

# FOOD & WINE

FEBRUARY 2010

50  
best  
recipes  
to pair with  
wine, beer  
& cocktails

A photograph of a winter vegetable chili dish. The chili is served in a dark bowl, topped with fresh cilantro and sliced red onions. It is accompanied by several slices of toasted bread. In the background, there is a tall glass of dark beer and a wine glass filled with red wine. The entire scene is set on a dark surface with a textured cloth.

*Winter vegetable  
chili, perfect with  
a smoky Syrah*

RECIPE P. 60



uncorked wines that stay fresh longest

## Ski Country's Newest Place to Party

Now that Utah has relaxed its stringent liquor laws, Park City is becoming a much more fun place to drink and eat. Novelist *Judith Freeman* sips cocktails, wine and whiskey.

**S**ITTING IN BAR BOHEME AT THE Sky Lodge Hotel in Park City, on Easy Street, I'm doing something I've never done before: having a gin martini, straight up, very dry, right here in Mormon Utah. I didn't have to fill out an application and pay four bucks to join a faux "club" for the evening; wasn't legally required to order food with my cocktail; and didn't have to wait while my bartender furtively mixed the drink in a back room. The low-lit zinc bar is filled with happy adults, because it's happy hour—though here, at Bar Boheme, it's called "easy hour." As in, "It's sure a lot easier to get a drink in this state now that they've passed the new liquor laws."

I'm still a bit of a stranger to this world. I grew up in Ogden, Utah, in a large Mormon family in which alcohol was absolutely verboten. Drinking was something you did at a water fountain. I remember how my father used to raise a glass each evening at the dinner table—a glass of the finest tap water. Looking at his eight children, he'd say, "Water: best drink on the planet."

I discovered something more exciting than tap water in the homes of my non-Mormon friends, whose gentlemen-sheep-rancher fathers knew a thing or two about fine Scotches and ryes, and also right here in Park City, then referred to as "Sin City," known more for its brothels than its bishops. I came to Park City for the first time in 1963. I was a young ski instructor then, and Park City was a funky old mining town



### *a vestige of the old park city wine scene*

A disclaimer on the wine list at Bar Boheme:  
"Utah law limits the amount of wine dispensed in each glass. We apologize for any inconveniences."

high in the mountains above Salt Lake City. Skiers could board mining cars and make a three-mile journey into the mountain, through a black tunnel where the walls dripped water, then climb into a miner's elevator cage for a scary 1,800-foot ascent. Few people envisioned how Park City's ski scene would grow, or how its Sundance Film Festival would attract travelers from around the world. Yet the laws imposed by the good Mormon legislators of the state often left tourists wondering, How the heck do I get a drink around here?

Mac MacQuoid, a partner at Parallel Napa Valley winery and a Utah resident, recalls bringing his own tequila to his favorite Park City Mexican spot in the '70s. "Bars had liquor lockers, so you could get a handle of booze from the liquor store and keep it at the bar until your next visit," he says. "I would buy margarita mix, unplug the Coors sign and hook up my blender." As for wine, it could only be purchased at state-run liquor stores, whether for private use or for sale in restaurants. Because the state liquor authority brought in such a limited range of wines, "We drank jugs of cheap red," says MacQuoid.

{ TRAVEL TIPS }

## best of the new park city

### WHERE TO STAY

#### Dakota Mountain Lodge

This new Waldorf Astoria hotel at The Canyons features an outpost of top San Francisco restaurant Spruce. *Doubles from \$179; dakotamountainlodge.com.*

#### St. Regis Deer Crest

At this luxe new Deer Valley resort, superchef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's J&G Grill has a phenomenal wine list. *Doubles from \$225; starwoodhotels.com.*

### WHERE TO DRINK

**Bar Boheme** Great French wines served in the old Utah Coal and Lumber Building. *201 Heber Ave.; 435-658-9425 or theskylodge.com.*

#### Glitretind Restaurant

At Stein Eriksen Lodge, sommelier Cara Schwindt's 10,000-bottle wine cellar is the best in town. *7700 Stein Way; 435-649-3700 or steinlodge.com.*

#### High West Distillery & Saloon

A ski-in, ski-out distillery producing artisanal rye whiskeys and oat-based vodkas. *703 Park Ave.; 435-649-8300 or highwestdistillery.com.*

#### Wasatch Brew Pub

Park City's first brewery since Prohibition pours craft beers with cheeky names like Polygamy Porter. *250 S. Main St.; 435-649-0900 or wasatchbeers.com.*



Wasatch Brew Pub can now serve high-alcohol beers like The Devastator.

