

MiamiHerald.com 

Posted on Fri, Sep. 14, 2007

## A world of wine from around the world

By GABE BERMAN

``Merlot makes me think silly things. Bordeaux makes me say silly things. Champagne makes me do silly things."

This doesn't apply to me. I'm certainly not impervious to the effects of alcohol: It's just that my taste buds haven't matured past Ovaltine.

If your palate has joined the rest of your body in adulthood, you'll see the preceding words about merlot, Bordeaux and champagne painted on the wall at the **33rd Street Wine Bar**, at 3337 NE 33rd St. in Fort Lauderdale.

This cozy nightspot shelves a United Nations of vino: 500 bottles hail from Chile, Italy, France, Spain, Germany, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and, of course, California.

Candace, who, like Beyoncé prefers to go by only her first name, is the owner and head bartender. She must have thought I was just being modest when I admitted my wine knowledge is sub-elementary because she was obviously expecting me to share her excitement when she revealed, ``I even have a Carmenere!"

I probably looked puzzled so she explained that a Carmenere is made from the "lost" grape variety from France. So I guess it's sort of the Sasquatch of wines.

Most of Candace's collection is available by the glass (served in Riedel stemware), for \$7 to \$25; a bottle will cost \$19 to \$150.

Decanters are available (I was too embarrassed to inquire about the benefit of decanting but according to wikipedia.org, it helps to oxygenate reds).

The bar, shaped like a question mark, is topped with black granite and illuminated by candles, track lighting and hanging cones of amber light. The floor is a mosaic of Spanish tile and the walls showcase the vibrant work of Daniel Austin, a local artist whose gallery is on Harrison Street in Hollywood.

The 33rd Street Wine Bar is open from 5 p.m. to midnight daily. Tastings are held every week on either Wednesday or Friday. Click to [www.33rdstreetwinebar.com](http://www.33rdstreetwinebar.com) to sign up for e-mailed calendar updates. Tastings are \$10 and include hors d'oeuvres. Some will be "vertical tastings," which I understand has something to do with vintages from the same winery. But check it out for yourself.

Chris Benziger from Benziger Wines is scheduled to be in-house to discuss his product on Sept. 20. In the future, look forward to similar elbow-rubbing encounters with Craig Watts from Lodi California and Brian Del Bendio of Markham Vineyard.

On Saturday nights, enjoy live jazz provided by **Sound Experience**, a duo with a stand-up bass and an

electric guitar. Candace plays DJ on the other nights by choosing CDs from her extensive jazz collection.

At the 33rd Street Wine Bar, expect to be surrounded by sophisticated wine drinkers without a hint of snobbery. You don't need to feel intimidated because Candace basically has a doctorate in decanting and will show you the ropes -- or the vines.

*Gabe Berman will answer questions about Broward nightlife. Go to [MiamiHerald.com/entertainment](http://MiamiHerald.com/entertainment) and click on Nightlife.*

---

© 2007 Miami Herald Media Company. All Rights Reserved.  
<http://www.miamiherald.com>