

A Taste of Wines and Wineries in Pittsburgh

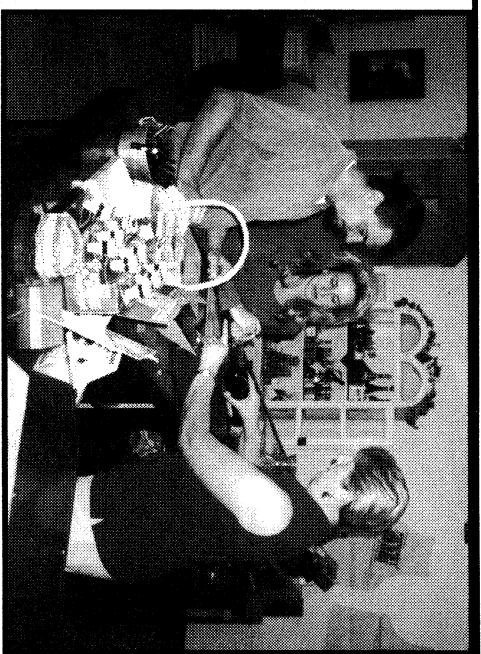
For centuries, wine has been a revered guest at the celebrations in our cultures, and a welcome accompaniment to our everyday occasions. No other libation has the power to refresh, relax, warm, and calm us. Wine, and wine making, is fascinating, alluring, and can be, simply, complex. The age old, singularly unique marriage of science and art has always yielded a dazzling array of wines to please most any palate.

Pittsburgh is home to numerous establishments for the wine enthusiast. Whether a novice or a connoisseur, a visit to either La Casa Narcisi Winery or Country Wines promises a memorable experience.

"It gets in your blood. I love it," says Denny Narcisi, enthusiastically, about the winery he and his family have built, literally, from the ground up. Denny's wife, Sara, and sons Randy and Tony opened the winery for business in November of 2001, but the

winemaking tradition has prevailed for four generations in the Narcisi family. Fourteen wines are offered, and each is a symbol of the family's pride and skill in their craft. The family is dedicated to quality from the time the grapes are harvested until the bottles are labeled. Superior, distinctive wine is the result. Not only has the business become

successful beyond the family's expectations, they sincerely enjoy what they do. Sara says of her husband, "He's never been happier. It's his dream come true." The warmth and excitement the family has for winemaking carries over to their



Narcisi Winery

customers and employees. A family member, or one of the knowledgeable, trusted employees will happily guide the customer through a sampling of wines. The Narcisi family knows that wine is meant to be enjoyed, and they delight in providing personal service to their customers. As Sara says, "Drink what you like, and like what you drink."

Though the winery is located just off Route 910 in Gibsonia, the scene created by the building's ivory arches and red, rippled roof seems to transport one to Old World Italy. Large double doors create an impressive mahogany arch at the main entrance. A garland of grape leaves, dotted with red and purple berries, and corks – for a touch of whimsy – adds to the décor. The massive room is light and bright and more to its size, and gives one an "alfresco" feeling. The delicious notes of a classical concerto complete the ambience. Here wines can be sampled in style at the distinguished copper top bar, where bottles are handsomely displayed. Stairs, handmade by Randy, lead to a mezzanine where events can be held in unique fashion. Outside, a deck and covered balcony also await visitors. The entire effect is warm, welcoming, and colorful – just like its owners, and the wine they so love to create.

This November will mark one year for La Casa Narcisi. The family will

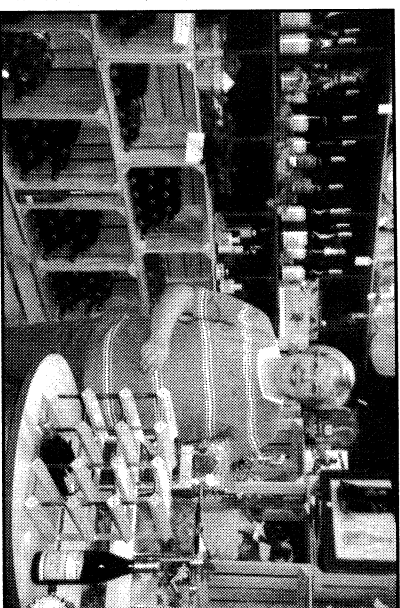
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celebrate this milestone during the month with live music and refreshments. Take a guided tour of the winery and enjoy the festivities. With holidays fast approaching, consider a bottle of the very popular sweet Black Raspberry wine as a gift. Gift baskets are available year round. The winery is located at 4578 Gibsonia Road (Rte 910). Visit their website at www.narciswinery.com, or call for more information at 724-444-4744.

At Country Wines, Alexis Hartung can not only help the customer to make a memorable wine selection, she can teach him how to make his own. Established in 1972, Country Wines has recently become two businesses in one. It has always been a supplier of ingredients, equipment and kits for the home wine and beer maker, and provided classes and demonstrations. A wine shoppe was added in October of 2001, and offers 27 different varietals from Presque Isle Wine Cellars.

Sparkling wine, labeled as Falling Waters, and Creekside red, white and blush are just a few of the popular selections. In 2000, Alexis, along with her husband, Ray, and five other close friends - Doug and Marlene Moorhead, Marc and Laurie Boettcher, and Mike Jore - became the proud owners of Country Wines. Alexis has been involved in making and appreciating wine for over 20 years. She and her husband began as hobbyists, and brought some of their own wine to Country Wines for evaluation. They were encouraged to enter it into a competition, and were rewarded with a ribbon. The rest was history. "I really love to do this!" says Alexis, with feeling. She has worked at the store for years, and is involved in all aspects of the business. She is also a certified wine judge, and teaches others how to judge.

At Country Wines, customers are friends, and can call or stop in with questions any time. Alexis enjoys working with the home winemaker, and said, "It's very rewarding to see the customer get a lot of joy from what they are doing." She knows that people take



Alexis Hartung, Country Wines

pride in producing a quality wine they can share with friends. Alexis gives her views on selecting a wine. "Don't feel as though what you are drinking isn't right. Many people are intimidated about choosing wines. Just ask." Country Wines is located at 3333 Babcock Boulevard. Gift baskets and catalogs are available. Call Country Wines at 412-366-0151, or visit their website at www.countrywines.com for more information.

"Wine is bottled poetry," said famed author Robert Louis Stevenson.

And so it is. The words used to describe the subtlety, style and flavor of the countless wines that exist are as varied as the people that drink them. With well-established roots in tradition, culture and family, wine will undoubtedly and joyfully be produced, sampled, tasted and appreciated for centuries to come. ♦

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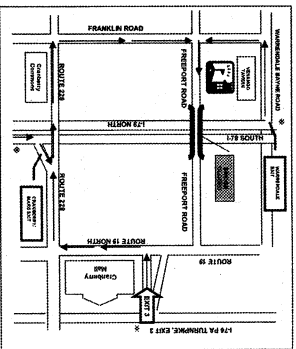


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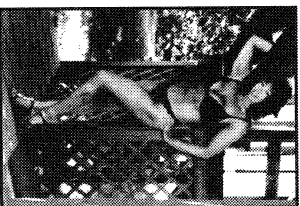


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