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| *July 9, 2004* | |

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| http://msnbcmedia.msn.com/j/msnbc/Components/Photos/040610/040610_lowcarb_VLarge_4p.vlarge.jpg  James Cheng / MSNBC.com | **1. Low-carb Wines, Sure, But How do They Taste?**  **Puzzled wine loves give mixed reviews**  One.6 chardonnay and One.9 merlot are the first wines to be specifically blended and marketed as low-carb offerings. But almost all wines, except dessert wines, are generally low in carbs. |

By Jon Bonné - *MSNBC*

July 1, 2004

Even among the carb-conscious, wine has not been a major enemy.

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After all, any dry wine contains perhaps 3 or 4 grams of carbs per five-ounce glass. That’s a small fraction of the 50 or 60 grams recommended during an ongoing Atkins-like routine, and certainly less than a regular beer or most mixed drinks.

So when the winemakers at Brown-Forman Wines recently unveiled its two reduced-carb labels, wine lovers and winemakers alike were puzzled. Would it still taste like wine?  Had they resorted to some sort of nefarious chemistry?  Perhaps they picked underripe or undersugared fruit?

“That’s not where we started the process,” says Jill Jepson, associate winemaker and brand director for the new One.6 chardonnay and One.9 merlot, each named for the exact degree of their low-carbitude.

Last summer, Jepson says, Brown-Forman analyzed various lots of grapes from their growers throughout California and chose the ones with the fewest carbs from 2002 merlot juice and 2003 chardonnay fruit.

Then they dry-fermented the wine to remove every bit of residual sugar. (Most wine has just a touch left over.)  And they blended it to achieve what Jepson describes as a “really interesting, fruity style.”

None of this is shocking.  Blending winemakers seek out specific properties in their batches all the time. And though Brown-Forman is the only winemaker with a low-carb line, other large winemakers have inaugurated modest reduced-carb strategies.

Diageo Chateau and Estate Wines, which controls the Beaulieu and Sterling Vineyards labels, crafted hanging “neckers” for some of their wines -– promo tags around the bottle neck that list carb counts and other nutritional details.

But the company opted not to change its labels and isn’t tinkering inside the bottle. “We haven’t had to reformulate,” says Diageo’s Jon Pageler.

Some high-end vintners find Brown-Forman’s effort downright distasteful, taking offense that a premium product like wine would be lumped with low-carb targets like spaghetti and snack bars. One shot me a withering glance when I even mentioned the concept.

Jepson sees any backlash as simply sour grapes in an often self-obsessed business: “The wine industry has traditionally made wine for ourselves and not for the consumer.”

**How carbs count**

Since consumers will ultimately buy on taste, we tried out the new wines. But first let’s consider wine’s place in the carbohydrate universe.The USDA’s nutrition database lists 1.18 g of carbs in a 5-ounce serving of white wine, and 2.51 g in five ounces of red. Most in the industry find those numbers too low, and the methods for counting carbs have created a bit of controversy in the industry, not unlike the gap between Food and Drug Administration guidelines and the “net carbs” touted by some food companies. For example, do you count tannins and organic acids, which have no nutritional impact?

The federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau is preparing specific guidelines which may be available as soon as this week; indications are that it favors the FDA-type approach.

Actually, any drink with fewer than 7 grams can now be called “low carb,” according to Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade rules. Wines aren’t required to list carbs, but those that do must list all standard nutrition label data, including calories.

Brown-Forman did not disclose carbs for one of its standard bottlings, the 2002 Fetzer Eagle Peak merlot. Sutter Home, which also launched a campaign to market wine as low-carb, lists carb counts for all its varietals. Its merlot has 4.1g per glass. Diageo’s Beaulieu Vineyards BV Coastal Estates merlot has 3.5g of carbs per glass.

Spirits makers don’t want to be left out either.  They have noted that basic distilled spirits – unflavored vodka, gin and tequila, for instance – have no carbs.  Of course, drink mixers like soda have carbs, and all alcohol comes with other weight-control issues (the body processes alcohol before any nutrients, and then there’s those late-night cheeseburger binges) but a straight shot of vodka, or a scotch and soda, won’t technically impact your carb count.

