



2 Mutt Chuck



Interested in starting your dog's own wine label? It's not as crazy as it might sound.

BY ANNAMARIA DiGIORGIO

Wine and cheese pair nicely; so do wine and fine dining — but what about wine and dogs? In this scenario, the wine is for you to enjoy while relaxing with your pup, and your dog's picture can be on the label thanks to the Dog Lovers Wine Club. A division of Carivintás Winery near Santa Barbara, California, the Dog Lovers Wine Club blends wine and philanthropy, with 10 percent of all proceeds from the sale of the wine going to animal shelters and rescue groups across the country.

Philanthropy is an integral part of Carivintás Winery. The company was founded “specifically to support and promote nonprofit organizations in the arts, sciences and humanities,” says Matt Hahn, co-founder of the Dog Lovers Wine Club and Carivintás Winery. So the leap to helping dogs was not far off. “Both my business partner, Fleet Hamilton, and I have dogs, and Fleet’s family has been involved in various aspects of the dog community for many years,” Hahn continues. “Fleet suggested starting [the Dog Lovers Wine Club] to benefit those organizations that work to support dogs, because all too often, as with many nonprofits, funds are desperately needed.”

In addition to benefiting charities, membership in the club allows you to receive bottles of wine featuring beautiful dog portraits on the labels. You can choose from delivery on a monthly, bimonthly or quarterly basis, with prices ranging from \$48 to \$72 per shipment. Members also receive discounts on orders of



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOG LOVERS WINE CLUB

The Dog Lovers Wine Club features your favorite red and white wines with artistic canine labels. What more could dog and wine aficionados want?

wines; information about wine, travel and art; and wine and canine notes with each shipment. The goal of the club is to enjoy premium wine and celebrate the unique bond people have with dogs.

For people who are fanatical about dogs, having a wine bottle with someone else's dog on the label is fine, but what about their own pooches? To this end, the club can create custom labels with images or illustrations of your dog. These custom bottles are an excellent way to memorialize your dog, and they make great gifts for dog lovers.

The artwork on the labels is created by Hahn, who signs all of them with the name Poocher Fetch. "It's inspiring to create each piece of art," he says. "My intention while creating the art is to capture the true spirit of each dog, as they all evoke unique, individual and lovable personalities."

But with so many pictures to choose from, how do you know just which one would make the best wine label? Hahn advises people to choose images that reflect their dog's personality. "I think the best shots are those that capture who your dog is," he says. "If your dog likes to lounge around, try getting those shots. If he is an exerciser, then shoot some during and after he's had a hard walk or run."

No matter which images you choose, you'll be receiving a one-of-a-kind memento of your dog. Even after drinking the wine, the bottles make wonderful decorations or keepsakes. Considering all this, the Dog Lovers Wine Club just makes sense: It's something you can enjoy that also celebrates and helps dogs in need. Now that's something to raise your glass and toast about. 🍷

Annamaria DiGiorgio is the managing editor of Dogs USA and the Popular Dogs Series of breed- and topic-specific titles. She lives in Southern California with her husband, Bulldog and pit-bull mix. You can read her dog blog at www.dogchannel.com/lifeinthedoghous



Custom Canine Labels

The process for having a custom wine label created by Carivintás Winery's Dog Lovers Wine Club is simple. I know because I had two labels created with my dogs on them. I first e-mailed the club a picture of each dog, and Matt Hahn, co-founder of the Dog Lovers Wine Club, created digital illustrations from the pictures. (You also can choose to have the image exactly reproduced for the label, if you so wish.)

Next I selected the type of wine I wanted, choosing from a variety of quality reds and whites. Before everything was finalized, Hahn e-mailed me copies of the labels for approval, then the labels were printed and the bottles shipped to me.

It was exciting to see my dogs on the wine labels, but most exciting was to see an artist's rendering of them. It was like having their portraits commissioned, except on a wine bottle rather than a traditional canvas and for much less money. And the wine was excellent, too. (I recommend the pinot noir.) Now, I have two beautiful bottles to use for decoration (photos on opposite page), and I can reorder more whenever I want.

Pricing for custom labels starts at \$62 for a single bottle, with options to order by the case. To have custom labels created with your dog's image, visit Carivintás Winery online at www.dogloverswineclub.com or call (877) 919-WINE (9463).