

# Learning From A Legend:

## Madge Baril, The Founder of The Wine Baril



“Be honest, serve people, and be open to sharing your expertise with people whether they are your customers or not.”

“It’s the people that make the business. I love people. My gift was being able to make friends wherever I went”.

### Madge Baril

Founded The Wine Baril March 19, 1971 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Still in operation today.

## Madge Baril, Honored for her Contributions to the Wine Making Industry in Canada

### The Keys to Long Term Business Success

Building long term success in business is a challenging game. There are many factors that can make or break our success if our business eyes are not tuned in to what is happening all around us. The most important lesson I have learned in building sustainable business success comes first hand from my mother, Madge Baril, founder of The Wine Baril (one of the first home wine and beer making supply stores in Canada). It is the ingredient in my business recipe that accelerates my success more than any other business tool on the planet. If you can master this one element and maintain its integrity in the life of your business, you will receive spiral and viral success both in business and in life. The secret element is this:

***Make relationships with everyone you meet your #1 priority and always serve others unconditionally.***

Madge Baril was recently honored at [Vineco International's](#) 40th anniversary celebration. Not only did she start a working relationship with their organization 40 years ago, but my brother Bob Baril who currently owns [The Wine Baril](#) still works with them today. According to Rick Vanderberg at Vineco International, “It has always been a real privilege to work with The Wine Baril who show unquestionable professionalism in the Wine Making industry. Madge has been a true pioneer in the development of this industry not only in the Winnipeg marketplace but on a national scale as well.

Much of [The Wine Barils'](#) success can be attributed to the relationships Madge and her son Bob have built with their customers”.

**A Recipe For Success**

I recently sat down with my mom to find out the secrets to her success in business and in life. What she believes it takes to “be the best for the world”.

**What does it take to make a business succeed in your opinion?**

**Madge:** Be honest and serve everyone. Take the time out to help people when they need your advice. We gave away free advice to our customers and to people who bought their products at competitor’s stores. It was about serving people no matter where they came from. It built our credibility and helped people make great wine/ beer products.

**For someone starting out today what advice would you give them?**

**Madge:** Be patient and cater to your customers. Be pleasant and pay attention to people.

I really believe what made us grow was our strategy to re-invest in our own business from profits made. I think many people go wrong when they take money out of their business too soon.



**Photo taken at Vineco International Industry Event June 2012 (from left to right): Madge Baril, Founder of The Wine Baril, Bob Baril owner of the Wine Baril, and Mike Hind, Marketing Manager of Wine Kitz.**

**How did you ride waves of your business because business has it’s up’s and down?**

**Madge:** On occasion, we had to find new ways to market products that were sitting on the shelves when business was slow. For example, we ordered a big shipment of demijohn bottles one time thinking they would sell fast. They were a huge investment but were not selling as planned. So I created terrariums. As I loved gardening, I saw an opportunity in selling gardens in a bottle.

It caught the attention of our customers and soon the demijohns and terrariums were being purchased. Being open to creating new ways to market our products mattered, especially starting out.



We also found ways to create additional streams of income to sustain us when things were slow. A business owner has to persevere and realize success doesn't happen over night.

**Why did you risk starting a business with a family of 9 children to care for?**

**Madge:** It didn't seem like a risk at the time. I was given a part time job with one of the first companies who operated a wine and beer making supply store right beside our home. They let me bring my kids with me to work when they were not at school. I learned all aspects of the business and became knowledgeable in the industry. The owner who hired me encouraged my husband Romeo and I to start our own company across town. He even provided us with a supplier list and start up supplies on loan to help us get going. The industry was expanding and demand in the market was increasing. We could see a great opportunity and were willing to invest our time and money to make it work.

**What was the most interesting part of business for you?**

**Madge:** It was meeting the people every day that made it a fascinating business. It was also a great reward to make a good living from the hard work we put into it. I remember how



**Image: Current location of the Wine Baril on 591 Archibald Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba. It has remained in the community of St. Boniface for 41 years.**

excited we were when we started making \$100.00/ day. We felt grateful. I loved helping people solve their problems and was passionate about what I did.

**What would you change?**

**Madge:** I can't think of anything I would have changed. At one point, we changed the hours of operation. We used to open evenings and lost valuable time at home. We cut back evenings and that worked better for us and our family. It was an amazing learning experience.

Bob made some great changes to serve our customers when he took over in 1989.

**Is the customer always right?**

**Madge:** Yes. Treat people well. Even if people do not treat you kindly always treat them

respectfully and you will reap the rewards.

**How did family play a role in your business?**

**Madge:** When we started out we had many challenges and it was a hard time in our lives. We had a strong faith and that helped us get through the ups and downs. God was good to us. My greatest gift in life was my children. We worked hard to make it work for them and us. We built a family, a business and welcomed everyone with love. It's what matters most in life.

*Madge Baril is now retired and enjoys traveling to meet more great people. To learn more about The Wine Baril, contact Bob Baril at (204) 237-3936.*

**About Denise Baril**  
 Denise is Madge's daughter, CEO of Marketing Matters Canada, and Founder of the Workplace Speaker Network. To reach Denise: marketingmatters@me.com (403) 620 - 5010