

Wine labels and shipper packaging design

20 sketches due Jan 23

Rough mock up due Feb 1

Critique Feb 15

Project due Feb 22

Required copy

Name of your wine

Vintage

Bottle contents size

(750ml)

Alcohol content

Contains Sulfites

Winery logo, contact, website

Government Warning:

(1) According to the surgeon general, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects.

(2) consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery, and may cause health problems.

Live area (all important info fits into this area):

3.75" x 4.75"

There is a new winery in town (Lodi.) It is looking to capitalize on the recent explosion in 21-35 year-old wine-buyer market. Young and hip, this generation of wine buyer has discovered/rediscovered wine as the social lubricant of choice, more sophisticated alternative to beer or mixed drinks.

They came to you to design a series of labels for them. They plan of having three different varietal wines. I will leave the choice to you. Examples of grape varieties commonly used in varietal wines are Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Merlot.

Name the winery (make sure that the name is available) and create an identity for them. Create labels for the three varietals that will be part of one brand. The name of the varietal should reflect the character of the wine and cater to its audience. Come up with a catchy name and give the wine a unique character. Lastly, create a gift box or a wine shipper box that can be sold in a wine shop.

The details:

Label Restrictions:

The label can be any shape you choose, as long as the design elements are within the 3.75" x 4.75" visible area on the front of the bottle. Think outside of the box, classic rectangular labels are soooo predictable. Also, account for the bottle shape, it is not a perfect cylinder but it narrows toward the bottom. Your design needs to be slightly distorted to make up for this otherwise it will look out of proportion.

The government warning must be somewhere on the back of the bottle, as well as the address. Also needed somewhere on the bottle is the winery logo and the bar code. Write copy describing the wine's qualities/tastes in a way that it will appeal to your target audience. Besides that, the sky is the limit. Wine is no longer the stuffy dinner drink of our grandparents, and innovative label design is being given its due respect now more than ever.

Gift Box / Shipper

The box will need to contain the basic information as the label. The box should have a visual relationship to the label(s) but take it further. You will need to start thinking in 3D. Do not think of this as four separate flat design areas but as a whole. You can use a template from the packaging books I have or design your own.

Deliverables

Label: Print label. Mock up on virtual wine bottle in Photoshop/Illustrator.

Box: Minimum size 5" tall, folded.

Wine Labeling Requirements

By Jere M. Webb

6/30/2009

A wine label serves two purposes. First, it attracts a buyer's attention; a label designer can use whatever creative energies he or she can muster to catch a buyer's eye. Second, the label must tell the buyer exactly what he or she is buying. The wine label has always served to inform the buyer of at least the type and producer of the wine. Current U.S. government regulations, however, require that a wine label provide a good deal more information than just the type and producer. State laws often have additional requirements.

The federal government regulates wine labels through the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (the "TTB"). This agency, which is part of the Department of the Treasury, has adopted a number of regulations that govern the information that labels must, or should not, include. Most states also regulate wine labels. Some states, such as California, require only that a wine label meet the federal regulations. Other states, such as Oregon, have their own wine label requirements, which are more restrictive than the federal requirements.

A wine producer must obtain federal approval of each specific wine label before the producer can bottle that wine in the United States. To obtain federal approval, the labels must be reviewed and approved by the Advertising, Labeling and Formulation Division of the TTB. The process is not particularly complicated; the applicant need only submit form TTB F 5100.31 to the TTB, along with a complete set of labels to be approved. Online applications are the preferred method.

There are mandatory elements to a wine label, some of which must appear on the Brand label while others may appear on any label (side, back, or neck): The Brand label requirements include Brand name, Class and Type designation, Alcohol content, and in some cases Appellation of Origin. In addition to the Brand Label requirements, there are additional mandatory items which must be included on any label. These mandatory items include: Bottler's Name and Address, Net Contents, Sulfite Declaration and Health Warning Statement

Every container of wine must have a brand name. The name could be virtually anything, including the owner's name, trademark name, winery name, growing area, or an appellation or grape variety. If a brand name includes a vineyard, orchard, farm, or ranch name, at least 95 percent of the contents must come from the vineyard, orchard, farm, or ranch referred to in the name. In the absence of an actual brand name, the name of the bottler or importer is deemed a brand name.

