



CAV Bar in San Francisco (above and right)

FIVE WINE BARS FOR THE WOMEN

Shakespeare wrote, “Good wine needs no bush.” We know better. By Colleen M. Lee

Pabst Blue Ribbon might still be the dyke drink on tap in some cities, but just as *The L Word* did for lesbian fashion, a crop of women-owned wine bars are subverting our beverages of choice. We now see our sisters drinking a sauvignon blanc in a quiet corner, discussing whether the next bottle should be a merlot or a pinot noir, while snacking on a plate of olives, cheese and smoked fish. The most exciting trend emerging: the ascension of the lesbian-owned wine bar. With subtle reds, spicy whites and fruity rosés swirling on our palates and in our minds, **curve** brings you our five favorite women-owned wine bars.

1. CAV Bar, San Francisco: CAV, probably at the top of any list of wine bars, is owned and operated by Pamela Busch, a native New Yorker who brought New York urban swank to the Bay Area. Although it is popular with all the darlings of urban hipness, make no mistake—on any given night you will see lots of lesbians in power suits sipping an understated chardonnay or a silky sauvignon blanc, and munching on a fabulous appetizer or entrée—but you won't be able to order tuna tartar. Busch says, vehemently, “Everyone has tuna tartar on their menus.” Features: weekly and monthly wine flights and a taster's club.

2. Café Barbette, Minneapolis: Barbette serves organic and local products whenever possible—the menu includes Minnesotan artisanal cheeses and eggs from Schultz Organic Farm. Owner Kim Bartmann adds that she “focuses on biodynamic, sustainable and organic farming practices for wine and for food. Customers know that we're serious about environmental issues.” Regarding the growing number of lesbians switching from beer to wine, Bartmann says, “Women are turning toward wine as a ‘healthier’ form of drinking. Especially when women are getting a little older, say, late 30s on. We tend to not be able to get rid of that beer belly quite as easily.” Features: open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

3. Tini Wine Bar, Brooklyn, N.Y.: Located a few blocks from the water, Tini offers mostly European wines—with a few from Oregon making the cut—and a typical wine bar snack menu. Co-owner Leisah Swenson has noticed the growing numbers of lesbian wine-lovers and says it's simple: “Lesbians are stepping up their chic factor in many ways, from their clothing to their palates. Not just the gay boys can lay claim to ultrahipness these days. The girls are knocking it out of the park more often than not on the cool front.” Features: displays and sells local art, giving the artists 100 percent of their revenues.

4. Joie de Vine, Chicago: Owned by Lori Petrushkevich and Sandy Northrup, Joie de Vine earned its popularity through word of mouth—it doesn't even have a website. The bar is unique because “it offers a comfortable environment for sophisticated lesbians,” says Northrup.

MARGO DUANE (CAV)

TANTALIZING NEW TASTES

Since I had my first taste of peppermint schnapps at 16, I have been a fan of booze. Thankfully, as I have matured, my taste in alcohol has, too. I appreciate an aperitif before dinner and now realize you're not actually supposed to chug wine. Fancy, eh? Here is my rundown on the liquor that has hit the market just this year. Tastings were done over ice only. — Colleen M. Lee

Domaine de Canton Ginger Liqueur

Fascinating taste and smell, cognac with a hint of ginger. The bottle weighs a ton, but the taste is light, crisp and fairly aristocratic. Mix into a preprandial cocktail or a light dessert drink.



Pink Fusion Vodka

After opening this bottle of extreme pinkness, I was instantly overwhelmed with the smell of delicious fruit. The taste is just as sweet. But, I have one word of warning for those of you who put your liquor bottles in the freezer—this drink actually freezes. It's a great summer vodka for your pool party or BBQ.

Sake2Me

Comes in four flavors, but the light, sweet Yuzu Citrus is the best (the others are Asian Pear, Ginger Mango and Green Tea). The cute little bottles allow for quick consumption, so be careful. You might drink more than your girlfriend wants you to.

