

# Moe Knows Wine

## CORKAGE

By Moe

What is “corkage”? Simply put, it is a fee you pay a restaurant to open and pour your own bottle of wine. From the restaurant’s point of view, it is providing service, glasses, and losing a wine sale. From your point of view, you are bringing a special wine that is old and rare and may not be found in most wine lists; or maybe you just want to save money off the restaurant’s wine list prices.

The corkage fee can range from zero to truly obscene to “we don’t allow that.” If a restaurant is wine friendly, it may charge a small corkage fee, it will be very happy you showed up with your favorite bottle, and it will even provide decent glasses for you to drink your wine. A partial list of wine friendly restaurants includes: Bandera **\$0**; Houston’s chain **\$0**; Pinot chain **\$0**.

While other restaurants simply say no wine is to be brought in (PERIOD), for example, The Ivy Restaurant, most restaurants fall somewhere in between. They prefer that you buy their wine, but are more than willing to let you bring your own bottle. Some restaurants are wine friendly on certain nights such as: Vincenti Ristorante **\$0 on Wednesdays** on a bottle purchased from Moe’s Fine Wines, and La Cachette **\$0 on Sundays**. Visit [www.moesfinewines.com](http://www.moesfinewines.com) for a more complete list of corkage fees for Los Angeles restaurants.

Rules of thumb for bringing your own bottle of wine to restaurants: Never bring a bottle that costs less than the gas to get to the restaurant; try to bring a bottle that is not on the wine list, if you are not sure, call and ask; if you are dining with a wine tasting group, call ahead to find out if the restaurant will accommodate a large number of bottles and people. Some restaurants will accommodate you if you don’t do it at their busiest time (i.e. Friday or Saturday night); and if you’re bringing that old and rare bottle, it may not hurt to offer the sommelier a little taste!

## Moe’s Fine Wines’ Pick of the Month 2001 Montes Alpha “M” Chilean Bordeaux Blend

The makers of this limited-production, silky Bordeaux blend from Apalta Chile are obsessive about this wine. They literally pick every grape one at a time. A combination of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Malbec may improve with age, but how can you resist it now!? The black

cherry, blackberry and currant flavors roll across your palate and let your taste buds savor the finish that seems to last just long enough. It will stand up to a steak and the pairing will dance its way into your heart and stomach together. The only downside to this wine will be the tear in your eye as the last sip disappears.

Remember to share.

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