **WineStyles** (2846 Williamette St.), a national franchise with a recently opened local branch, the sun bounced off of the slender glass bottles lining the olive green walls. Light jazz music lingered in the background as the bottles seemed to snicker and gossip about the newcomer. At the counter, a man dressed in a freshly pressed black shirt and coordinating slacks looked over some paperwork. I became nervous. How could you impress anyone with a vocabulary that consisted of merlot and chardonnay or simply just red

and white? I began to realize that there was going to be more to learn beyond the label and color.

I explained my mission at WineStyles to the man behind the counter, whose name was David. To my surprise I was not met with a blank stare; rather, he was delighted to help. The franchise owners, a married couple named Brie Malarkey and Jon Cunningham, emerged from the back of the store as David and I joked around about my usual cardboard box selections. Everyone was immediately interested in showing me some new options.

WineStyles is built around the idea that learning about wine can be easy, enjoyable and affordable. As Malarkey and I looked around the store, she stressed the importance of these values. "The definition of good wine is if you like it," she explained. I quickly learned from her "Wine 101" crash course some of the distinct differences between, for example, a fruity chardonnay and silky chardonnay. In fact, there are handy placards that hang above each type of wine which explain some of the flavors

in each wine, as well as different foods to bring out those flavors. This is also a great place to get an idea of what your overstimulated palate is trying to tell you — *Hey! That's a raspberry/blueberry/strawberry taste!* — a cheat sheet, if you will.

Malarkey walked me through the variety the store offers. Cunningham and Malarkey carry 200 different wines, both local and international bottles. I was delighted to find out that many of the selections are priced around \$10-\$25. And if you feel like splurging, you can go to the "If You Insist ..." section.

Perhaps my favorite part about WineStyles is that they really do practice their informal slogan of "What's your style?" when helping a customer around the store. They encourage you to try different kinds of wine so that you can find your niche. "We were our customers," Malarkey said while explaining their strategy. One of the most charming things about WineStyles is that the back of the store has an old-cellar-turned-lounge vibe. Here, the owners display local art on the walls, hold interactive classes on wine tasting and host live music on the weekends. "We want to get people out of the grocery store and go out and try something new without being overwhelmed or intimidated," David said as we tasted each wine.

I've never liked white wine, so I was surprised to find out I could taste specific differences among the three we tried. Everyone sat around and joked during the tasting, but WineStyles' relaxed atmosphere should not fool you; the owners and workers know their wine.

As I left the store, I felt much more confident about my abilities. I realized that there is history, artistry, science and personal experience to draw from when deciding on a good wine. Although I'm still learning, I know that I wasn't too far off to begin with: Personal taste is the most important part of the experience. And when I have more than three bucks, I'll snag a bottle of the light, "crispy" portion of my tasting experiences, Salitage Chardonnay. ♦

WineStyles is located at 2846 Williamette St. and is open Tuesday-Saturday from 11am-9pm and Sunday-Monday from 11am-6pm

WHEN CAN I GET MY ALCOHOL FIX?

COMPILED BY DEANNA UUTELA

You just never know if your favorite winery is open, right? But unless it's listed below, the winery — in Lane County, Douglas County north of Roseburg and the southern Willamette Valley (south of Salem) — is year-round and open daily. So schedule your tasting trips accordingly!

LANE COUNTY VINEYARDS

- Benton-Lane Winery** (just outside of Monroe): goes to weekends starting Dec.
- Noble Estate** (Eugene): open year-round Sat. & Sun. only
- Pfeiffer Vineyards** (Junction City): open May-Dec. weekends; Mon.-Fri. by appt.
- Chateau Lorane** (Lorane): goes to weekends starting Oct.
- High Pass Winery** (Junction City): open May-Thanksgiving weekends
- Territorial Vineyards & Wine Co.** (Eugene): open year-round Fri. & Sat. only
- Iris Hill** (near Lorane): Open May-Dec. weekends; Mon.-Fri. by appt.
- Houston Vineyards** (Eugene): available by appt.

SOUTHERN WILLAMETTE VALLEY

- Bellefontaine Cellars** (Corvallis): year-round Fri.-Sun.
- Springhill Cellars** (Albany): open Sat. & Sun., Memorial weekend to Thanksgiving
- Tyee Wine Cellars** (Corvallis): open daily June 15-Labor Day; open weekends April-Dec.

UMPQUA VALLEY VINEYARDS

- Hillcrest Vineyard** (Roseburg): open daily except Jan. & Feb. which are by appt. only
- MarshAnne Landing** (Oakland): May-Oct. open Wed.-Sun. daily; Nov.-Dec. weekends
- Palotai Vineyard & Winery** (Roseburg): open April-Dec., Fri.-Sun.; closed Jan.-March
- Reustle-Prayer Rock Vineyards** (Umpqua): open year-round; closed Sundays



Thank You!

Friends and Neighbors

Whiteaker Cocktail Society extends many thanks.

THE WHITEAKER BLOCK PARTY

At 29th & Willamette
Next to the Market of Choice



Now Serving Wine & Beer

• Espresso • Crepes • Sweet Life Desserts • Panini • Wine

WINE TASTINGS
THURSDAY - SUNDAY 4-8PM

FREE Appetizer*
M-W 4-6 PM • TH- SUN 4-8PM

OFFER VALID WITH COUPON ONLY • EXPIRES SEPTEMBER 1, 2007 * SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY

Winner of the 2005 - 2007 Award for Best Wine Selection



Open Seven Days a Week • Wines by the Glass/Bottle/Case
Large selection of Oregon wines
Free Friday Wine Tastings 5-7 p.m.



200 W. Broadway
541.685.0790
oregonwineandmore.com