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## 'Wine boutique' fits in with city's cosmopolitan feel, owner says

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The staff at Vinea prides itself on being able to suggest different wines to customers, yet keep them within their price range. (SUBMITTED PHOTO)

When asked to describe Vinea, City of Wine, the closest they could come was “wine boutique.”

But unlike most boutiques, there's something in this store for the novice or connoisseur, for those looking to spend \$10 or \$100.

“Nashville's becoming a much more cosmopolitan city,” said Kristen Maharrey, one of the owners. “With all the development downtown, in The Gulch and in the 12th South area, there was a need for this store. Everyone who's walked in said this is the perfect place for this, this is the perfect idea.”

The wine store opened in the 12South area late last year. Maharrey knew she wanted to open a wine store, and she knew that building owner Brett Corrieri, owner of Corrieri's Formaggeria and chef at MAFIAoZA's, wanted a wine store in this space.

There was something lacking in this market, Corrieri said. “We wanted a store that wasn't so cluttered. We carry the commodities, but we also introduce people to new wines at incredible values.”

It was also important to Maharrey that the sales staff be knowledgeable about wine.

“The salespeople are enthusiastic about wine,” Maharrey said. “Many have other jobs and do this because they love wine and want to introduce people to good wines.”

During a store tour, co-owner Mark Johnson explains how it's laid out, beginning with the wines along the walls. There sit the best bottles of each varietal, priced between \$9.99 and \$15.99. On the left side of the store are the American, South African and South American wines, along with the cooler, where a large section of white wines are chilled.

On the right side is a very large Italian wine section; wines from Portugal and France lay behind that. The owners are in the midst of having a cellar constructed for wines that should be aged.

In the rear of the store sit a collection of half bottles of wine, along with high-end spirits and beers.

"It's been fun to introduce people to new things," Corrieri said.