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DRINK

Off the vine

River City Wine Week celebrates the bounty of craft and boutique wines grown throughout the Sacramento region and beyond

BY JAMES RAIA

Carrie Boyle has two decades of wine industry experience—teacher to vintner, broker to global wholesale representative. Now she’s undertaken another task as co-founder of the inaugural River City Wine Week.

“We kept having that conversation,” says Boyle, who works from a home office in Antelope. “Nobody is doing this? We are going to do it.”

More the 35 wineries, as well as several restaurants and specialty wine-related businesses from throughout the Sacramento region, will be participating in the event. It begins Aug. 5 with a preamble, two days before the official start—a Sacramento River cruise exploring the wines of Clarksburg that will be held through the week. The debut kaleidoscope of wine ends Aug. 11 with four events, including wine tasting in a barn in Plymouth.

“It’s all about getting the conversation started again about wine,” Boyle says. “It’s getting restaurants excited to introduce new things to the community. I think there’s been so much attention placed on other things—beer and craft cocktails—that sometimes wine lists might not get as much play.”

While major wineries in the region get notoriety, boutique locales often have difficulty getting exposure. The Pop & Pour event, scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. at CLARA auditorium in Midtown will address that concern.

“Smaller wineries are at a disadvantage,” says Boyles of the more than 1,000 wineries within a two-hour drive from Sacramento. “It’s a great way to showcase boutique, handmade, artisanal wine that people may not ever have a chance to try in a restaurant.”

A portion of the proceeds from Pop & Pure will benefit WellSpace Health, a system of community health centers that provide primary care, dental health and behavioral health services in Sacramento, Placer and Amador counties. Rio City Cafe’s wine flights, a Summer Sangiovese Pairing and a three-course dinner and wine pairing at The Waterboy are among the 27 events scheduled.

Sara Arbabian, owner of The Rind and La Crosta, will also participate and calls it a “wonderful opportunity to highlight wine with the bounty we have in Sacramento.”

“For us, it’s a time to highlight our relationships with winemakers and distributors, and have fun with exciting wine flights and dinner and cheese pairings,” she said.

Boyle believes the diverse offerings will accentuate that Sacramento is in the middle of wine country and a wine destination. □

For a complete schedule of events during River City Wine Week, visit rivercitywineweek.com.

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