The only restrictions on brand names concern descriptive names, which must not be misleading. Brand names that describe the age (e.g., "mature"), origin (e.g., "Napa Valley"), identity (e.g., "Zinfandel" or "Retsina"), or other characteristics of the wine are prohibited unless the name accurately describes the wine and conveys no erroneous impression about the wine. For example, if the name is "Japan Gold Sake," the TTB will require that not less than 75 percent of the volume of the wine is derived from rice grown in Japan. The TTB does not address trademark issues; it only ensures that a descriptive name is accurate.

Wine labels must also identify the contents as being either a class, type, or designation of wine. The TTB has created nine classes, including grape wine, sparkling wine, and aperitif. Types include such names as red table wine or sweet table wine. Designations may be either fanciful or varietal. If a varietal designation, such as Merlot or Pinot Noir, is used, then federal regulations require that the label provide an appellation of origin and that at least 75 percent of the grapes be of that variety. Oregon regulations increase that requirement to 90 percent.

American wine labels must include the name and address of the bottler or packer. Imported wine labels must show the name and address of the importer as well.

Wine must be bottled or packaged in a metric standard of fill. Net contents may be blown or branded into the bottle in lieu of, or in addition to, stating the net contents on the label.

Every wine label must indicate the alcohol content of the wine. Although a specific indication of alcohol content may be provided, such as 12 percent by volume, ranges may also be used. Additionally, certain types or classes of wine are permitted to contain only a certain level of alcohol concentration.

The lettering of the required information must meet minimum height requirements, generally 2 mm for containers larger than 187 ml, and 1 mm for containers of 187 ml or less. The lettering must also be legible, be set on a contrasting background, and appear separate and apart from, or be substantially more conspicuous than, other descriptive or explanatory information.

There are several optional items that winemakers may wish to include, but that are not mandatory. These optional labeling terms include: Varietal Designation, Appellation of Origin, American Viticultural Areas, Estate Bottled, Vintage date, Produced by or Made by statements, Vineyard, Orchard, Farm or Ranch Name and Organic Claim. Each of these has specific percentages and restrictions for use.

TTB has published an interim rule, effective July 26, 2006, allowing the voluntary labeling of major food allergens on the labels of wines, distilled spirits, and malt beverages.

Under the interim regulations, producers, bottlers, and importers of alcohol beverages may voluntarily declare the presence of milk, eggs, fish, Crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soybeans, as well as ingredients that contain protein derived from these foods, on a product label unless an exemption applies to the product in question.

TTB has also published a notice of proposed rulemaking regarding the mandatory labeling of major food allergens used in the production of wines, distilled spirits, and malt beverages that are subject to the labeling requirements of the Federal Alcohol Administration Act.

Also, on March 10, 2006, the US signed the Agreement between the United States and the European Community on Trade in Wine. One of the provisions of this agreement covered the use of Semi-Generic designations on wine produced outside of the specific European country where the wine designation originated. There are 16 designations, as well as Retsina. The list of these Semi-Generic designations covers Burgundy, Chablis, Champagne, Chianti, Claret, Haute Sauterne, Hock, Madeira, Malaga, Marsala, Moselle, Port, Rhine, Sauterne, Sherry, and Tokay

The law change disallows the use of these Semi-Generic designations or retsina on any NEW labels. Only those that are grandfathered may continue to use these semi-generic designations on their labels.

In general, most states adopt the federal standards, or require federal approval as a prerequisite for state approval. California, for example, only requires that the label receive federal approval; there are no additional state requirements. Other states, such as Oregon, require federal approval, but also have additional regulations specific to wines produced in that state. Additionally, some states have regulations that restate and emphasize the basic federal requirement that wine labels may not create any erroneous impressions about the wine. Each state's requirements are different and should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure compliance.