

Wine Friendly Restaurants

We are always talking about all sorts of different wines on Wine of the Week, but it's tough to taste a bunch of wine at any given time... so I thought it would be fun to talk about some of the wine-centric restaurants in and around town that offer tasting flights that give dinners a chance to sample small tastes of different wines.

Grapeseed in **Bethesda, Maryland** has an impressive menu that boasts almost 100 wines by the glass. What I love is that you can get both full-glass pours or half-size "tastes." They also have an extensive wine list with over 250 choices from around the wine world.

Blue Duck Tavern in the **West End neighborhood of Washington, DC** takes a very customized approach to their wine pairing program. They offer an "improvised" pairing where the servers gauge the interest (i.e. number of courses) and preferences (adventuresome or not) of each dinner and put a menu together on the spot. Typically, the pairings are organized according to the progression of the meal, from appetizers to main course, and then dessert. With almost 30 by-the-glass pours, there is something for everyone at the table. In addition, the staff can do either full glasses of wine to accommodate shorter menus, or half-pours or "tasting-size" for diners taking the long road.

Proof in the **Penn Quarter of Washington, DC** draws a wine-savvy crowd to its sophisticated bar, where their extensive wines by the glass program includes 16 whites and 16 reds, all dispensed by a stylish stainless steel "Enomatic" machine from Italy. Each bottle is kept at the perfect temperature in a glass-enclosed display. Inert gas is pumped into each bottle, ensuring that every two, five or eight ounce pour is kept as fresh as when the wine was opened.

Tallula Restaurant in **Arlington, VA** is known for their ever-changing assortment of 400-plus eclectic wines, with over 60 labels available by-the-glass. Best of all, if you fall in love with a wine at dinner, head next door to the adjoining retail wine store, **Planet Wine**, where many of the wines on the restaurant's menu are available for sale.

If you really want to have some fun, don't miss the Third Annual **Taste Around Town** which will include DC's favorite restaurants and wine bars from March 24th - April 6th, 2014 and will feature great wines from Spain, Argentina, and the Rhone Valley. Wines will be featured in flights, pairing menus, by the glass or by the bottle for lunch and/or dinner, exclusively available during Taste Around Town. Be sure to request the Taste Around Town wine list from your server or bartender when you visit each participating restaurant or wine bar.

Join me at **Veritas** on March 18th from 6:00 – 8:00 pm for the **Taste Around Town launch party**. Veritas is located at 2031 Florida Avenue NW, Washington, DC. Tickets are \$40, but **WTOP listeners get a 30% discount** when you buy your tickets online at www.bottlenotes.com/taste, click on DC and enter the promo code THEVINEGUY. Or go to WTOP radio and look for the link <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/taste-around-town-2014-dc-launch-party-tickets-10662629211?discount=THEVINEGUY>