



Wine + food + music = an amazing experience

'An Intimate Pairing' Makes For An Awesome Weekend

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although festivals like Coachella, Bonnaroo and Stagecoach have become popular music experiences, there aren't many non-station concert gatherings for hot AC listeners that not only provide good music but also are a lifestyle experience for those who attend. Enter Live in the Vineyard, the brainchild of independent promoters Bobbii Hach-Jacobs and Claire Parr, a unique promotion/music experience involving acoustic music in an intimate setting, food and wine, and entry into exclusive vineyards.

While the two have separate promo companies, they've worked together and have been friends for years. "Bobbii is a foodie, and I am a wine-y," Parr says jokingly. "We both love food and wine, Bobbii is a big cook, and my husband and I got married at one of the vineyards in Napa."

Casual conversations the two were having about how to put together live events for the artists they were promoting came to a head when Hach-Jacobs was at a winery in Sonoma. "I called Claire three sheets to the wind and said, 'Oh, my God, we've got to do this event. I'm at the most beautiful winery I've ever seen,'" Hach-Jacobs says. "Everything was so perfect about that day that I wanted to capture it with music. If we could do this same concept with music, it would be spectacular."

The vineyards responded well since there wasn't anything like this happening in Napa. "There were classical and jazz events in the area, but nothing pop music-driven," Parr says. "We found the vineyards and the vendors were extremely excited because the demographic of hot AC radio is exactly who they want to target, and the concept of drinking great wine and eating great food and listening to amazing music always goes together."

Hach-Jacobs and Parr were working Jason Mraz's "I'm Yours" single at the time and hit up Roadrunner senior VP of promotion Mike Easterlin to see if Mraz could play; he had one date available, so they took it. From there, they got Matt Nathanson from Vanguard, hit up Capitol for Tristan Prettyman and secured Dave Barnes from Razor & Tie. The inaugural Live in the Vineyard was a one-night, one-show format in July 2008, and winners were flown in from 16 stations around the country.

In November 2008, Parr and Hach-Jacobs went back for round two, which was expanded to two nights and two shows, featuring acoustic performances by Sarah McLachlan, Colbie Caillat, Jon McLaughlin, Thriving Ivory, Matt Wertz and Erin McCarley; 30 stations participated. Last month, 83 stations were involved in the third outing and included national exposure from Bob & Sheri's syndicated morning show and Sirius XM's the Pulse channel.

Eat, Drink, Artist, Music

It's not just the music that makes this event so incredible. It's the fact that it's an intimate weekend with only 250 people, who also got to drink amazing wines from exclusive vineyards in an experience they couldn't buy.

The April weekend began on a Saturday with listeners gathering at the main venue, the Silverado Resort, for a premium wine tasting with the owners and winemakers of eight wineries, along with a food pairing. Following that, everyone went to a cocktail party where Saving Jane, SafetySuit and Plain White T's performed. At a late-night soiree, there was wine, cheese, fruit and a show by Meiko.

The next day, winners were given time to explore Napa, then returned to the Silverado Resort for the main event: a show with Nick Lachey, Anjulie, Lily Allen and O.A.R. "There were 250 people at the show, and we served food and premium pours from wineries," Parr says.

"Everyone had an opportunity to see and meet a lot of these artists," she continues. "O.A.R. finished their set, and instead of walking offstage into the back, they simply stepped off the stage into the audi-

ence. These are the kinds of things where stuff happens that we don't script or predict. Sammy Hagar showed up with his daughter because she's a huge Nick Lachey fan. It was her birthday—Nick wound up singing 'Happy Birthday,' and we had a big cake for them."

That Monday, the winners were broken up into

small groups and taken to Miner Winery, where they met owner Dave Miner and were treated to a special acoustic performance by Live's Ed Kowalczyk in one of the wine caves. "People were in shock; they were crying," Hach-Jacobs says. "Some

computer programmer from Kansas City said he'd never experienced anything like it in his lifetime and didn't know what to say. They were speechless. It was just so intimate and exclusive."

After that, listeners made the trip to the home of Kat and Rob McDonald, who run a winery called the Girls in the Vineyard. "We got everyone back together and took them on buses to Kat and Rob's house, where Todd Humphries, who's a very well-known Michelin-rated chef and has a Michelin-rated restaurant in Napa called Martini House, did a cooking demo sponsored by KitchenAid in Kat and Rob's outdoor kitchen," Parr says. The McDonalds also augmented dinner with their winery's premium wines.

Passion-Infused Listeners

When the winners left, Parr describes them as tear-filled and emotional. "A lot of people believe that these listeners are checked out, and they're not," Parr says. "They're very aware, they're very active, they're very plugged-in, and sometimes, all it takes is a little bit of encouragement to get them really excited. We look at it like going back to grass-roots promotion. Yes, thousands of people in each market heard the promotion, got excited, went to the Web site and experienced the artists, but the winners go back and feel like they can affect other people around them. It's pretty exciting. We walk out of it really energized."

Hach-Jacobs and Parr were amazed by the passion that the listeners infused into the event. "Everyone walked away with this big, warm and fuzzy, happy, ginormous smile on their faces," Hach-Jacobs says. "A station called us a couple of days ago and asked, 'What did you do to our winners? We have never ever had winners flip out and write letters and call the station over and over about a promotion.'"

Parr says the promotion is so valuable because it's lifestyle-oriented—and not just for women, since the winners went to a resort with a 36-hole golf course. "So you've got a balanced event that men and women can participate in and enjoy without being segregated or segmented. It's about the experiences you can't buy—the wineries you can't get into, the people you can't meet and the music you hear before it's produced and polished," she says.



Bobbii Hach-Jacobs (left) and Claire Parr make a Nick Lachey sandwich.

Get Live In The Vineyard

While Bobbii Hach-Jacobs and Claire Parr aren't willing to bring more people into each event since making them bigger would ruin the intimacy, they're open to getting more stations involved. Check out liveinthevineyard.com to get a clearer picture of what goes on.

Listener Reactions

"It was by far the most phenomenal and memorable experience of my life. I knew the itinerary going in, but nothing could have prepared me for how truly amazing the event would be; it far exceeded my expectations. As if the beautiful scenery and resort were not enough, the artists blew my mind with how fabulous they were in such a raw and intimate setting. I've been telling everyone about it."

"We were in awe [of] the one-on-one interaction with the artists. We loved the winery trip and wine-tasting events. Everyone was so friendly. Definitely a once-in-a-lifetime experience."