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What To Drink Now: Red Mare Wine

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RED MARE

CABERNET SAUVIGNON
NAPA VALLEY
2010

ALC. 14.5% BY VOL.

One of many great things about our city is our love of wine. Texans are some of the highest consumers of wine in the country, with Dallas as one of the top wine loving communities in the state. We love wine. We love big flavors – everything from big, juicy grilled steaks to refined raw sushi, and go out of our way to celebrate both (and everything in-between) with wine favorites and up and coming options.

It is no wonder that so many Texans dream of making wine, with many taking the leap and stepping into the wonderful world of wine either simply as enthusiasts that buy a barrel of pre-selected juice ready to be bottled and labeled with a local's logo, to the truly adventurous that become savvy wine entrepreneurs, buying vineyards from regions locally to internationally to make wine under their own label. Within the past handful of years Dallas has seen great development of our local wineries, producing wine within the city from grapes grown both throughout Texas as well as the world, like **Fuqua, Calais, Times Ten Cellars** and **Oak Cliff Cellars**, to those that have made the leap and developed wineries in specific Oregon and California AVA's like **Siduri & Novy, Merriman, Hall, Coquerel** and **Red Mare**. I had a chance to sit down with the majority owner of [Red Mare Wines](#), Jim Striegel, recently to learn a little more about his wines and get a feel for how this Dallas real estate broker decided to open a winery in Napa Valley.

Passion plays a huge part of any story dealing with wine. The passion is what drives anyone in the wine business, as the logistics, financial responsibility and having to completely forfeit control to Mother Nature will stress even the most rational to hysteria within a winery. But, when all the elements come together from vine to glass, winery owners and makers learn the joy of creating something truly special.

Passion is the basic element that drove Jim Striegel to create Red Mare in 2003, after being a part of the Napa Valley community for many years. Frequent visits to the area as it was in the midst of growth made this Dallas resident, born and raised in the Mid-West from parents of Italian heritage who made wine in the basement, know he would one day want a wine of his own. His visits to California allowed friendships to be built, along with increased interest in the business behind owning a winery. As was evident when we spoke, Striegel calls many of Napa Valley elite friends, giving him the ability to learn the ins and outs of the business from the best, and call on these individuals anytime he needed help in getting started.

His first call was to Heidi Barret, asking if she would be the winemaker for this new project he was developing. Unfortunately her plate was full, and instead she referred him to Anne Vawter, her consultancy partner on several projects, including as assistant winemaker at Paradigm under Heidi. In turn Anne became winemaker and partner within Red Mare. How did the name then come about? Anne had received a Red Mare as a gift early on in her wine making career at Paradigm. Her love of the horse, the wine and the legacy made the name an easy fit.

Still small, their Napa Valley production is focused on Sauvignon Blanc, made in the Bordeaux style aging the wine for a short period of time in oak to add richness and texture, along with a California style Chardonnay, produced from sourced 40+ year vines from Russian River, aged in 50% new, 100% French oak for 10 months with citrus, apple and oak on the palate, and classic Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley's most loved red aged 20 months and filled with layers of cherry, cassis and leather.

The goal for all of these wines to create something approachable price wise and palate wise, making wine that you could drink every day and on the special occasion. Though production is still small, it is often only found on wine lists throughout Dallas, including Capital Grille and Fearing's; [Sigel's](#) and [Pogo's](#) also keep a selection on hand.