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'Yappy Hour' pairs wine and man's best friend

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Nothing goes better with a glass of wine than ... man's best friend?

Don't expect to see any "No dogs allowed" signs at the Cinnabar Winery on April 3. Pooches and their two-legged friends are invited for a few hours of socializing over treats and wine on the patio.

Cinnabar is hosting the event as part of its "Yappy Hour: Pups on the Patio" events, where on the first Thursday of every month dog owners are encouraged to bring their leashed furry friends to the winery between 5 and 7 p.m. During that time, patrons can receive 10 percent off wine by the glass or bottle, and their pets get goodie bags and freshly baked doggy treats provided by Pet Food Express.

Kyle Ritchie, an assistant tasting room manager at Cinnabar, said the purpose of the event is to provide a socializing opportunity for people as well as their pets.

"We all just kind of hang out. I talk about wine. We just exchange stories. It's fun," Ritchie said.

Yappy Hour was introduced at Cinnabar last year and was so successful that organizers decided to bring it back for another year, Ritchie said. The idea for the event sprang up out of a shared love for dogs among some of the winery staff, he said.

"We've got a fair amount of dog lovers here," Ritchie said. "They wanted to do something to celebrate with the dogs."

Christine Klein, a San Mateo resident, brought her dog, a Jack Russell terrier named Wishbone, to Cinnabar's first Yappy Hour on March 6. Her friend, David Johnson of Pleasanton, accompanied her on the patio.

"They brought little doggie snacks for Wishbone and made sure he was happy," Klein said. "The adults had wine; he had water."

It was her first Yappy Hour, but definitely not her last, Klein said. "I love the idea that [Cinnabar is] an animal-friendly winery. I definitely would like to go back down again."

Yappy Hour will be held on the first Thursday of every month through October "as long as our weather holds up," said Ritchie. The dates are: April 3, May 1, June 5, July 3, Aug. 7, Sept. 4 and Oct. 2. In case of inclement weather, Ritchie encouraged patrons to call ahead of time to ensure that the event is still taking place.

The Cinnabar Winery is at 14612 Big Basin Way in Saratoga.



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