

# A Romantic Device

**The Butterfly** is the innovative answer to screwcapped wine bottle presentation, keeping the romance alive

photos by Bill Diehl

It's no secret that THE TASTING PANEL is a proponent of the screwcap closure.

"The screwcap or twist-off is the best of all closures," says Editor-in-Chief Anthony Dias Blue. "It is virtually impervious to TCA, it is hygienic, it is streamlined and easy to use and it recloses effortlessly." But what about the romance of the cork?

When we met up with Michael Levine, co-owner of Monty's Steak House in Woodland Hills, CA, we witnessed something that brought it all together—possibly the most creative solution to the notion that opening a screwcapped bottle tableside is something less than romantic.

"I made a conscious decision to take a negative and turn it into a positive—something beautiful," says Michael Levine, owner of Monty's Steak House in Woodland Hills, CA, and a 30-year veteran of the on-premise world. Levine's invention is a sleight of hand for sommeliers. With four to five twists of the wrist, the ceremony of opening a bottle—albeit a screwcapped wine—continues to entertain the customer.

"An estimated 19 billion bottles of wine were produced last year," Levine tells THE TASTING PANEL. "Of those 19 billion, two billion had screwcap closures."

The growing number of screwcapped wines worldwide—along with the resistance of many wine professionals and customers to purchase them because of incorrect presumptions, lack of knowledge or failure to take the wine's longevity into account—provided Levine with inspiration.



"Customer hesitation appears to be greatest with bottles priced at \$50 or more; they expect the traditional cork top" Levine attests. "It's at that point when the ceremony needs to be kept alive, a part of the dining experience. No one has dealt with the presentation aspect of screwcapped wine service before."

Levine's plans date back to over a year ago when he commissioned a local San Fernando Valley manufacturer to bring his technical drawings and concepts to life, with precise tooling. The mechanical and design patents are pending; however, The Butterfly is ready for global distribution.

"I don't doubt that many wine enthusiasts will fight for the cork closure," Levine surmises, "but at least with the The Butterfly, we can show a solution for those on the other side. This device will "Bridge the Gap between Cork and Cap."

For more information, go to [www.butterflywineopener.com](http://www.butterflywineopener.com). ■■



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