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Food & Entertainment

Swirling down the vino vortex

by Harry Stoll
Staff writer

Last weekend, Saturday night fervor was showing next to the Delta Cinema as the Brentwood Wine Store hosted a release party for the 2004 vintage of Hannah Nicole Vineyards Fumé blanc and Viognier. Accompanying the two whites were three reds from the 2002 vintage: Red Table Wine, Meritage and Cabernet sauvignon.

Hannah Nicole Vineyards wine is produced predominantly from grapes grown locally by owners Glenda and Neil Cohn. They plan to build a winery on Balfour Road. For now, the wine is produced at Prospero Winery in Madera.

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Neil and Glenda Cohn stand by their wine, with their Hannah Nicole Vineyard in the background.

Photo by Richard Wisdom

Wine and food fuel evening of discovery

Vino from page 1C

The Wine Store's air-conditioned interior was hot, hot, hot as patrons paid \$10 for a big glass to taste the five wines. Neil Cohn and winemaker John Sotelo poured it on.

Our Fumé blanc is 90 percent Sauvignon blanc and 10 percent Vignier. It would go well with shellfish.

Noses sniffed citrus, mouths got a nice smooth taste with a crisp exit. Tubs of oysters on the half-shell and shrimp got along swimmingly with the Fumé, Cheeses, crackers, kivi, quiche, stuffed mushrooms and more waited for the wine. Alicia Herroess and Jamie Perkins fixed the food and kept it coming.

Quick Fix, a two-man voice and guitar group, brought it on and laid it down in a space near the L-shaped polished wood tasting bar.

Next is our Vignier, with 10 percent Sauvignon blanc. It would like the quiche.

Like? The two mated and made magic. The Vignier is an apricot and a peach held to your nose; the taste is of the exotic fruit and flowers brought by a lover.

Some tasters took to the side-walk and sat in chairs against the building or stood in the calm balmy Brentwood night filled with the Quick Fix sounds mixed with big drums

from Graciel opposite the Wine Store on First Street. Up the street

Sweeney's emitted more music. The Delta Cinema's vertical sign lit up one letter at a time, top to bottom - D-E-L-T-A - until all were lit, then the sign went dark and did it again.

Inside, tall suave assured Kim Hernandez was offered either the Fumé or the Vignier, and said,

"I don't really care for white wine."

White is considered the yin wine. Kim is very yin but went right for the yang.

Our Red Table Wine is a light red that exhibits the subtle flavors of Merlot blended with the intense flavors of Cabernet sauvignon.

Tasters tried this light-repeat wine with the dip and they got all "Ah-hh." No one did the seinfeldian double dip.

Bottles were opened and tilted by John and Neil and



their words flowed like wine.

Our 2002 Meritage is a full bodied wine, deep in color and intense with the flavors of a classic Bordeaux blend. It's great with lamb, beef, or chocolate.

Tasters soon learn that Meritage rhymes with heritage. It's a name the Meritage Association copyrighted in 1988 to catch some cachet from the famous Bordeaux blends. The deep complex Hannah Nicole Meritage is a

blend of Cabernet sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet franc and a little Petit verdot.

A petite Vietnamese waitress crossed diagonally directly from Minh's carrying a laden tray that she maneuvered through the wine racks to a window table where a married pair paired the Vietnamese cuisine with

see **Vino** page 13C

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Photos: by Richard Williams

s from the Hannah Nicole Vineyards wine tasting, clock-
ed by the 2002 Meritage and Cabernet sauvignon against
husband Neil splashes the glass of a fortunate guest at the
g that took place at the Brentwood Wine Store; glasses in
tasters spill out onto the sidewalk on a delectable summer
; and from behind the Wine Store's bar, as revelers shoot
reeze, an impressive array of bottles wait to fulfill their
y.



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