

It's A Wine World, After All

Tenth Annual Miami International Wine Fair And TobaccoRum Miami Preview Party

[J'aime](#)

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MIWF After-party at Tempo

Photo by Donovan Zegna

Imagine a microcosmic version of EPCOT except less crowded and without screaming kids and creepy adults dressed as cartoon characters. You could truly drink around the world and discover a variety of flavors straight from the vine last weekend at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

The 10th Anniversary [Miami International Wine Fair](#) went far beyond your typical wine tasting to include spirits, food, accessories and cigars. Winemakers brought bottles from Argentina, Chile, France, Spain and even emerging wine markets like Canada, Brazil, South Africa and Portugal. They occupied dozens of booths roughly organized by region, ready to serve their samples and talk shop with business owners and distributors. Many wines were available exclusively at the fair, and haven't yet hit the market.

The MIWF is the leading wine trade expo in the country, with 5,000 square feet dedicated to the Florida Room, helping wine producers and importers reach our local restaurants and retailers. A series of seminars took place Friday to disseminate the latest and greatest information on industry trends and news.

Hundreds of people bustled around what looked like a giant white-walled warehouse at Tempo in Downtown Miami for the after-party Saturday night. In addition to tasting award-winning wines from the [7th Annual Florida International Wine Challenge](#) earlier that day, after-partiers were treated to a TobaccoRum Miami preview party. This event was sponsored by Cigar Snob magazine and Rums of Puerto Rico to get people amped about the First Annual TobaccoRum Miami exposition that is scheduled to happen during Art Basel this year.

Bikini Jazz kept the live music coming and helped cover the dull roar of the crowd as people sipped and sampled all kinds of wine or rum. Aficionados puffed on premium cigars outside, a select few of which were freshly rolled that night during the party. The dress code most often consisted of high heels and cocktail dresses for the ladies and collared shirts with semi-casual slacks for the gentlemen. Guests were all smiles as they made their way around the room, mingling, sipping and posing for pictures.

Throughout the fair, there were a few innovative or interesting products that caught our attention:

Choco Noir: Talk about a dessert wine. This Pinot Noir base is blended with rich chocolate to create a unique cocktail from the Braman Winery in Texas.

Conelly Cocktailmakers: Coming all the way from Austria, these all-in-one alcohol-plus-mixer combos look cool and taste even better. Liquid Minds Branding was sampling their Sex on the Beach and LadyKiller flavors to help bring this beverage to the States.

Côté Tariquet: This French wine was described as a "lucky mistake." Domaine du Tariquet created this flavor accidentally when they mixed a Chardonnay and a Sauvignon. It's smooth, fresh, fruity and floral simultaneously.

Green Griffin International: This group had the coolest looking bottles topped with chrome caps. They make delicious and affordable "French wines for the Modern World." Their Millennial wines were designed with Gen Y in mind and feature five flavors including a Cabernet Sauvignon, a Rosé d'Anjou and a Chardonnay.

Doubleve Wines: Imported by Miami Int'l Wines from Canada, these come in less-breakable, aluminum packaging, hence why the brand is known as "the bottle-can wine." Take your pick of a Baco Noir, Vidal Rose or Vidal Blanc, eh.

Spirits do Brasil: A distributor that brings the best Brazilian wines and cachaças to Miami. Their Cachaça Werneck and **Villaggio Grando** branded Brut Rose, Chardonnay and other interesting wine blends are worth a try.