

A Place Where Wine and Beer Are Co-Stars

Beer and wine get equal treatment at Bottle & Bine, a three-week-old spot in Midtown




Beer Curator Carolyn Pincus, left, and Wine Director Gina Goyette at Bottle & Bine in Midtown East, a three-week-old bar and restaurant that focuses equally on beer and wine. PHOTO: ANDREW LAMBERSON FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



By **LETTIE TEAGUE**

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There are beer bars and there are wine bars and rarely do the two coexist. Now, there is Bottle & Bine in Manhattan’s Midtown East. This three-week-old bar and restaurant is equal parts grapes and hops—“bine” refers to the stem of a hops plant.

It is a bar where “you can get a good glass of wine and you can also watch the Bruins play,” explained Gina Goyette, the restaurant’s wine director, on the evening I stopped by.

It was still early when I arrived and the bar was empty, although Ms. Goyette assured me the restaurant and bar had been filled every night with a mix of curious locals, wine industry friends and customers of other bars owned by Bottle & Bine proprietor Dennis Keane.

Mr. Keane knew how to attract a beer crowd, said Ms. Goyette, but wine was something new to him. Two of his other bars—Cornerstone Tavern and the Stag’s Head, both in Midtown East—are more beer-oriented. The Stag’s Head focuses on locally sourced craft beer, serving more than 50 kinds by the bottle and more than a dozen brews on tap.

The 33-year-old Ms. Goyette has been a sommelier at several top New York restaurants including the Dutch, Lafayette and Jean Georges. At Bottle & Bine, Ms. Goyette decided to focus on American wines and “wines that have influenced American winemaking” to match the modern American menu created by chef Angie Barry. The dinner menu is available in the dining room upstairs and the bar downstairs. There will be a bar menu and lunch menu early next year.

‘We want beer and wine on the same tasting menu instead of all beer or all wine.’

—Gina Goyette, Bottle & Bine’s wine director

There are 120 wines by the bottle, 17 wines by the glass as well as 16 beers on tap, and there will be more of both in the next several months. Ms. Goyette’s criteria for wine selection required that the wine not only be “delicious above all” but also accessible to someone “who has never

been to a wine bar.” That meant choosing familiar grapes like Sauvignon Blanc but from lesser known regions such as Long Island’s North Fork or the Finger Lakes in central New York. (She is a big fan of New York state wines, particularly from the Finger Lakes.)

Ms. Goyette faced an unusual challenge when it came to choosing the wines: She was pregnant. “I did a lot of spitting,” Ms. Goyette recalled with a laugh. (Her due date is now about three months away.) There were a few other pregnancy-related challenges as well. For example, Ms. Goyette found that her perception of acid was off sometimes and that detecting minerality was an occasional challenge. “Everything can become extreme when you’re pregnant,” she noted.

Her next challenge will be to create a wine- and beer-pairing menu in conjunction with Bottle & Bine’s beer curator, Carolyn Pincus. “We want beer and wine on the same tasting menu instead of all beer or all wine,” Ms. Goyette explained, noting there will be either three wines and two beers or three beers and two wines, depending on the food.

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Ms. Pincus, who also serves as the beer curator for Mr. Keane's other bars, plans to select beers that she called "complementary to wine" for the tasting menus. For example, she might choose

a beer made with a Champagne yeast or a beer aged in a wine barrel.

But was it such a good idea to put beer and wine together? I asked. I'd always heard that the worst kind of hangover came from drinking a combination of wine and beer.

"I have heard that," Ms. Pincus replied, "But I don't think it's true. I think the worst kind of hangovers are when you have too much beer or too much wine."

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