



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2007

FOR INFORMATION..... Allison or Scott Helfen, 425.271.4501

Online..... www.thewinealley.com

**The Wine Alley Launches Online Store,
Expands Selection, Continues Free Delivery**

RENTON, Wash. (Aug. 8, 2007) -- For wine enthusiasts who prefer to spend time sipping rather than sitting in traffic and who would rather spend their hard-earned dollars discovering new wines instead of filling their gas tanks, The Wine Alley's new online store offers a trio of benefits: a big selection, convenient, point-and-click shopping, and complimentary delivery service in the tri-county area.

Local residents and wine lovers Allison and Scott Helfen launched the online option as an extension of the focus on customer service that's been an integral part of their business since it opened in the Fairwood Shopping Center in Renton on April 29, 2005.

Coinciding with the debut of the online store (believed to be one of the few such offerings in the region), The Wine Alley expanded its offerings by more than 100 labels, bringing the selection to approximately 600 wines, sparkling wines and dessert wines, with new items added daily.

Allison Helfen notes some retailers may offer more bottles, but emphasizes The Wine Alley's selection is carefully chosen among highly rated varietals that includes new and exciting labels as well limited editions, collectibles and a variety of formats. Among some of the more popular and sought-after labels they offer are Diamond Creek, Beau Vigne, Leonetti, Pride, Long Shadows, Fidelitas and Billecart Salmon.

Quick Facts: The Wine Alley

Location..... 14276 SE 176th St, Renton
(Fairwood Shopping Center)
Phone.....425.271-4501
Website, online shopping..... www.thewinealley.com
Store Hours Tues-Wed 10 am-6:30 pm
..... Thurs-Fri 10 am – 7:30 pm
..... Sat 10 am -5:30 pm
..... Sun-Mon-Holidays – closed
Formal TastingsThurs, 5-7 pm
Informal TastingsFri 5-7 p.m., Sat noon-5 p.m.

In addition to specializing in fine wines from the Pacific Northwest and from around the world, the store features unique beers, a variety of specialty foods (including a cheese collection) and a appealing array of accessories, gifts and hand-crafted novelty items.

Three weekly tastings, a corporate wine program, a “fill your cellar” program, quantity discounts, a free weekly e-newsletter with “hot bargains,” “new arrivals” and tasting news, and a wine club are among The Wine Alley's special offerings. The store owners also provide special orders services with no minimums. Along with free delivery in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties, The Wine Alley ships out of state, where allowed by law.

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14276 SE 176th Street • Renton WA 98058 • P: 425.271.4501 • F: 425.271.4502
www.thewinealley.com

The weekly events include formal tastings on Thursday evenings that feature a flight of four or five wines from a winery or region and two informal tastings (one on Friday evenings and another one on Saturday afternoons). The twice-weekly informal tastings are complimentary. A \$10 fee is charged to non-wine club members for the formal tasting events. The formal tastings – often featuring appearances by winemakers, winery owners or other special guests -- include complimentary cheeses, crackers, salami and chocolate.

In a nod to store mascots Maggie and Mac (a pair of golden retrievers), the owners even feature a selection of wines “especially for animal lovers.” Citing research by ACNielsen, a marketing information company, Allison Helfen said most "critter" wines, as they’re known in the industry, are priced between \$8 and \$19. Last year, annual sales of wines with animal labels or names topped \$600 million. Not only are “critter labels” memorable and approachable, many are also very affordable and drinkable, Helfen remarked.

The Helfens are longtime wine enthusiasts who hone their expertise through research and both ongoing informal and formal education. They live in Woodside, a nearby Fairwood neighborhood.

Allison Helfen grew up in Snohomish and is a graduate of Washington State University’s highly acclaimed hotel/restaurant administration program. Her prior experience includes 20 years in the hotel industry. Husband Scott was raised in Indiana and is a graduate of Purdue University where he majored in computer programming.

Asked about abandoning their successful careers to become entrepreneurs, the couple agree it was an easy decision. “Being the wine lovers that we are and living in such a great state that produces some of the world’s best wine, we decided to bring those wines to our neighbors,” Scott Helfen explains.

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