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Tempe winery offers partnerships

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As commercial and residential buildings pop up all over Tempe, Avenue Communities may surprise everyone with its next venture.

It is developing a winery named PurVine inside the downtown Centerpoint Condominiums.

Avenue Communities, the developer of the Centerpoint project, has partnered with Ray Signorello of Signorello Vineyards in California's Napa Valley to create the project.

"The idea is (that) you see the microbrewery concept all the time," said Ken Losch, the principal of Centerpoint Condominiums. "This is more sophisticated."

Losch is a partner in a Signorello winery in Vancouver, British Columbia. After seeing the success of that venture, the two decided to work together on this one.

Signorello is shipping 60 tons of grapes from Napa Valley to Tempe so wine production and the aging process can begin immediately. Signorello Vineyards, established in the mid-1980s, has a 100-acre vineyard on the Silverado Trail in Napa Valley.

The winery here will allow people to become partners who will be in charge of their wine - deciding how long to age it and going through the entire winemaking process.

Participants can purchase a partnership for \$500. Residents and people who do not live at the Centerpoint are eligible to be partners who will purchase a barrel of wine at a cost of \$9,000. Each partner will receive one barrel of wine, which equals 288 bottles or 24 cases.

Partners participate in winemaking by determining how long to age their wine. The winery will be in a temperature-controlled, glass-enclosed area that can be used to

store the wine and for tastings. Winemaking will occur at PurVine from the crushing of the grapes to fermentation in stainless steel tanks.

The wine will be aged in American or French oak barrels.

During their first year PurVine will produce Cabernet Sauvignon. Other varietals will be produced in the future.

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