

FREE ■ 2017-18

DOOR
MART

THE **INDY**'S GUIDE TO
BOOZE & BREWS

(oh, and wine, too)

Wine Finds



Discover deals where you least expect them **By Emily Wallace**

Be it near a gas station or grocery, there's likely a little wine shop around the corner from you in the Triangle—or, at least, a store that stocks really great grapes. With that in mind, we've compiled a range of places to fit your wine needs and perhaps some other essentials, too—from a cart full of groceries to a full-fledged meal, and from a tank of gas to a neatly wrapped gift.

THE GROCERY **Durham Co-op Market**

1111 WEST CHAPEL HILL STREET,
DURHAM, DURHAM.COOP

During campaign season, Bill Clinton made a Co-op stop to ogle the beverage cooler, and with good reason. Under the guidance of beverage director Nick Williams, the Co-op shelves an amazing collection of sustainably produced wines and features more than fifty labels priced between \$5.99 and \$8.99. Sample free pours each week at Winesday (held, you guessed it, on Wednesdays) between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. and purchase glasses for just \$3. Or pick up Nicky's Sixx, a perfectly punned six-pack selected by Williams that will save you between 25 percent and 35 percent. While you're at it, also choose from a case packed with local beers (Clinton went for Ponysaurus).

THE RESTAURANT **Glasshalfull**

106 SOUTH GREENSBORO STREET, CARRBORO
GLASSHALFULLCARRBORO.COM

Make a night of it. At Glasshalfull, in the heart of Carrboro, pair small plates—from standard cheese and charcuterie to North Carolina striped bass or a cauliflower cake—with one of twenty-five bottles of wine, all available by the glass (and all half off on Mondays). Then take the party home. Adjacent to its dining room, Glasshalfull stocks nearly three hundred bottles selected by Michael Klinger and Jim Wald, most with an acidic Old World bent. In addition, all bottles can be purchased at retail price and served in the restaurant with an \$8 corkage fee.

GIFT SHOP **Parker & Otis**

112 SOUTH DUKE STREET, DURHAM
PARKERANDOTIS.COM

Here you'll find hundreds of bottles (including lots of bubbly) and the best collection of greeting cards the Triangle, not to mention bar-related novelties, including a variety of corkscrews and glasses, decorative wine glass favors, a slew of

books (such as *The New California Wine* by Jon Bonné and *The Wild Vine* by Todd Kliman), and wine-scented soy candles handmade in Charleston and cased in refurbished bottles. If shopping wears you down, buy a bottle and stay for a glass—as well as a deviled egg and a scoop of pimento cheese.

THE GAS STATION **Taylor's Wine Shop**

10005 SIX FORKS
ROAD, RALEIGH
TAYLORSWINESHOP.COM

Take the bait. Taylor's Wine Shop isn't a gimmick but rather a reflection of its surrounding community. After Falls Lake was completed in the 1980s, the gas station started stocking lures and live bait. And when folks began building homes in the surrounding area of North Raleigh in the nineties, Taylor's installed a grill to feed construction workers and new residents. The latter also spurred the convenience store to shelve an impressive inventory of wine—from a Dragora Tinto that comes closer to \$500. In summer months, taste various beers and wines at one of Taylor's "Parking Lot Parties," featuring food trucks and live music.

THE WINE SHOP **The Goat**

2000 FEARRINGTON VILLAGE CENTER, PITTSBORO
FEARRINGTON.COM/THE-GOAT

Beyond her post in the Fearington House Restaurant, beverage and service director Paula de Pano (see p. 36) oversees more than 150 wines all under \$35 at The Goat, a wine shop and coffee bar located in the heart of Fearington's sprawling village. On Fridays and Saturdays, find tastings with visiting wine distributors or a Fearington sommelier, and in summer you have the opportunity to carry wines by the glass (or bottle) across to the Roost Beer Garden to enjoy outdoors. The Goat also assists in placing special orders.

Cork Star

Paula de Pano demystifies the life of a sommelier By Emily Wallace

Posted up in a corner of Durham's Fullsteam brewery, Paula de Pano sips a beer, her long dark hair tucked into a teal knit cap. "This is who I am," she says, motioning to the hat and an oversize sweater she wears, implying that she's more relaxed than her role as a sommelier at Fearington Village might suggest. De Pano joined the Relais & Châteaux inn as beverage and service director in September, replacing Maximilian Kast, who led the wine program there for nearly a decade.

"I never aspired to be a sommelier," she says. Her introduction to the profession came in 2007, when she worked in public relations and marketing for a wine bar in her native Philippines. From there, she enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America in New York and, at the suggestion of her teacher, began the intense certification process toward becoming a master sommelier.

"Those who pass the test are instantly recognized among the best in the business," Bianca Bosker once mused in *The New Yorker*, adding that it's "the wine-world version of being knighted, or made in the mob."

De Pano, who holds the second-highest rank as an advanced sommelier, is less grandiose about her status.

"If you like alcohol, you'll be fine," she says.

As the wine steward at Fearington, de Pano oversees about fifteen hundred unique labels of wine, in addition to other beverages. That's why she's at Fullsteam on a Monday afternoon, for a conversation to fine-tune a beer on which the two businesses collaborate. For de Pano, it's a hop, not grape, that might be low hanging.

North Carolina claims a burgeoning beer community. According to the North Carolina Brewers Guild, it has the largest number of craft breweries in the South. By comparison, de Pano admits, "The world in North Carolina of wine is so small." This became strikingly clear when she left an earlier position at Fearington as assistant sommelier to Kast for an illustrious stint at Eleven Madison Park in New York City, where the drink menu requires a table of contents for its 189 pages.

Beyond bottles, of course, there was also a much larger wine community there (including fourteen master sommeliers to North Carolina's one: Fred Dexheimer at Raleigh's Standard Foods). The smaller wine community in North Carolina is partially the result of alcohol laws that limit access to many goods. But this is also, as de Pano puts it, due to "perspective and priority."

"Some people will spend

sixty dollars on a shot of whiskey," she says. "That's a really good bottle of wine."

In her role as beverage director, de Pano works to make deft pairings and suggestions, but she also seeks to meet guests where they are and make them feel comfortable. If someone wants a glass of wine similar to the Yellow Tail or Kendall Jackson, she honors that request.

"Drink what you like to drink," de Pano advises. She suggests being as clear as possible with sommeliers or wine shop owners when describing the flavors or characteristics of a wine that you prefer.

"While we all—at least I try to think that way—want to make sure you enjoy your purchase, we are not mind readers," she says.

She also refuses to open bottles tableside, as she is determined to taste each wine and ensure its quality. "I refuse to give a bad wine to anyone," she says. But being a sommelier, de Pano explains, "is not just about wine. It's foremost about service. How do my guests feel?"

Put another way, she believes it's about "taking care of other human beings."

PAULA DE PANO PHOTO BY ALEX BOERNER

