

Raley's upping customer service for wine buyers

By Sonya Sorich, Sacramento Business Journal

As competition for local grocery shoppers' attention increases, Raley's Inc. is heightening its focus on wine.

So don't be surprised if you soon see a wine steward in your local Raley's store, ready to help you decide which adult beverage to serve at your big Saturday night dinner.

"It's our job to make sure the customer comes in and doesn't feel overwhelmed," said Curtis Mann, a wine, beer and spirits buyer for the West Sacramento-based grocer.

The wine stewards are part of an effort that began about two years ago: a decision to transform 20 of the company's approximately 120 locations into "wine shop stores," according to Mann. Those 20 stores include Raley's locations, as well as Bel Air Markets and Nob Hill Foods, which the grocer also operates.

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