

## UNCORKED

Tips for wine tasting



**1 Swirl:** Moving the wine around in the glass helps intensify the aroma.



**2 Smell:** Stick your nose right into the glass; don't be shy. What does the aroma remind you of?



**3 Taste:** Hold the wine in your mouth for at least five seconds to savor all the nuances of taste.

# Swirl, sip and savor

Weekly tastings help wine shops educate customers—and sell bottles



...in a quiet, familiar or local, but these they can usually do on people standing in a back corner, talking and smiling over their small plastic cups.

In front of this group of young men and women is a plain table topped with 10 rows of wine bottles, five rows of whites and five rows of reds, all free for the sampling. Some of these folks have been coming here for years, a few may bring their own wine glasses.

For Bill, the proprietor of Chicago, the usefulness of the Saturday tastings is obvious.

"Well, you can drink better wine this way," Bill says, and, holding up a couple of white wine



**Bill Duley**  
owns local and some regional

...in employee in wine shops and specialty restaurants throughout the Chicago area. Wine tastings, classes and seminars are held regularly. These programs range from five and 10-minute sips to a full afternoon and sip whatever is being paired to formal, focused, in-depth sessions where an absolute price is charged.

Attendees get a chance to meet up with old friends, maybe make new ones, sample and learn about wines that might be interesting and, perhaps, buy a bottle or two to take home.

"I think it's an excellent avenue to stay tuned to what's happening," said Mike Baker, Wine Consultant Center's general manager. "It's a way for customers to see us top of the trends."

One such customer is Brian Andrews of Chicago. This four-year veteran of Wine Consultant Center has just met through sampling to like French's whites along with the red. And, he has never forgotten an "awesome" first encounter with a red wine from Italy.

"Wine shops treasure the opportunity to introduce new wine to customers. Exposure is key."

"A \$30 bottle of Spanish wine needs some coaxing," observed Philip Paul, a Wine Consultant Center staffer, pointing to a 2003 Arturo Venereo Saca Cava de Artisanal, a granado used as part of the day's tasting.

Mike Maricich, co-owner of The Twisted Vine

**4 See:** Wine is more than just something to drink. It can be a key to its variety, age and condition.

Tribune photos by Bob Fila  
Hand-blown crystal wine glasses by Bottega del Vino