



# C'est la vie!

## French vintner tickles Indian palates

By Vineetha Mokkil

**G**iving Indians a taste of French wine was high on Rajiv Singhal's agenda during his recent visit to the city to introduce a French wine training series to Pune-kars.

The series has already been held in Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai and Kolkata. Rajiv Singhal is head of the Indian bureau of the Food and Beverage Marketing and Promotion Board of France

"Pune has great consumer potential for the imported wine market," said Singhal, citing the *raison d'être* for the debut of the series in the city. "The city has a large chunk of moneyed people. There is also a viable possibility of trade via hotels and retailers here," he added.

The training series featured wines from various regions of France. Participants at the training session were food and beverage managers, professionals from the hospitality industry, wine sellers and importers.

"Our aim is to cultivate French wine culture in this country. We are disseminating information so that the Indian consumer has a good understanding of French wines and begins to appreciate them," said Sing-

hal.

India imports 1,20,00 cases of wine per year. Compared to countries like China (which imports two million cases annually) this is a small market. "But the market for imported wines in India is growing fast," said Singhal.

Keeping this in mind, Singhal's bureau has been organising wine tasting sessions for select women's groups too. The contemporary Indian woman's growing economic prowess has placed her in a prominent place on the wine consumers' list.

"Through these sessions, we try to find out which wines appeal to Indian women's tastes and which varieties they are interested in buying," he added. More such wine training sessions in the course of the year are on the cards.

*L'Apertif a la Francaise*, an annual global celebration of French food and wine, will be visiting Pune in the near future. French cuisine enthusiasts in the city can look forward to some good times ahead.



TRANSIT  
LOUNGE