

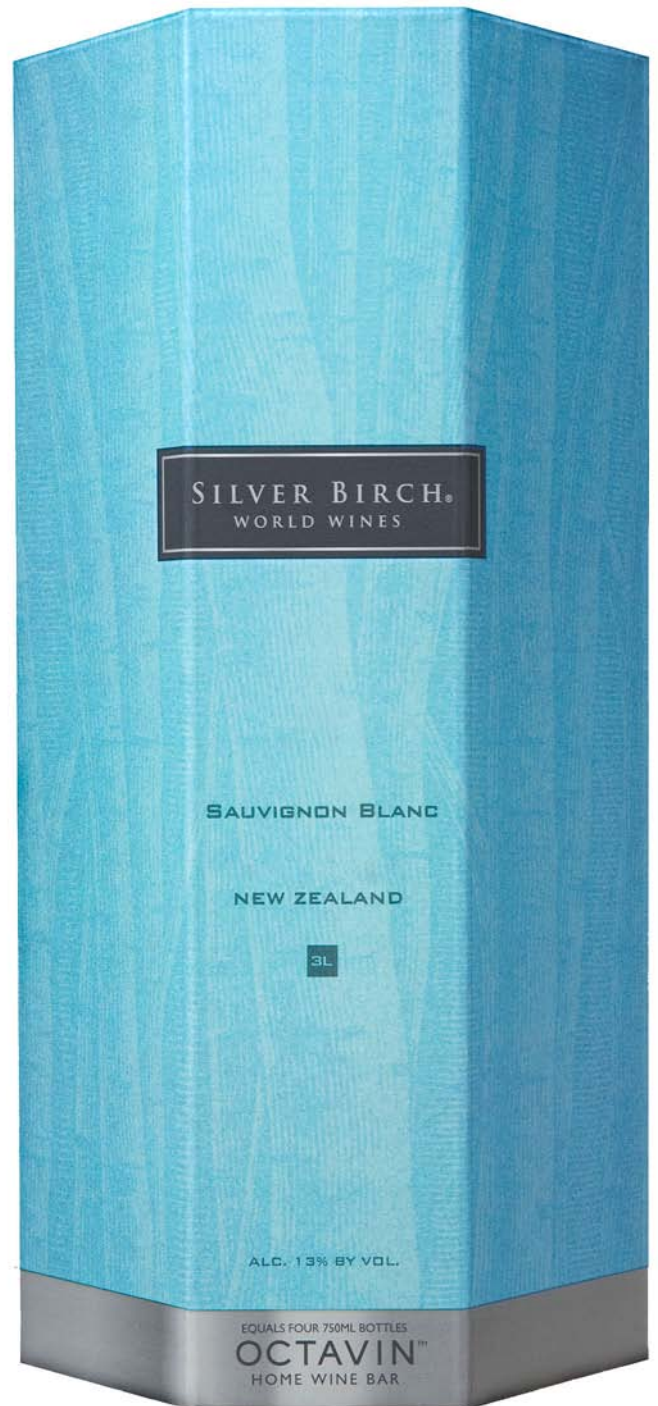
# OCTAVIN<sup>®</sup>

## HOME WINE BAR

Silver Birch Sauvignon Blanc  
is a 'Sip that Sparkles'

# Orlando Sentinel

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### Budget Bites and Sips that Sparkle

#### Family Features

If you're in the mood to host a holiday party but think you don't have the time – or the budget – think again. "You don't need to spend a lot of money to throw a fabulous and memorable event. Keep it simple and special. You and your guests will enjoy it even more," say Dawn Sandomeno and Elizabeth Mascali, founders of [www.party-blogprintsblog.com](http://www.party-blogprintsblog.com) and authors of "Plan to Party" (Yorkshire Publishing 2010). Here are some tips that will help you throw a stylish, low-stress party that will make your guests merry without spending a bundle.

**Go with the Grape.** Instead of an open bar, offer a selection of wines that will appeal to different tastes. Try setting up a home wine bar and let guests serve themselves. Provide sparkling water with lemon slices as a refreshing non-alcoholic option.

- To stretch your budget without sacrificing quality, consider wines that are packaged in 3L casks, which offer significant savings over the same wine in bottles. Many premium wines are now available in this format. The Octavin Home Wine Bar collection offers distinctive artisan wines in bottles and casks from France, New Zealand, Germany, Spain and South Africa.
- Plan on serving about two glasses of wine per guest every two hours. A standard 750 ml bottle of wine holds about 5 servings, while a 3L premium cask yields around 30 glasses. The cask has the added benefit that once opened, the wine stays fresh for up to six weeks, so any leftover wine won't be wasted.
- Have plenty of glasses available, and provide festive colored wax pencils so guests can mark their glasses. Inexpensive stemless glasses make for a casual option and work well for all beverages.

To learn more about the Octavin Home Wine Bar Collection, visit [www.OctavinHomeWineBar.com](http://www.OctavinHomeWineBar.com).

**Keep it Simple.** Guests won't be expecting a meal, so set out a variety of appetizers you can prepare well in advance. Determine budget per person ahead of time and try to stick to it. Last minute shopping is always more expensive.

- Stick with finger foods – they're easier for guests to manage, which lets them mix and mingle. And because they don't require utensils, you have less to clean up afterward.
- Don't go overboard – 3 or 4 types of appetizers are plenty. Plan for each person to eat around 8 to 10 pieces over two hours.
- Set out a cheese plate with 3 or 4 cheeses of different textures and flavor profiles. Include some fruit and good bread, along with spiced nuts.
- Bite-sized desserts put a sweet finish on the evening. Holiday cookies, festive cupcakes or mini-cheesecake bites let guests indulge without over doing it. Or, ask guests to bring holiday cookies to share.

#### Make it Special.

- Sounds of the season help set the mood and can be had with a click. Free online sites like Pandora offer playlist options like "Classical Christmas" and "R & B Pop Holiday."
- Most importantly, keep out of the kitchen. Set out all the food and drinks before your guests arrive so you can relax and share the holiday cheer with your guests.
- When it comes to decorations, Sandomeno and Mascali advise using what you already have and supplementing with a few inexpensive basics

such as candles, glass vases and gold accents. "The simple combination of candlelight and gold makes everything shine," say the party experts.

Roasted Rosemary Cashews  
Time: 15 minutes total  
Yield: 3 cups

*1 1/2 pounds roasted cashews*  
*3 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary leaves*  
*1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper*  
*2 teaspoons brown sugar*  
*2 teaspoons sea salt*  
*1 tablespoon melted butter*

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Place nuts on ungreased baking sheet and bake for around 10 minutes until warm. Combine fresh rosemary, cayenne, sugar, salt and butter in a bowl and add in the warm nuts. Coat completely. Serve warm.

Suggested Wine Pairing: Silver Birch Sauvignon Blanc  
#10891\_AR  
Source: Octavin

