



December 2008

Issue: 2

## Season's Greetings from the Fermenter's Guild

Dear Haey,

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of the Guild Newsletter. As promised we're committed to keeping in touch so we hope you find the following information to be useful. Enjoy!

## Boosting Your Customer's Experience

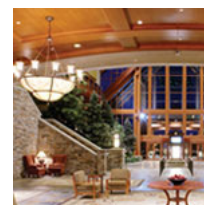
Let's take a look in your store to see how you can improve your customer's overall experience. This is a sure way to assure loyalty and will gain you a competitive edge in your market.

Two things come to mind.

First, be respectful, courteous and friendly. Try not to be clingy or obtrusive and always remain genuine and sincere. It doesn't hurt to take a personal interest in your customers. The simple topics are easy. Weather, the last election, children or the status of an ailing relative. **You should never discuss politics or religion. It could be the road to disaster.**

We live in a time where interpersonal relationship is slipping away. In this age of big box stores where price and selection are king, customer service is being lost. Canadians rush through life making ends meet, multi-tasking, overachieving and end up feeling lost in the shuffle. Slow them down. Make the experience in your store a personal one. Make it pleasant and engaging and you will stand out from both rivals and your community's business climate.

Don't ever forget. You're not selling only wine and beer, you're selling service, relationships and lifestyle. Make your customer think they matter to you. Greet them by name when they step in to your store. As a business owner you must also ensure that your



## 2009 FGBC Conference Update

We're quickly moving ahead with plans for the 2009 FGBC Conference. As you know the event is scheduled for Saturday March 7th (evening only) through Monday March 9th at the River Rock Casino Resort.

This year's trade show on Sunday March 8th will have a little twist.

Mini-semiars will be presented during the course of the day with breaks in between so you can browse supplier's

staff are walking the same walk.

Leadership starts at the top. When you make a hiring decision, pick a 'people' person and pay them well. If they are the face of your store they will draw loyalty and that will pay you with better sales. Consider higher wages as an advertising expense. Great employees are hard to come by. Particularly the ones that take an interest in your customers lives. Customers that feel appreciated and will love coming into your store. Best of all, they'll bring their friends.

Remember, you must be sincere in your commitment to your customer. If you get it right, it will pay off.

As for the second thought...well you'll just have to look for the next newsletter. If you would like to pursue this concept feel free to contact me. I'd be happy to share ideas with you.

**Jim Mullen**  
**info@cariboubrewmasters.com**

## Graceful Aging

### The Simple



### Cellar

Cellaring your wines and building your collection offers the opportunity to enjoy a lifestyle with great wine to enjoy all the time. Buying younger, less expensive wines and aging them is a great investment. It is easy to save money and increase your enjoyment of your wines by having your own "cellar". Just a few *months* can make a huge difference in the flavour of a wine.

#### Ideal:

Most experts recommend an average temperature of 7-13 C (45-55F) for all wine storage. Cooler temperatures won't damage your wine but will slow its development. A temperature of 18C (65F) degrees will have a negative effect on wine the longer it's stored. Ideal humidity should be 60-70% but anything over 50% is acceptable. These humidity levels keep moisture in the bottle by preventing evaporation through the cork. High humidity, 80% or more, may cause mold to form on corks and bottles. Ideal long term storage should avoid heat, direct light and vibration. That makes the best location for a cellar below ground in the basement. There the temperature will be cooler and typically more humid. A corner with two exterior walls facing north and east and free of windows is ideal.

#### Reality:

Okay, so you lack the perfect storage. No problem...move over

booths. It will be a full and informative day.



We're pleased to inform you that Dave Larocque of Wineculture will be our key-note speaker on Monday as well as our host for Sunday's Gala Dinner Event.

Dave has presented at our conference in the past and is expert at pairing wine with food.

His enthusiasm for all things food and wine is infectious and worth seeing so look for more details of his seminar topic in upcoming newsletters and emails.