Back to the wines: With a $5 million marketing campaign, Brown-Forman put serious cash behind One.6 and One.9, which are currently in a 300,000-case release and available at major retailers like Wal-Mart and Target for about $10.

Since these wines are meant to appeal to consumers shopping in that price range, we gathered a couple panels of nonprofessional wine drinkers to see how they stood up in blind tasting.

**Room for improvement**

Results were fair at best. The biggest message from our tasters? There’s room for improvement among inexpensive takes on these popular varietals – low-carb or not.

The One.6 chardonnay was paired against two similarly priced wines, a Morro Bay chardonnay from California’s Central Coast and a Waterbrook chardonnay from Washington.

One.6 generally ranked second or last among our newsroom tasters. They found “almost no nose,” and “no fruit.” Some said it tasted “bland” and “mild”; a couple found it “sweet” and “more like pop than wine.”

Most found the Morro Bay “tangy” and “sharp”; a few thought it was “weak.” The Waterbrook drew mixed reviews – some found it “grassy.” Others detected “cat pee.” Even the biggest chardonnay fan in the group said she was “not crazy about any of them.”

The merlot garnered slightly more enthusiasm when we tasted it at a recent dinner party. We compared One.9 against two other California bottlings around $10, including Brown-Forman’s own Fetzer. One.9 ranked a solid second; one person made it their top pick.

Panelists found it “light” to “medium bodied” and “acidic,” picking up “cherry/cranberry” or “blackberry.” “Kind of stagnant, but I could finish this,” one said.  Its presumably carbier brother, the Fetzer, got slightly better marks: “Fruitiest of batch,” “dry and strong.”

Tasters found the third wine, a BV Coastal 2001, “listless” and “slightly bitter.”  The entire panel felt all three were palatable, with basic fruit; none were standouts. No one planned to buy any.

The bottom line: No dry wine should cause you much carb concern. If you enjoy value-brand California chardonnay and merlot, and you’re concerned about an extra 1 to 2 grams of carbs per glass, you might enjoy the low-carb .

But if you’re that worried about carbs, you may want to skip the vino. Stick to water.



**2. .08 Law Has Intended Impact**

 By Angie Hunt - *KCRG*

July 1, 2004

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA -- Has the state's lower blood alcohol limit made it safer on the road for you and your family? Iowa state troopers believe it has. A year ago today, Iowa's blood alcohol limit for drunk driving was lowered from point-one percent to point zero-eight percent. Since then, Iowa's drunk driving deaths have dropped 15-percent. Troopers say it's also made motorists more aware.

"When they're out drinking, they're thinking with a lower rate that they have to be a little more aware of how many they're drinking before they chose to behind the wheel and drive," says Iowa State Patrol Lt. Randy Jones.

Sally Eggleston's son was killed in a drunk driving accident. The Cedar Rapids woman helped push for the new .08-law. She feels it's made an impact.

"All they have to do is get a designated driver. We're not telling them they can't drink, we're just telling them please don't drive while you drink," says Eggleston.

Last year, 124 people died on Iowa highways as a result of drunk driving.



**3. UI Grad to Open New Bar**

By Vanessa Miller – *Iowa City Press-Citizen*

*July 8, 2004*

IOWA CITY, IA -- His legacy remains with Iowa City in one of the town's most famous bars, and now, Mark Eggleston wants to make his mark on North Liberty as well.

After leaving the Iowa City area for seven years to run a tavern in Las Vegas, the University of Iowa graduate and original owner of The Fieldhouse has returned to open Eggy's on 965, a new sports bar along Highway 965 just north of Forevergreen Road.

"I'll have been back in town for two years in September, and I had to get something going," said the 56-year-old Coralville resident, who spent the past eight months managing The Vine Tavern & Eatery in Coralville.

He began work on Eggy's in June and expects to open Aug. 15.

"I came back to town in 2002, and I couldn't believe I ever left," he said. "Las Vegas is a great town, but the people here and my friends beat the heck out of a good time."

That passion for the community is at the center of his new business, Eggleston said, adding that Eggy's on 965 will be a combination of The Fieldhouse and his Las Vegas bar, The Funhog Ranch. The venue will have a 4,300-square-foot ground floor - about the size of a basketball court - and a 1,500-square-foot mezzanine. It will offer big-screen televisions and a variety of food.

