



## Date Night: Southern girl and city boy meet and make great wine.

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*by Jan Walsh    Photography by Beau Gustafson*



I recently lunched at Bottega Café with Napa Valley’s Suzanne Phifer Pavitt, proprietor of Phifer Pavitt. I enjoyed both her story and her wines.

Being proprietors of Phifer Pavitt is a dream come true for this devoted couple. Pavitt grew up in Ringgold, Ga., just about as far across the country as she could have been from her husband Shane Pavitt’s hometown of Manhattan Beach, Calif. Yet after 13 years of marriage they are still best friends, partially due to their weekly date night. The couple goes out on a date once a week with no technological devices — no “iAnything,” she says.

The vintage cowgirl on the Phifer Pavitt (a.k.a. Date Night) label is an authentic reflection of Suzanne’s typical attire. “Southern women are strong women,” she says. “It is okay to be a strong woman with a commanding presence. We can run a ranch with a firm hand, then clean up and be feminine.”

The wines are also true to her style: “Drink what you like. Make what you like.” Plan a date around a bottle of their red or white. Phifer Pavitt Cabernet Sauvignon (a.k.a. Date Night) 2008 offers notes of toffee, coffee, black cherry, plum and licorice. It is full-bodied with velvety edges and can be cellared until 2028. The Cabernet Sauvignon winemaker is Ted Osborne, and the

grower is Arthur Spencer. In its first vintage release is the Phifer Pavitt Sauvignon Blanc (a.k.a. Date Night) 2011. This Sancerre-inspired Sauvignon Blanc offers ripe notes of stone fruit, peach, honeydew melon and honey with a full-mouth feel. Sauvignon Blanc winemaker is Gary Warburton, with organically farmed fruit from Juliana Vineyards. And we have a Birmingham fan of the wines, Steve Young, to thank for encouraging the Pavitts to bringing these exceptional, small-production, organically farmed wines to Birmingham.

PHIFER PAVITT WINE

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