

Wild Wines Winery offers organic varietals

by Erika Fey

Wild Wines, a sustainable winery in Oregon's Applegate Valley, opened the doors to its new tasting room with food and fanfare on May 25. The unique tasting room of straw bale construction, a hand-carved wood bar and natural accents makes an ideal home for this distinctive winery specializing in seasonally wildcrafted flower and fruit wines. Eleven organic varietals with no added sulphites are available for free tastings, including raspberry, Oregon grape, dandelion, and ginger.

"People are often pleasantly surprised that our wines are dry and not sweet," says Carla David, winemaker and Wild Wines owner. "We ferment and age the wines for up to a year, bringing out their distinct flavors, which are much more interesting and complex than people assume. It's quite remarkable to see people experience their favorite fruits in this new way."

"We hope to offer the public an opportunity to experience something different—an educational and uplifting, diverse farm setting to relax and enjoy a glass of fine quality, unique wine that highlights the broad range of fruit and berries that Oregon is so well-suited to grow," David says.

After several years of practice and experimentation, in 2007 David officially opened Wild Wines. Slowly starting out by selling her wines at farmer's markets and the Ashland Co-Op, her wines are now sold in 23 stores and restaurants throughout the state of Oregon.

The growth of her business over the past six years has been slow and steady. A US Department of Agriculture matching funds grant awarded to Wild Wines last year will help to see the expansion of production from 275 cases a year to 1,000 cases over the next five years.

With the general rise in consciousness about where our food comes from and how it is grown, Wild Wines seems to have found a perfect niche for those seeking a local, ethically harvested and handmade product. At the same time, by focusing on wines made without grapes, Wild Wines' unique varieties offer a novelty and array of unusual flavors sought by wine lovers all over the world.



Hand-carved bar at the wine-tasting room at Wild Wines Winery.



Customers enjoy the newly opened straw-bale wine-tasting room.

Wild Wines is located at 4550 Little Applegate Road, right outside of Ruch, and 20 minutes from downtown Jacksonville. Regular tasting room hours will continue through the season Friday through Sunday, 11 am – 5 pm.

For more information about Wild Wines, visit their website at www.enjoywildwines.com.

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