

365 by Whole Foods Market opens in Silver Lake with an impressive selection of organic wines and craft beer

By John Verive

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365 by Whole Foods, the market with a focus on lower prices and a streamlined shopping experience, opens today in Silver Lake. And while many areas of the store's inventory have been simplified compared with the full Whole Foods model, there's been no downsizing of the beer, wine and spirits department.

The 28,000-square-foot Silver Lake store is the first location in a coming wave of the millennial-minded grocery stores that feature lower prices and high-tech amenities. Besides the tea-dispensing machine from TeabOT that lets you custom blend a cup from a dozen different ingre-

dients via touch screen, all the price tags and signage in the store are digital, you can order hot foods via a tablet near the entrance (to pick up when you're done shopping) and there's even an app to help you navigate the booze department.

The idea, explains 365 by Whole Foods President Jeff Turnas, is to keep prices down through increased efficiency, and to narrow the selection of goods to prevent the kind of shopper's paralysis that we've all suffered when trying to decide which of the 14 different varieties of marinara sauce to buy.

It's a page out of the Trader Joe's book, but Turnas



says that they've worked hard to identify which products that customers want to have a wide array of options for, and which areas should have a streamlined inventory. The yogurt case, for instance, is stocked with all the brands and variations you'd find in a full-sized Whole Foods. "People have their favorite brands, or their specific type of yogurt," Turnas says. "It was important to provide those options for shoppers."

And selection isn't limited when it comes to adult beverages. Shelves holding nearly 400 SKUs of wine wrap around the back corner of the shop, and "99% of the bottles are under \$20," said department manager Mary Guiver. There's an emphasis on organic and biodynamic wines, which get a dedicated shelf in each of the varietal sections.

Nearly all the beer is stored cold, and the selection leans heavily on breweries from Southern California. Local brands such as El Segundo Brewing, Smog City Brewing and Strand Brewing Co. are well represented, and the beer selection is split between large-format options and six-packs of cans and bottles. The focus is squarely on year-round regular production brews with seasonal beers and special releases getting a small dedicated shelf outside of the cooler. There's a wide array of craft ciders

and a focused selection of imported beers alongside one cooler's worth of the classic brands from the big brewing companies. There's even a few options for organic brews (which are far less common than organic wines), including Bison Brewing, Eel River and Germany's Pinkus.

One of the tech features that 365 is pushing is the Banquet app. It helps shoppers navigate the sometimes esoteric booze aisle. An offshoot of the Delectable wine app that lets users rate and review wines, Banquet adds beer and spirits to the database and offers integration with the store's inventory. A standalone app for iOS and Android is planned, but until it's released, shoppers can use the in-store tablet kiosk to search the inventory, plan beer and wine pairings for the food in their cart, and even scan bottles that look interesting to get details and reviews.

While 365 probably won't replace Bill's Liquor in nearby Atwater Village as the go-to bottle shop for beer geeks, the new grocer offers a beer and wine selection that's pleasantly deep and thoughtfully assembled. There's also an attached Allegra cafe that offers four taps of craft beer and five varieties of wine, as well as cold brew and espresso drinks.

365 by Whole Foods Market, 2520 Glendale Blvd, Los Angeles, www.365bywfm.com/stores.