Full details of the conference agenda and presenters will be sent in the New Year once all the details have been confirmed. Room bookings should be made by Jan 31st to get the reduced FGBC rate.

Stay tuned.

## Magazine Subscriptions

**Did you know that one of the many benefits of FGBC membership is subscriptions to the the following magazines:**

**'Wine Access'**  
**&**  
**'Winemaker Magazine'**

shoes and boots. A wine cellar may be as simple as a few boxes stashed in a closet. Wine rack size can be made to any dimension. It is important, however, when using 'imperfect' wine storage to take into account the main enemies of successful aging. General rules of thumb for cellaring wine are to pick a location which will give you best conditions as discussed earlier and a **stable** temperature. **Consistent as opposed to exact conditions mature wine best.** Wine storage can be done safely in temperatures barely above freezing up to about 21C (70F). Wine matures at a faster rate at higher temperatures. Keep the bottles stored so that any bottles with natural cork stays moist (in other words lay the bottles on their sides) and ensure the area is free from other items that have a strong odour, like cleaning supplies or bags of garlic. By taking care of your wines you'll ensure that they taste their best when you are ready to drink and you won't lose any bottles unnecessarily to spoilage.

*'The Simple Cellar' is a series written by wine enthusiast Dan Dyle from the Fermenter's Guild of British Columbia. If you chose to share this article all that is asked is that you acknowledge its source. For free digital copies in 'Word' format, contact Dan at Westviewubrew@yahoo.ca.*

## Credit Card Increase - Update

Over the past several months there has been much press about the issues surrounding the charges banks are currently and planning to charge for Visa, MasterCard and Interac fees. Up until last year, depending upon which association you have chosen to leverage the best rates (CFIB, CRFA, Chamber of Commerce plus others), typical visa/MasterCard rates were approx 1.7%, interac fees were \$.07 per transaction and rental fee for the terminal were approx \$30 per month. Today, and into the future, we are all facing a far more complicated rate schedule with such things as qualified transactions, non - qualified transactions, HIGH SPENDER cards, Corp cards and the introduction of rate charges on interac transactions. There is no way at this point in time to calculate the exact impact this will have on the bottom line of u-vin and u-brew operators in BC. Suffice it to say, we can expect an increase in our bank charges impacting us by the thousands, not hundreds of dollars.

Under the current directions of the big banks here are some examples of the changes we face. Today, if one of your customers pays for their beer or wine using a corporate card, there will be an up-lift on your base rate as much as 1%. Very soon, we will be faced with what the industry calls HIGH SPENDER cards, where the rate charged will be dependent on the amount of money owed by the purchaser based on their line of credit at the time. A customer purchasing a batch in your store on Monday (normal transaction 1.70%) could return on Friday, after making larger purchases in other stores, purchase another batch and you would

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**If you would like to receive**

**'Brew Your Own' magazine**

**Let Haely know at any time.**

Email Haely at the FGBC office at [info@fermentersguild.com](mailto:info@fermentersguild.com)

**Would you like a voice in the FGBC Newsletter?**

**We'd love to hear from you!**

We want your articles, recipes, tips or even a great story about your operation.

Submit them to Haely at the FGBC office at [info@fermentersguild.com](mailto:info@fermentersguild.com)

be charged not 1.7% but some higher percentage because he/she is using more of his/her line of credit. Also, in the works, interest charges on interact.

Organizations like the CRFA (of which we are all members through the FGBC), CFIB and the Retail Council of Canada are actively lobbying the government on behalf of all retailers. The position these associations are taking with the government is that banks are offering special privileges to cardholders, who cost the bank money, and re-cooping the cost for introducing those special features by charging the small retailer.

I would encourage all members of the FGBC to read the attached position papers (links below) being taken by organizations like the CRFA, CFIB and the Retail Council of Canada. Along with members of your local community get on-line, register your complaint and contact your local MP.

Let me know your thoughts.

Cheers and good selling!

Roger Doull  
President FGBC

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