



Columbus, OH

March 6, 2008

About Town: Worthington

In the House

By G.A. Benton

Q: What do you get when you combine the logical, organizing mind of a mechanical engineer with a deep passion for wine?

A: One of the most distinct and user-friendly wine shops in Central Ohio.

House Wine in Worthington might have a mundane name, but it's certainly easy to remember, isn't it? And easing people's brains into a greater understanding of wine seems to be behind all of the slick design elements at House Wine.

Donnie Austin was that engineer I earlier referenced, and, as explained to me by House Wine employee Gene Adams, after Austin visited Tuscany and Napa Valley (where he was again when I recently popped in), Austin decided to chuck his lucrative Honda gig to devote his energies to the almighty grape.

This has paid off for House patrons in the form of concise and easily scanned wine descriptions. These come on large plastic tags hanging by every bottle, and contain producer's information, tasting notes and suggested food pairings. The cards are color-coded and bear one-word categories (like "finesse" or "robust") and logos for the prescribed food matches. Those cards also enable very efficient browsing, as does the spacious layout of the place. As a result, unlike many other cramped wine shops where bottles are piled up and strewn all about, House Wine's generous geometry makes you feel like you're never in danger of knocking something over.

And unlike other dusty stores crammed with wooden crates and hard to find and reach bottles, House Wine is sleek and clean and modern. It



has crisp sightlines, pale green walls, metal shelves and narrow blond wooden tables hovering above translucent space-age green plastic chairs.

This is where you'll sit and sip and take advantage of House's unique-to-Central-Ohio Enomatic machine. That automated Italian device allows self-serve pours from 24 different labels and is activated by a "smart card" you buy credit on.

This means you can have as much or as little interaction with House's super-friendly and knowledgeable staff as you so desire. You can also have an artisanal cheese plate (\$8) supplied by the North Market's Curds and Whey to go with your drinks.

That — plus a small yet stylish selection of wine-drinking accouterments and themed wine-tasting nights — make House a great place to pick up a bottle, or just cop a cool perch and learn a thing or two while indulging in a couple of delicious quaffs.

Hours

11 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday

11 a.m.-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday



Uncork/screw Mondays

No corkage fee on bottles

House Wine

644 High St., Worthington

614-846-9463

Web: housewine.biz

Wine 345

Monday: \$3 glass

Tuesday \$4 glass

Wednesday: \$5 glass

Tasting Thursdays

6-8:30 p.m.

\$15/person (no reservations required)

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