



Friday, October 8, 2004

FOOD & WINE



For wine buffs: A nude come-on, with peel-off label

The wine drinker's mantra is going to have to be revised to "swirl, sniff, sip – and ogle," thanks to a provocative new label from a Napa Valley producer. Marilyn Wines of St. Helena has made a name for itself with collectors over the past 18 years by releasing bottles of merlot and cabernet sauvignon featuring images of Marilyn Monroe on the labels. To launch their latest brand, a red blend called Velvet Collection, they've gone a step further. This time the image is of a nude Monroe from the famous 1949 Tom Kelly photo shoot that helped launch *Playboy* magazine. To protect the delicate sensibilities of the American public (and appease government bureaucrats), the label features a plastic overlay that covers her naughty bits with iridescent sparkles. The overlay can be peeled away and pressed back into place. The bottle also is packaged in a sealed box (about \$200-\$225 retail for a 1.5-liter bottle). "The government is concerned about the use of nudity to sell alcohol beverages, but they worked with us on this, recognizing the significance of these images in popular culture," Marilyn Wines president Bob Holder says.

- Jerry Shriver