



Christou's wine bar, The Living Room, brings a laid-back option to SoCo area

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DJ Tyler "Danger" Jacobson, right, will spin his last set at Lipgloss at La Rumba tonight with longtime partner boyhollow, left. (Denver Post file photo)



Just south of downtown, beer practically flows in the streets. The neighborhood south of Colfax Avenue could be called the Golden Triangle, or "SoCo" if you're at a nightclub operated by local maven Regas Christou, or maybe Western Capitol Hill. Whatever it is, suds and suds-drinkers abound. From neighborhood bars to booming nightclubs, there's a place to tinkle for every taste.

Well, almost: It's not the first place to poke around for a relaxing glass of wine.

Fortunately, that's changing. Club owner and neighborhood stalwart Christou is trying to temper the area's hard-partying character with **The Living Room** (1055 Broadway), a laid-back wine bar in the heart of the madness, opening tonight. Christou has two party places on the same block as The Living Room, **Vinyl** and **Bar Standard**, but he's hoping the new joint will work with **City Hall** (1144 Broadway), another of his recent additions, to bring in an older, chiller crowd.



"In order to stay in the business, you have to appeal to different people," says Christou. "This presents an opportunity for us to do that." Plus, Christou says, the sedate Living Room reflects his own taste in night life. "Sometimes you can mix business preferences with personal preferences," he says. "I'm not 25 years old anymore."

Indeed, The Living Room's focus is squarely on kicking back and sipping juice. So much so that Christou hired a sommelier, **Josh Seawell**, to manage his new venture.

Seawell's new toy is the Enomatic, a self-service station that dispenses wine by the glass and by the ounce, for tasting. Customers load up an access card with money at the bar, then use it as a sort of debit card at the Enomatic. Prices for sips of wine by the ounce range from about \$1.25 to \$6.

Seawell says the Enomatic is the first of its kind in Denver, and only the second in Colorado. It's a good deal for drinkers curious about a new wine, but who don't want to risk dropping \$80 on a full bottle. Since high-end bottles often aren't available by the glass, having a sip first will help.

"People can see the wine and taste the wine for only a couple bucks," says Seawell, noting that the Enomatic keeps wines from spoiling while they're in the machine.

Seawell takes an egalitarian approach to wine drinking, disregarding wine's snooty stigma.

"I don't know why everyone feels like they have to know something (about wine) to enjoy themselves," he says. "Just know what you like. ... It's not some secret club." He also wants to expand the palates of seasoned drinkers with tastings, classes and a club card that tracks a user's tastings on the Enomatic. "I think people will attach themselves to one or two descriptors of wine," he says. "But everyone should try something once, just to know what it is."



There's beer, too, for those inclined, though the Bud and Bud Light taps sit at the end of a line of Colorado microbrews. A small menu of Mediterranean snacks is available, as well, including olives, hummus, dolmades and cheese-and-meat plates.

Low couches, high-backed booths and a front patio (with hanging bubble chairs!) will help The Living Room live up to its name. Just add people: people who want to have a conversation, hang out and make friends with a bottle of wine.

According to Christou, it's not just this neighborhood that needs a peaceful spot to unwind. "We need something like this all over town."

About: The Living Room

Denver, CO – The Living Room is located at 1055 Broadway in Denver, and opens August 28, 2009, with a fabulous wine and beer list, a menu of mouth-watering small dishes and sweets along with an Enomatic wine sampling system allowing customers the ability to taste 24 varying wines by the ounce simply with the swipe of a card and a touch of a button.

The Enomatic systems in The Living Room (the first of its kind in Denver) preserve and dispense wines by the ounce, allowing guests to experience a variety of wines both room temperature and chilled, for the utmost tasting experience. Tastes range from approximately \$2 to \$6 per ounce. The wine list is ever-changing including distinctive national choices and international staples to allow for varied tasting experiences. We also offer designer cocktails and a complete craft beer & micro brew menu for those more inclined to hops than the grape.

The menu is full of small plates of Mediterranean dishes with an ever-changing fresh menu of choices from an assortment of olives, cheeses and meats, to paninis, halumi cheese, dolmades and hummus along with plenty of sweets to pair with your wine.

Along with exceptional, friendly service The Living Room offers a warm, seductive yet casual ambiance in this comfortable and stylish setting complete with high backed booths, hanging retro bubble chairs, low lights, great sounds, gathering bar, urban patio and just the right touch of downtown aire, all in a unpretentious setting that takes the intimidation out of wine tasting. This isn't just another venue to experience; it is an experience unto itself.

The Living Room is part of The South of Colfax Nightlife District which includes City Hall Amphitheatre, The Funky Buddha Lounge, Bar Standard, Milk, Mo's, The Church, Vinyl, 2am Afterhours, and Fidel's Mexican Cantina. We are located on Broadway, just one block south of the Denver Art Museum between 10th and 11th. Come mingle with the locals and taste the flavor 7 days per week. Hours: Sunday – Thursday 4pm-midnight and Friday & Saturday 4pm – 2am.