While The Fieldhouse was geared toward UI students and younger patrons, Eggleston said his new establishment will cater to those 25 to 45.

He opted for North Liberty over Iowa City because of the mature crowd he wants to attract and because of changes in Iowa City laws.

"I'd lived in Iowa City for years and years, but it appears it's getting tougher to operate there," he said.

Eggleston's first venture in The Fieldhouse was successful, attracting national acts and a seemingly endless stream of patrons. He and co-owner Randy Winegarde sold the business to Lew Converse and Dave Moore in 1996, who then sold it to Dave Carey in May.

Until 2002, Eggleston operated his Las Vegas tavern, which offered video poker and served traditional sandwiches including pork tenderloins and French dips.

"I'm trying to do something up here that's nicer than The Fieldhouse with more food," he said. "And the big thing will be sports."

The venue will employ from 25 to 35 people and feature pork tenderloins, shrimp cocktail, steaks and seafood, Eggleston said.

"I'm glad to be back where I belong," he said.



**4. Cutting Edge Hospitality (Mixology) at 35,000 Feet; Airline Takes the Cocktail Craze Airborne**

*U.S. Newswire*

July 6, 2004

WASHINGTON, July 6 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Virgin Atlantic launches yet another trend -- In Flight Mixology -- taking hospitality to new heights, the Distilled Spirits Council said today, applauding the airline's new program to put a mixologist on board the Upper Class lounge.

"Virgin Atlantic has taken the cocktail craze to a 35,000 foot level," said Distilled Spirits Council Director of Public Relations Shawn Starbuck Kelley. "Once again they have taken the lead in cutting edge hospitality."

This program for Upper Class passengers demonstrates that the cocktail phenomenon has reached far beyond restaurants, bars and nightclubs, Kelley pointed out.



**5. Supervisors Deny Tavern Renewed Liquor License**

By Brian Rathjen – *The* *North Scott Press*

July 7, 2004

DAVENPORT, IA -- The Scott County Board of Supervisors has denied a rural Davenport tavern owner’s request to renew a liquor license after county officials cited concerns over the owner’s brushes with the law.

Without discussion, the board voted 4-0 Thursday to reject a liquor license renewal application from the Lakeside, 14010 112th Avenue.

The county auditor’s office notified Lakeside owner Mike Brendel of the board’s decision Friday. Brendel was not in attendance at Thursday’s meeting, and several attempts by The North Scott Press to reach him at his business were not successful.

County Attorney Bill Davis, in a memorandum to the county auditor, said he had “grave concerns about the management of the establishment and the owner’s continual involvement in the criminal justice system due to alcohol-related offenses.”

The Scott County Sheriff’s Department backed Davis’ recommendation.

On a renewal application filed June 10, Brendel listed three arrests, including domestic abuse, public intoxication and operating while intoxicated. The domestic abuse charge, dated Aug. 30, 2003, was later dropped. The other two charges, both from this spring, are pending.

Iowa law requires that liquor license applicants accurately list all arrests, summonses and dispositions, even if the charges were dismissed or there was an acquittal.

While the Scott County Sheriff’s Department has responded to several disturbance calls at the business in past months, Davis said that did not really factor into his recommendation to the board to deny the license.

“Every business is entitled to a problem from time to time,” he said in an interview. “When the problem is the management, they should have another line of business.”

Davis said that, in 25 years as county attorney, he cannot recall the last time his office recommended denial of a liquor license.

The board of supervisors votes on approval of liquor licenses for all rural Scott County establishments that sell alcoholic beverages.

County administrator C. Ray Wierson explained liquor license applications go through a series of approvals by various boards and county officials. For instance, the county’s Planning and Zoning Commission determines if there are any zoning issues that must be resolved. The Scott County Health Department, the county attorney’s office and sheriff’s departments also provide recommendations.

“We take the application process very seriously and they’re all scrutinized. By the same token, there aren’t that many (the supervisors) deny,” said Wierson.

Once the supervisors decide on approval of a license, the license and fee are forwarded to the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division in Des Moines. If a license is denied, the division’s administrator notifies the applicant that he has the right to appeal.

The final decision on granting a license rests with the administrator. Either side may appeal the decision in district court.

