

Best of The Poop

Exposé: The Shame of the Wine Industry

While we usually like to keep the tone of the Poop positive and light-hearted, we've got to come clean. We can no longer live with the immense, stinking skeleton that lurks within the closet of our industry.

It is our sad duty to shed the harsh, critical, and tongue-clucking light of scrutiny upon a particularly hideous practice that occurs behind the well-cultivated gloss of the retail wine business. Only intense industry lobbying, including so-called "hardball" tactics, have kept the media from exposing a practice that is so cruel, so inexplicably wanton, that its exposure will trigger a firestorm of consumer outrage that will be felt from Napa Valley to New Zealand.



Exposed: The horror of wine penning

We're speaking here of the scurrilous practices of *bottle engorging* and *wine penning*. For decades, vintners around the world have been forcing wine down the unsuspecting open throats of bottles, and then stuffing their gaping mouths with corks, not allowing the wine to breathe.

As if the engorging wasn't cruel enough, winemakers then force wines to live in crates that are barely large enough to contain them, often cramming up to 12 bottles into a single crate. There is no room for the bottles to move, or even to socialize in any way. They are forced to stand erect on their heads, and to endure weeks-long journeys across oceans and

continents in stuffy cargo holds.

Sadly, these practices have become so commonplace in the industry that they are now fully accepted. However, a small band of conscientious wineries, wholesalers and retailers are battling to bring consumers free-range wines that are permitted to forage freely in the vineyards. These wines are gently gathered whilst slumbering, then shipped uncorked in a roomy pen where they freely associate with others of their kind.

At Hair O' The Dog, we believe that Happy Wine makes for Happy Wine Drinkers. We proudly stock only free-range, humanely-treated wines in our shop. Come and taste the difference.



Free-range wines foraging in the wild

Disclaimer: We'd just like to say right here that the above article is purely satirical. While it is true that wine bottles are shipped in the conditions described above, we're pretty sure they don't mind, given that they are inanimate objects.

Please don't be offended that we're borrowing a bit from the very real *foie gras*, veal, and poultry scandals. For what it's worth, the author of this piece doesn't eat veal or lamb on principle. He doesn't eat lobster because he deems that animal a noble beast. And while he really liked the *foie gras* he had in France, he felt bad about liking it and *foie gras* is really terrible when you get it here, so he's given that up, too. He's sorry about the chicken and the eggs, and if he can find free-range locally, he'll buy 'em.