This has changed, mostly due to Utah's former governor Jon Huntsman (now the U.S. ambassador to China), who, though a good Mormon, is also a savvy businessman. He understood how the state's \$7 billion tourism industry and tax revenues would benefit from loosening the liquor laws and helped shepherd those changes through last year. It's as if Utah has just now emerged from Prohibition.

Park City has new hotels and restaurants with fantastic wine and cocktail programs that may rival those in New York City and San Francisco. Among them is the ultra-swank St. Regis Deer Crest in Deer Valley, which features star chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's J&G Grill and a 4,600-bottle, Vegas-style wine vault that can be accessed by a funicular that drops skiers off in the hotel lobby. Ambitious local microbreweries, like Squatters and Wasatch, are turning out terrific beers with a higher alcohol content than the previously legal four percent. There's even a new distillery, High West Distillery and Saloon—the first one in Utah in a hundred years.

When I visited last fall, my friend Pat and I stopped by High West, located in an old livery stable at the base of one of the town's ski lifts. The place is the brainchild of David Perkins, a biochemist with a passion for cooking and fine spirits who loved the idea of a ski-in, ski-out distillery. As thunder rolled from the skies, we sat in the dining room looking over the copper still and ate fondue made with a High West rye instead of kirsch. Among the three different whiskeys we sampled was the 92-proof Rendezvous Rye Straight Whiskey, a blend of an aromatic

*Novelist Judith Freeman most recently wrote the nonfiction book The Long Embrace: Raymond Chandler and the Woman He Loved. She lives in Los Angeles and Idaho.*



David Perkins's ski-up distillery and saloon, RIGHT, makes artisanal whiskeys and vodkas.



16-year-old rye and a spicy six-year-old rye. High West is also distilling two oat-based vodkas, including one made with peaches harvested near the town where I was born.

Artisanal whiskey and vodka seem a long way from the Utah I grew up in, and yet locally grown produce was always a part of my youth. Every Mormon household keeps a large supply of food in case of emergency, and my mother was an expert at home canning. As I sat in High West, I remembered how my siblings and I would occasionally discover that the bottle of home-made grape juice on the breakfast table had fermented on the shelf. What a riotous time we had then, we naughty children, sipping the forbidden stuff.

On this Park City trip, my wine options were a lot better. When Cara Schwindt took over the wine program at the venerated Stein Eriksen Lodge 11 years ago, there were no half bottles (there are 100 now), no Rieslings (there are now more than 30) and little stylistic variation in the Merlots and Chardonnays. "It has become more fun to drink in Utah," says Schwindt. "Customers are now legally permitted to have more than one glass of wine in front of them at a time, allowing me to pour a glass of white as well as a glass of red or even a flight." What's more, Park City's ski scene is attracting more wealthy, wine-collecting tourists. "In the past, a restaurant would try to immediately sell a current release from a great producer to turn a profit," says Schwindt. "But now there's demand for aged wines and an incentive to have a deep cellar."

The team behind the new St. Regis was so adamant about having an extraordinary wine collection that they began working with Utah lawmakers to modify the liquor laws five years ago, when construction on the property was

just starting. One significant change: A new resort license allows hotels to make arrangements directly with wineries, rather than state-run liquor stores. The wine must still be purchased through the state, but the rule has made it easier for resorts to obtain wines like the 2005 Jonata La Sangre de Jonata Syrah, which is on St. Regis's 7,000-bottle list.

**“I grew up in Utah in a large Mormon family with eight kids. Drinking was something you did at a water fountain.”**

Wine director Andrew Green of Spruce at the Dakota Mountain Lodge—another of Park City's new luxe hotels, at the base of The Canyons ski area—oversees a list of nearly 1,000 bottles and recently implemented a Madeira-by-the-glass program similar to the one he runs at the Spruce in San Francisco. "The biggest shortcoming in Utah is that a lot of wine hasn't been imported into the state, so we're working on that," he says. "We'll probably triple the number of Burgundy producers available in Utah just by what we're bringing into the restaurant."

Several people I spoke to predicted a Utah wine renaissance. Park City is less than a two-hour flight from San Francisco, and many California growers have made it their resort of choice, a place to play and showcase their wines. There's even talk of Kiler Grove Winegrowers, a Paso Robles winery, opening a tasting room in Salt Lake City.

Most locals regard these changes as positive, though many will tell you it's more about perception than reality. It's still illegal for bars to offer happy hour drink specials, but as far as I could tell from the crowd at Bar Boheme, everyone is still pretty happy.