

## WHAT'S IN A DAME : Give me one glass of studly

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Would you prefer a glass of white, red, blush, feminine or macho ?

Don't be surprised if those are the options presented at the next dinner party you attend.

Last year, several wine manufacturers marketed special wines for women. Perhaps the biggest splash was made by Beringer, who unveiled the lower-alcohol — translated: lower-calorie — White Lie. Other womanly wines like Rainier's Mad Housewife, O'Brien Family Vineyards Seduction (which wears a big "O" and comes in a sexy lingerie-like bag), and Olympic Cellars' line of screw-capped Working Girl Wines (with cutesy names like Rose the Riveter. Get it ?) have since poured into liquor stores.

Well, no more tears in your beers, gentlemen. You no longer have to feel left out of the pandering.

Ray's Station, a Sonoma County vineyard, has introduced "Hearty Red Wines for Men" in merlot and cabernet varieties, priced about \$ 15 (which is quite a bit more than a bottle of girlie White Lie, which goes for \$ 10. 39 at Popatop in Little Rock). Ah well, men make more than we do. They can afford it.

What exactly does a manly wine taste like ? Sweat with a testosterone finish ? Gasoline with notes of biker leather and deer rub ? Old Spice with complex chewing tobacco, tattoo ink, caveman and locker-room aromas ? No, apparently it tastes like wine. Bold, burly, muscular, rugged, strong, brawny, studly wine. Ugg a ugg a.

I've not located the macho wine in central Arkansas, so I must depend on an Associated Press story that says "the wines are packaged simply with a label bearing the outline of a galloping stallion. The accompanying tongue-in-stubbed-cheek ad campaign features the winery's namesake, Sonoma County pioneer John G. Ray, and such masculine pursuits as fishing and hunting."

Talk about some cheese with your wine.

Do we, as a culture, really need our beverages to be labeled like rest rooms ? Are we so uneducated and

so under-confident about what we like that we need manufacturers to lead us by the hand ? Are we really so simple and stereotypical ?

Um, yeah. Talk about dough with your wine. It seems like this sex-specific marketing might be helping brands stand out in a crowded, confusing marketplace, at least in the case of chick wines. ACNielsen supermarket data on eight wines aimed at women accounted for \$ 10 million of the approximately \$ 8 billion in wine sales for the year ended Feb. 11. You can bet that winemakers are drinking to that. Pour an e-mail to:

[jchristman@arkansasonline.com](mailto:jchristman@arkansasonline.com) What's in Dame is a weekly report from the woman 'hood.

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