



Q&A with Jenny LaFever, Founder of WineStraws



IntoWine recently caught up with WineStraws founder, Jenny LaFever, to discuss what WineStraws can do for you and to get the latest on this wine drinking trend.

What inspired the idea for wine straws?

The idea was born one night in December, 2007. I had a few girlfriends over for wine and appetizers before we headed to a holiday party. Two of the girls had recently had their teeth professionally whitened and (dentist's orders) had to use a straw for their wine. The rest of the girls and I decided we didn't want wine staining our teeth either so we all decided to use a straw. I had seen firsthand many times what a night of drinking red wine can look like! Right away, aside from having fun trying something new, I noticed that the wine taste and experience was not minimized whatsoever, I had no staining, and my lipgloss stayed on lips—not the glass. The only downfall to that first experience was the straw itself... it wasn't perfect. After many delicious trial runs and tests, what started out as a whim of an idea amongst a few wine loving friends has now turned into the conceptualization and launch of my company: WineStraws.

Why would someone want to drink wine through a straw?

There are a few reasons, actually:

- Your dentist tells you to (this is to avoid/reduce permanent enamel staining and erosion, even for veneers). The staining is caused by the deep strong pigment of red wine and erosion is caused by the acidity of any wine, even white wine and champagne.
- To eliminate embarrassing red wine stains on your lips and teeth. Even a casual wine-tasting trip or night on the town can yield extremely unsightly and horrific-looking purple mouths.
- For the ladies: keeping your lipgloss and lipstick in place and not on your wineglass should be a reward in itself.

Why use your straws rather than just a regular old plastic straw?

Like I previously mentioned, I'm a perfectionist. Being a red wine lover AND a perfectionist, I knew immediately that that the regular old plastic straws were too flimsy, too lightweight, much too big diameter-wise, and too long (your nose should be close to the glass in order to maintain that bouquet

experience). Then there's my favorite reason: WineStraws simply look better. Who in their right mind would pour themselves a glass of Caymus, and then stick a McDonald's straw in it? That's just wine sacrilege.

Wine is traditionally associated with high end, luxury culture. How do you see your wine straws integrating with, and being accepted by, that culture?

I think, like anything, there will be some people who don't like the concept. But I am confident that once red wine drinkers are armed with the facts and have the chance to try WineStraws, I believe they will be hooked. WineStraws are elegant, look and feel like glass, but are 100% recyclable high-grade plastic. The inner diameter is smaller than the average straw, mimicking the natural flow of sipping red wine. Most importantly is that the entire wine tasting experience isn't lessened. The high end luxury culture certainly takes high-end measures to make sure they maintain their looks; I can only imagine that their beautiful smiles and white teeth are high up on that list too.

Who is your target market?

Spectacular question! Originally, I thought my target market was (vain, shhh) women in their 30's and 40's. But we have been pleasantly surprised and excited as more and more people from many different walks of life report back on how much they love our product. I guess you don't have to be vain, or a woman, to care how your smile looks. Remember- if you are out on the town or enjoying some wine at your local wine bar with some friends, chances are there will be somebody snapping up photos of the fun; why take any chances? WineStraws are for each and every person that loves red wine and wants to look their best.

Where can your straws be purchased?

In addition to our website, **WineStraws** are also available at a handful of med-spas, wine bars and independent wine stores in Southern California. Additionally we have just expanded into the wine and spirits retailer: Brix Omaha. Stay tuned as we are growing quickly and will be soon available in other local retailers near you.

<http://www.intowine.com/qa-jenny-lafever-founder-winestraws>