

Wine and Beer Boutique opens in Mumbai

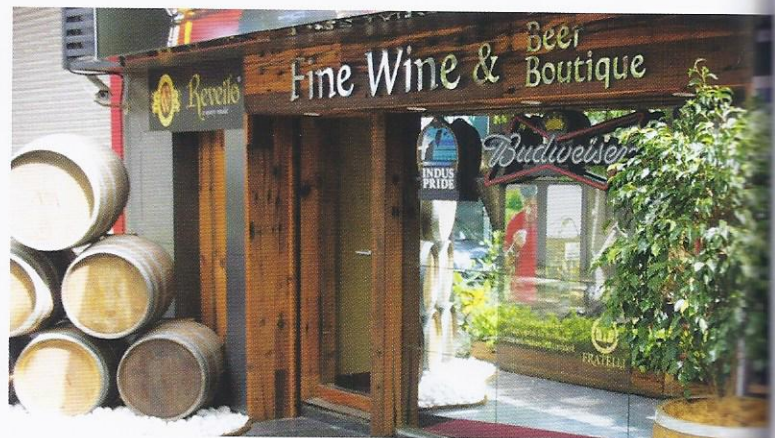
‘Come on over right now!’ said the heavily accented, loud and cheerful voice of Craig Wedge, CEO FineWinesnMore, when I called to ask about their newly opened fine wines and beer boutique. The soggy monsoon weather couldn’t stop me from travelling halfway across Mumbai to check out the first of its kind swanky wine retail store and tasting room.

Tucked away two lanes behind the busy main road might be considered a deterrent to visit a wine retail store, but as Craig explains, the number of foot falls they receive in a day from just the regular office goers of the well-known Laxmi Industrial Estate in Andheri (West) itself is amazing.

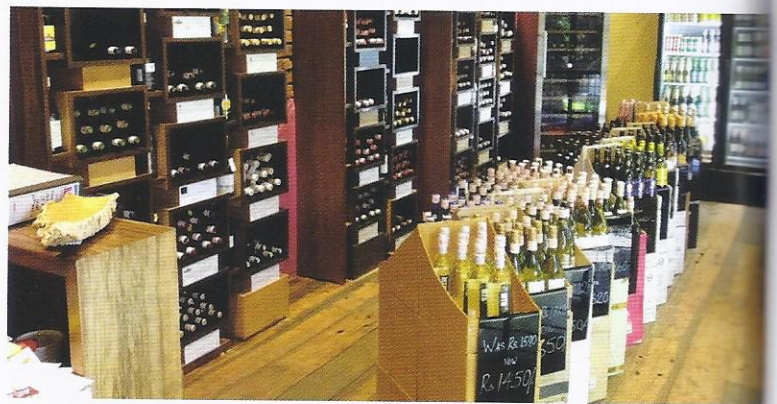
The retail outlet is a charming place with wine trivia, accessories and handwritten notes scattered around the simple but tasteful interiors. The cartons placed on the rustic wooden floor act as storage as well as a wine display offering good discounts to potential shoppers. The store currently has 145 wine labels and a refrigerator full of 28 of the most exotic beer brands from India and abroad. Fifty per cent of these brands are the company’s own imports and the rest are from different importers and distributors.

Apart from wine and beer you can also purchase wine accessories and related products like Riedel glassware and temperature controlled wine cellars for your home. Said Craig, “As a company we consider it our responsibility to deliver the wines in optimum condition to the consumer, from the time they leave the winery. It is very easy for things to go wrong at any point in the supply chain. Therefore, was a conscious decision to bridge the gap and directly reach out to the consumer, hence the introduction of the retail store.”

Craig is also very passionate about the “try before you buy” concept as well as wine education and awareness in general. The Tasting Room adjoining the boutique was added keeping in mind a calendar full of tasting opportunities throughout the year. The beautiful wooden table in the centre of the room can accommodate 15 to 18 people comfortably. An amalgamation of all the tasting rooms that Craig has visited around the world, this one recreates the feeling of a friendly wine cellar. One can almost visualise gatherings of fellow oenophiles, office-goers after work



Above: Exterior of Fine Wine & Beer Boutique in Andheri (West). Below: Attractive display of international and Indian wines on the shop floor



or socialites engaged in animated conversation over the sound of clinking glasses!

A LED display converts the room into an informal classroom for F&B students and corporate workshops for wine and cheese tastings besides providing a comfortable venue for meeting wine partners and overseas visitors wishing to showcase their wines. This, until now, was limited to upscale hotels and wine friendly restaurants only. ❖

— Suneeta Sodhi Kanga

HOW TO GET THERE

Fine Wine & Beer Boutique and Tasting Room
21-L&M, Laxmi Industrial Estate, Off New Link Road,
Andheri (West), Mumbai 400053. T 022 40330044
Opening hours 10.30 am to 10 pm