



Balzac scores with eclectic wines and tempting small plates

Get Your Grape On

Exhaustive reserve lists, fancy food pairings ... no doubt about it, wine bars are all the rage. Here's where to start sipping BY MANYA KACZKOWSKI

Visit **Kafevino** morning, noon or night for fine wines, freshly brewed coffees and aromatic teas. Affordable, robust vino from Spain, Italy, Argentina and South Africa will transport you, if only for an evening, to a more exotic locale for as little as \$10 a bottle—although you can spend several hundred dollars on a rare vintage if you like. Bonus: All wines are available in 1-, 3- and 6-ounce pours, so you can taste as many alluring varietals as you like. Even better? On Mondays, any bottle of wine priced \$15 or higher comes with a free pizza appetizer. 330 E. Menomonee St., 414-224-4900, www.kafevino.net.

New on the scene is **Pastiche**, where chef Michael Engel has

created a lovely little French bistro and wine bar out of a hardware store in Bay View. Wines hail from sunny Southern France, Spain and Italy—harmonizing beautifully with Engel's Mediterranean plates, like duck breast with chorizo and cassoulet. 3001 S. Kinnickinnic Ave., 414-482-1446, www.pastichebistro.com.

The décor at **Balzac** is comfortable and eclectic, an array of mismatched chairs, odd paintings and lamp-brandishing cherubs. The wine list is equally interesting—you might see a crisp Oregon White Riesling or a sweet, heady French Pineau D'Orignac. Half-pours encourage maximum sampling, and recommendations are key, as the manager's

current favorites aren't always listed. Tempting tapas include crispy roasted duck nachos and garlicky Spanish-style mussels. 1716 Arlington Pl., 414-755-0099, www.balzacwinebar.com.

Indulge, located in the heart of downtown, definitely lives up to its name with a lengthy international wine list featuring some 60 by the glass. We love the fun category names ("fierce," "luscious," "sassy") and the varied selection of artisan cheeses, imported charcuterie and house-made truffles. The mellow vibe makes this the perfect place to start—or finish—an appropriately indulgent evening. 708 N. Milwaukee St., 414-390-9463, www.getindulge.com.

