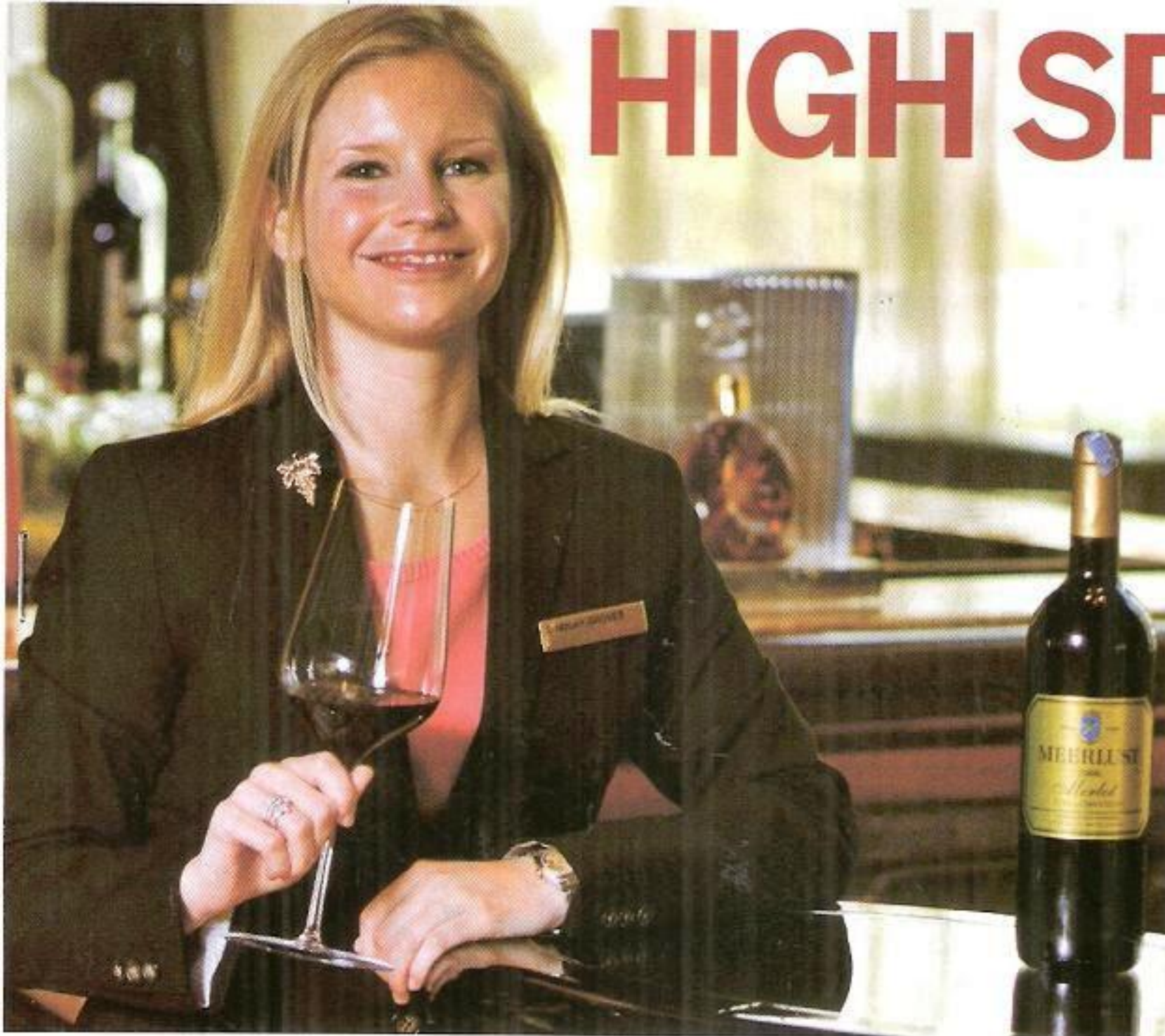


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Just passing



HIGH SPIRITED

Sommelier Lindsay Groves was recently at Sheraton Bangalore as a part of their Sommelier Nights event. She spoke to **Nidhi Nayer-Kang** about how wine pairing with food is more art than science

anything in excess is bad.

Which is your favourite Indian wine?

Among Indian wines, Sula is a high quality consistent wine. I also like Grover's La Reserve—a benchmark in Indian Reds. Grover Viognier is an excellent white table wine. Good Earth Winery also makes some fantastic red wines. Recently, Fratelli Wines—an Indo-Italian collaboration—is making great varieties of wine that are a good balance of Italian traditions with a modern twist. Their Chenin Blanc is the best—dry and refreshing.

How did your passion for wine begin?

I have always loved travelling, interacting with people and learning about other cultures. Hence, I wanted to do something that would keep this passion alive. Since, wine's an integral part of most Canadian households, I decided to study wine making, which was a new and exciting career choice then.

What does it take to be a sommelier?

Passion. Also, a good sommelier has to be open-minded and on top of what's currently available in the market. Being a good communicator is paramount to our job, which introduce people to the world of pairing wine with food. Being a sommelier is glamorous, but there's a lot of back-end stuff too, like ordering stocks, dealing with wineries, wine tasting and staff training.

In a culture that isn't familiar with wine, how do you convince

Indians to switch to wine and pair it with food?

Although the trend of wine pairing with food is still at a nascent stage in Bangalore, I love it that Bangaloreans are open to experimentation. In India, people drink wine/alcohol before their meals and water with the meals. So, my eureka moment is when people are convinced to switch spirits, and drink wine with meals, thereby adding a whole new dimension to their dining experience.

What are the health benefits of wine and the risks of drinking too much of it?

This is a rather controversial topic. With respect to wine, red wine is a healthy beverage, as long as it's limited to a glass a day or a few glasses a week. Red wine is rich in anti-oxidants like resveratrol and melatonin that are good for your heart and have anti-ageing and cancer-preventative properties. However, one must remember that

THE INDIAN FOOD-AND-WINE UNION

Wine selection depends on the cooking method, sauces and spices used. New World wines are more conducive to Indian dishes. With a perfect intensity, concentration and structure, these wines complement the Indian spices.

Tandoori Fish: Wines that are easy going and fruit flavoured, like a Merlot or a Pinot Noir, work beautifully.

Paneer Butter Masala: A light to medium-bodied red wine is recommended, Valpolicella or Barberry.

Desserts: Desserts usually go best with dessert wines. The general rule is that the wine should be sweeter than the dessert itself so that the flavours are enhanced. A Late Harvest Chenin Blanc or a traditional dessert wine like Bordeaux is perfect. ●