

## **Indian wine Label Contour and Content Narration and its influence on buying pattern of consumers in South India**

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### **Abstract**

The Indian Wine Market has been showing a steady growth. The demand of both the domestic and foreign wines has been growing day by day. There is enough room for each and every wine brand, be it Indian or foreign, in the Indian market as the market has registered a significant percentage of growth in both volume and value terms in recent years (PR Newswire, New York). This boom in wine production and wine consumption also has seen a myriad of different wine labels in India, each of them distinctly different in terms of contour, color, size of the label and textual information. Cashing on this growing interest in wines, there are lots of seasoned and novice consumers who are inclined in wine appreciation and buying. The paper tries to give an overview of domestic wine label contour and content information influence on consumers when they make a buying decision.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The decision to purchase a bottle of wine is often difficult for consumers. Influenced by levels of self-confidence, the decision conflict between competing characteristics of the wine products offered can affect the consumer's decision behavior. Research has suggested that the front label conveys key information to consumers relating the benefits of purchasing a wine product. (Barber, Nelson Ismail, Joseph; Taylor, D Christopher). Over the last decade, 90 wineries have sprung up across many states, and still counting in India, where the subtropical climate is favorable for growing wine grapes, (Asia News Monitor, Bangkok). With an average of 6-7 labels (varietals) per company, there are on average 450 to 500 different Indian wine labels and most this wine labeling is in an evolving stage, where it can influence consumer buying pattern. A generic understanding of how Indian wine labels can help and educate wine consumers and purchase better specific to demographic points out that wine companies in have a long way to curate the label contours. There's no such thing as a natural-born wine expert. It's all a matter of education. A good memory and set of working taste buds help immensely, but they can be honed with practice. So it is with wine. You have a reference source right there in your hands when you browse the liquor store aisles. It's on the bottle. (Kislenko, Dan. The Spectator). The same logic applies to Indian wines also. With an emerging market, and a cluttered field, it's high time the Indian Wine label undergoes a change in terms of what else, or "what not" the label should contain. Since Indian label primarily focuses on the grape varietal on its label, it adds more to the confusion in terms of what is a good wine to buy. Most domestic consumers do not know grape names. Savvy wine buyers can tell quite a lot about the wine they are purchasing by examining the packaging. Wine labels can give up a lot of information. A couple of important things to look out for are: 1. Alcohol level. By law, the alcohol content of your wine must be clearly visible on the label. (Nugent, Matthew). Some of the key label issues that influences Indian wine buyers to buy the wine can be attributed to:

### **Myriad Wine retail formats**

Indian wines are retailed in multiple places, and in different formats beginning from Government retail stores, wine boutiques, retail stores in shopping malls and across the counter beverage kiosks. In almost 75% of beverage retailing in India, it' found that all alcoholic beverages are retailed together (spirits, beers and wines). Even liquor stores no longer stack just rows and rows of Bagpiper and McDowell, which are value whisky brands. Premium brands are prominently displayed, but luxury labels, considered a rung above, are found only at select liquor vends.( Iyer, Ravee. McClatchy). With this sort of mixed retail format, though there are multiple wine labels, they compete with other spirit label brands. It's difficult for a consumer to identify, choose an appropriate wine, as the store format is not conducive for exclusive purchase of wine. This adds to the woes of the discreet wine consumer.

### **Bridge the label myth**

Floor executive are not trained in wine or wine education, any wine labeling does not amount for it being sold, as the executive has no idea about the number of wine labels the store retails. This primarily is the main cause of concern as many of good wines remain unsold, as the floor executive is not able to explain the wine to the consumers, in spite of attractive labels. Unless the aura and myth is bridged, specifically in the domain, it is going to get tougher as the Indian market will see more spurge of domestic wine labels. Current wine sales in India are estimated at 5m litres by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and are expected to grow at a CAGR of 25-30% over the next three years. This equates to a very low per capita consumption of 5ml of wine per year, leaving a huge opportunity for growth for the sector. Sales are expected to touch 9m litres by 2015, according to ASSOCHAM. Significantly, the industry body estimates that over 650m Indians will see an attitudinal shift in alcoholic preferences, and start favoring wine in the next five years (.Rathore, Bhavna). With staggering numbers being projected, unfortunately, most shop floor executives are entrusted to monitor store racks, not on product knowledge but on the availability of personnel on a day to day basis. This is a matter of concern, as there is no tutored or curated wine education offered to the employees. Moreover, employers feel there is no logic in the training as Wine sales do not get them volume business as compared to spirits. This leads to lacunae where labels are well defined, but point of sales executives has no inkling to read or understand the wine.

### **Wine label travails**

A wine label with wide appeal is a winery's single greatest sales tool. It can make a good wine more desirable and a bad wine more salable. It is the sole emissary on the store shelf and perhaps, as Corey Miller hopes, a source of great wealth (Teague, Lettie). A lot of people are label buyers, it's unbelievable," "Even at the \$50 to \$60 level, they (shoppers) go for attractiveness. Wine is a romantic thing. Obviously, quality is required but attractiveness and packaging is crucial."(Daley, BillView ). From occasional imbibers to serious oenophiles, just about every wine drinker I know cares about labels -- and even employs them as a buying guide (Teague, Lettie.) When we buy them, we don't know whether these weirdly packaged wines will be good, but we do know they will be fun to try simply because of their container or goofy label. And that's good enough reason for us. (Dan and Krista Stockman). Wine is all about enjoying the moment and celebrating anything. This is precisely what consumers desire for, have a very quirky wine label. Many domestic wine labels have fancy names, for impulse buy, but do not focus on product narration for commoners.

## CONCLUSION

With modern day millennial consumers, it more a challenge for domestic wine players and marketers to be able to compete, with well rehearsed and seasoned imported companies. More so when imported labels with well thought label layout techniques are far better in style than Indian counterparts. Wines have set benchmarks already recognized in the global wine arena. Research supports the importance of packaging and the reliance of wine consumers on the label to infer the quality of the bottle contents. In particular, it is the infrequent and new wine drinkers who rely most heavily on label information in comparison to regular drinkers. (Statia; J.E. (Joe) Barth). With competition to curate and sell good wines for domestic consumers, wine labels should be more narrative in nature, and especially in Indian context. Wine companies can also look at vernacular content, to improve impulse purchasing by native diaspora. . This will help wine consumers to be able to read and buy wines more easily. Consumers believed the information on wine labels accurately reflect content, and they use that information in making purchase decisions. However, consumers generally held misconceptions about when products are varietals, that beverages believed to be "wines" contain less than 50% wine grapes, and where wine grapes are grown. Therefore, it may be concluded that current labels may not adequately convey important information for consumer purchasing decisions. (Tootelian, Dennis H.

Ross, Karen). This aptly summarizes the India label scenario, which wine companies have to introspect for future growth.

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