



RED OR WHITE?
Gillian Vigman, center, and other patrons enjoy the tastes at Colorado Wine Co.

SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

The success of last year's Eagle Rock Music Festival cemented the area's burgeoning reputation as a vibrant, artsy community. Small family-owned businesses are cropping up with frequency, and the young, the hip and the well-to-do can be seen flocking to them. The neighborhood gets its name from a giant rounded rock with an indentation that resembles a flying eagle.

ART & ARCHITECTURE

Eagle Rock's Center for the Arts is hosting a photography exhibit called "Developed Eye" through May 5. The Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival center was built as a library in 1914 and received a face-lift in 1927. The show under its dark wood-beamed ceiling highlights the works of Helge Gerull, David E. James and Jeffrey Neale.

Sip and Smile

Wine has a sense of humor at the Colorado Wine Co., where a recent tasting paid homage to Ponch, the hunky brunet cop played by Erik Estrada on the late '70s TV show "CHiPs." Jennifer Nugent, who owns the shop with her husband, John, explains, "You can only do 'Merlots From Around the World' so many times before you want to kill yourself." It's not that the Nugents don't take wine

seriously; it's just that they want to make it accessible to everyone. "I don't know when wine

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became this sort of rarefied topic," Jennifer says. "That attitude just sucks the life and joy out of it." She stands behind the wine bar in a curtained, sage-colored lounge with a low '70s-style couch and a coffee table. About 20 customers sip hearty pours from South America and Italy (the Ponch "theme" only extends to the décor) and snack on rich cheeses and salty olives from Auntie Em's Kitchen. Music from the band Someone Still Loves You Boris Yeltsin filters through the air as actress Gillian Vigman sidles up next to the candle-lit shrine to Ponch. "I always get super-pumped up at these parties," Vigman gushes.