

FROM WINE TASTING TO WEED TASTING

Why THC-infused beverages deserve a serious and proper place in our fridges.

I've written for and about wine and the industry for nearly 10 years, so I'm no stranger to the wine-weed "conundrum." With the widespread state-legalization of recreational marijuana and the sheer creative plethora of cannabis-related products available to us, does being canna-curious mean we still can't be wine enthusiasts? On the business side, do these products divert consumers away from wine?

Specific to my experimentation with just a short list of THC-infused beverages (page 17), I can say from my experience the joy is in the alternative. An alternative taste. An alternative occasion. An alternative high.

In my eyes, there's a myriad of positives to drinking these products. I'm not going to lie, the first for me is calories. These are low- (and in some cases no-) calorie beverages that don't break the diet plan. And as a former fitness professional, it's safe to assume there is always a diet

plan. This lack-of-calorie situation is predominantly due to the fact that there is no alcohol or sugars. Alcohol equates to seven calories per gram. Carbs, four calories per gram. So, these beverages are reasonable options for those watching their intake of either.

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The lack of pretentiousness surrounding these products is another highlight for me. Speaking to the producers of these products, each actually recommended creating cocktails with their drinks. Herbacée cans even have a QR code that will lead you to specific recipes if you're canna-cocktail curious but not a confident mixologist. When was the last time it was OK to put ice in your wine glass or dilute it

with sparkling water (in public anyway)? Some "serious" wine drinkers wag a finger at this behavior, making those who may want an *alternative* experience feel they do not have a place in the wine world.

Still, for me, these drinks are no replacement for a classic cocktail or my favorite local, small-batch wines. And I'm not about to exchange my DipWSET for a Ganjier title. But in the spirit of having an available alternative, I can say that I now save space in my cellar and fridge for a few cannabis products.



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Stacy Briscoe is Senior Editor, Print at *Wine Enthusiast*. She enjoys vodka on the rocks, the many personalities of Riesling, cool-climate Syrahs and now, the House of Saka "rosier" with a splash of bubbly water.
