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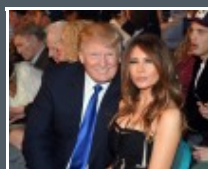
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January 07, 2016 | **917 Views**

Bostons Top Wine Bars *Sip and Savor*

By Cheryl Fenton

NEWS & ALERTS

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Belly Wire Bar

One Kendall Square, Cambridge
bellywinebar.com

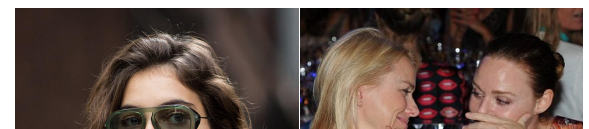
Pretentious oenophiles, go somewhere else. Adding a bit of humor to the oft-intimidating world of wine, this modern *wine bar* is *from the crew that brought you The Blue Room and Central Bottle*. Husband-and-wife team Nick Zappia and Liz Vilardi styled Belly after a European enoteca and wanted zero stuffiness to surround their appreciation of a good glass of vino. Focusing on progressive and traditional wines (and some damn good charcuterie), the wine list greets you with categories including Faith (“not everybody has a body like you” a la George Michael) for full bodied reds, Mustaches for southern Rhones that range from pencil-thin to fully evolved, and Sentimental Valium of complex wines paired with complex songs. You can look forward to two- and five-ounce pours. Ask them about their sherry beef bone marrow luge.

Sip Wine Bar & Kitchen

581 Washington Street, Boston
sipwinebarandkitchen.com

Sip? Ok, if you insist. Shining in the theatre district, Sip Wine Bar & Kitchen offers a wine list that’s divine. Your pour of choice is presented one of four ways—a sip so you may try different varietals, a half glass or a full glass, or by the bottle. If it gets too overwhelming, check in to their helpful categories, such as ‘sweet & bubbly’ to ‘spicy reds.’ The menu mixes serious hearty (think Aspen Ridge hanger steak and American homestead pork chop) with flirty bar snacks like pretzel bites with provolone fondue and crispy panko-crusted sausage stuffed olives. Save room for s’mores, huge marshmallows ready for dipping in a trio of treats. Grab a coveted patio seat and people watch the downtown droves.

FROM THE EDITORS DESK



Les Zygomates

129 South Street, Boston

winebar.com

No wonder it roughly translates to "the facial muscles that make you smile." Vintage posters and warm faux finishes enrich the coziness of this low-key wine bar and bistro. A chic, yet unpretentious French atmosphere, you can chill in the "quiet" dining side or take a seat in the swanky "Jazz side" for live performances Tuesday through Saturday evenings. Don't know Pinot or have questions about a Cab? They'll introduce you to your newest favorite, perhaps from their Reserve list. And the menu is as sexy as you please, with dishes such as lobster crepe, charcuterie, a love-inducing extensive raw bar and intoxicating dessert bar.

Troquet

140 Boylston Street, Boston

troquetboston.com

Want to impress with your Wine 101? Troquet is known far and wide for serving rare and elusive wines that don't break the bank (unless you want them to). If you're looking for something special, perhaps a Bordeaux you sipped during your Parisian getaway last spring, you can even call ahead. They have a rich, decadent French menu from Chef Scott Hebert—try the duo of Painted Hills beef with bordelaise, roasted Vermont suckling pig or Valhrona chocolate soufflé. Much like a good lover, Troquet likes you to take your time, so allow at least two hours of slow tempo for dinner. Excuse us as we swoon.

Spoke Wine Bar

89 Holland Street, Somerville

spokewinebar.com

A Davis Square newbie celebrating its first birthday this spring, Spoke was originally billed by owner Felisha Foster as a "modern speakeasy." With her rep as an Old World fanatic, she loves to supporting small producers who care about the land and their communities. The carefully curated wines are handpicked and provide a fling with each season, focusing on small-batch vineyards. Want a great way to start off the week? A new



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wine is featured every Monday. Beyond the typical bottle of red, bottle of white, think Gorrondona Txakolina from the Basque region of Spain, the Italian red sparkler Lambrusco Rosso or a French Cour-Cheverny from the eastern end of the Loire Valley.

The Butcher Shop

55 2 Tremont Street, Boston
thebutchershopboston.com

The South End's contribution to the wine bottle is Barbara Lynch's cozy neighborhood wine bar. A nod to her Italian and French passport stamps, there are over 100 wine selections. Since you don't have the time to travel the world, Wine Director Cat Silirie does it for you. Named by *The New York Times* as "Boston's preeminent sommelier," her annual globe-spanning trips to different wine-growing regions, meeting the winegrowers and sampling the regional cuisine translates to a bold wine program. The staff stays savvy during weekly "Wine Words." Written on the slate wall, there are always seasonal, food-friendly additions to the wine list from her recent discoveries.

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