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Wine Fritz™ Tool: A New Twist on Screw Caps

By 2014, 75% of wines in the U.S. will be sealed with screw caps, according to the New York Times. Screw caps protect the wine far better than corks, which allow up to 15% of wines bottled with them to be tainted, based on a screw cap closure study done by Hogue Cellars. Yet many people still think all screw cap wines are inferior.

While embraced in other parts of the world such as Australia and New Zealand where they are the norm, screw caps have an image problem in America. The new **Wine Fritz™** tool is going to solve it.

Keystone, Colorado restaurant owners Tom and Shari Scholten are very familiar with the screw cap issue. Customers' negative or ignorant perceptions about screw cap wine threatened to have an impact on their business. Their challenge was two-fold: convincing customers that wines sealed with a screw cap were of high quality, and preserving the tableside ceremony of popping the wine cork, a time-honored tradition for millions of restaurant diners.

Former corporate executives – Tom, a telecom guru and Shari, a new-products whiz for the telecom industry – spent the next year researching the issue. They interviewed fellow restaurateurs, sommeliers and wait staff at restaurants around the country, asking them about customer perceptions of screw caps. The responses were almost unanimously negative. Not only did diners associate screw caps with cheap wine, but they also felt the lack of presentation when the cap was unscrewed detracted from the dining experience. This led to awkwardness on the part of the restaurant staff in presenting the wine, and reluctance to recommend screw cap wines to their customers. In other words, a service protocol dilemma.

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With the popularity of screw cap wines on the rise, Tom and Shari saw the opportunity to help both wine consumers and their business. They teamed with a design engineer and food and wine lover to create Wine Fritz™ tool, a simple, attractive solution to the screw cap's image problem.

The Wine Fritz™ tool does for screw caps what the corkscrew does for wine. It celebrates the opening of the bottle and adds a bit of formality and anticipation. Elegant in its simplicity, this simple tool makes screw-capped wines as romantic and sophisticated as their corked cousins. And, left on top of the bottle, the Wine Fritz™ tool not only enhances the screw cap, it becomes as much a topic of conversation as the wine itself.

Using the tool is easy – simply slip it over the screw cap. The patented grooved mechanism inside the tool grabs the screw cap with its teeth creating a distinctive sound. When the presenter makes the turn with the tool, the cap is contained in the Wine Fritz™ tool cavity. The cap is easily extracted with a simple thumb motion or the tool can remain on the wine bottle.

“The Wine Fritz™ tool grew out of our passion for food, wine, skiing and the European mountain lifestyle,” says Shari, whose maiden name is Fritz. “Tom and I own and operate Fritz Alpine Bistro in the heart of Keystone Ski Resort, and we’re finding more and more screw cap wines that we love. This is a way for us to introduce those wines to our customers in a way that will interest them and make them feel comfortable.”

“Many of our customers have become personal friends, and they’ve traveled to places like New Zealand, where screw caps have really caught on,” adds Tom. “We believe the Wine Fritz™ tool will help the American consumer market embrace screw caps as well.”

For more information on the Wine Fritz™ tool, visit www.winefritz.com or order it by calling 1-866-374-8948 (1-866-FRITZIT). The retail price is \$39.95.

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