

# Open a Wineshop

John and Jennifer Nugent of the **Colorado Wine Company** spill all **BY MARY TRAHAN**



**1**

## Get Schooled

Attend classes in New York given by the world's finest wine makers and feel tsk-tsked when you confuse a region with a grape name. Become annoyed by clerks who say good wine can't be had for less than \$50 a bottle. Receive **Vino Italiano: The Regional Wines of Italy**, cowritten by **Mario Batali**, as a gift and start reading. Fill every corner of your 700-square-foot co-op in Brooklyn with bottles and scribble Sharpie notes all over the labels detailing grapes and regions.

**2**

## Down Your Fears

Hate your jobs in Internet marketing (him) and event planning (her) and **sit around every night sipping wine** and asking, "What could we be happy doing together where we wouldn't kill each other?" Come to realize that you are drinking a lot of wine—how about that? Crank out e-mails to your friends in L.A. asking where to open a wineshop. Be repeatedly informed about Eagle Rock, which is rapidly gentrifying but still commercially underserved. Quit your jobs, sell your co-op, and book a flight.

**3**

## Hang in There

Rent a space on Colorado Boulevard for a few grand a month, find an apartment, and then learn to play a mean game of 20 Questions with the Health Department and with Building and Safety. Whatever you don't ask, they won't tell—until it's too late or too expensive. Sweat it out for eight months and watch your life savings dribble away while **the city sends notices to every library, church, and neighborhood grandmother** within 500 feet of the premises asking them if you can open. Pass your permit hearing at the zoning and planning office downtown in front of four supportive fans.

**4**

## Do It Yourself

Enlist the services of friends willing to work for companionship and moonshine. Ask one who's handy with chicken wire to design light fixtures. Build a bathroom after looking up "how to frame" on the Internet. Tour wineries from Sonoma to Mexico. Meet distributors and taste 40 to 60 varieties a week. Argue with each other a million times a day, then **get engaged** and celebrate with two big glasses of bourbon at a bar two blocks away.

**5**

## Give 'Em a Taste

Open shop with 3,000 bottles two months after *Sideways* hits theaters. Vow to remain a "populist" wine store, specializing in the \$25-and-under range that you and your friends can afford, keeping the expensive stuff on the "Fancy Rack," and holding tastings nearly every day. Work an average of 80 hours a week. Take two days off to get married. **Wake up every morning your own boss, pop the corks, and smile (see above).**

» *Colorado Wine Company, 2114 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock, 323-478-1985 or cowineco.com.*



**the innovation award goes to:** No local hotel is tapping into the zeitgeist more nly than Santa Monica's Fairmont Miramar. It offers "Girls Night In" packages for le friends who need to bond (over "girlie-themed tapas" and champagne), free over-parking for hybrid-driving guests, and a new "Electronic Rehab Weekend," which res guests relinquish any beeping gizmo for lockup in the hotel safe on arrival. Herbal and complimentary yoga will be provided. But an L.A. weekend without a cell phone, Berry, or laptop? Sounds like a new premise for *Survivor*. // **PHYLLIS SONOMA**