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Vinology

I recently had the pleasure to meet with Kristin Jonna, owner of Vinology, a wonderful wine bar in Ann Arbor. Vinology opened in April of 2006. Kristin has a real passion for wine that developed while living and interning in Europe. Starting as a "cellar rat", Kristin learned the wine business from the ground up. After returning from Europe, she moved to Sonoma Valley and spent a year working with Benzinger Winery. Kristin returned to Michigan and leveraged her family's experience as owners of Merchants Fine Wine to open her first wine bar – Vinoteca in Royal Oak. Vinology followed a year later.

Vinology seeks to educate its patrons through wine tastings, food pairings and subtle suggestions to move outside their comfort zones. If you come into visit – and I encourage you to visit – expect to be offered a glass of a non-traditional varietal that will expand your palate. The Vinology staff has been well trained and educated on all of its new and exciting varietals. So, if you are a California Pinot Noir aficionado, you might be offered Pinot from New Zealand, or, if you prefer white wine, you might sample a Falanghina from Italy.

To get the full experience, you should visit all four "areas" within Vinology. The sleek and sophisticated **Wine Bar** welcomes you with bottles that appear suspended from the walls. It is a full service bar and I am told that it offers a wonderful martini that is made from ice wine – I decided to save this pleasure for a return trip.

The **Main Dining Area** has spacious high top booths accented with custom-designed boxes mounted above each table. At Vinology, no opportunity is missed to educate the wine lover and enhance their experience. So, at each booth in the dining area, there is a box filled with a unique wine related element and a description of how that element affects the wine in your glass. Downstairs in the "**Bubble Room**", along the back wall, is a sculpture that describes the various production processes for sparkling wine. The Bubble Room is an intimate dining area that earned its name from the hand blown glass "bubbles" that hang from the ceiling. Keep this unique wine tasting setting in mind for New Year's Eve or Valentine's Day!

Finally, the glass encased **Cellar Room** offers a unique setting for a dining and wine education experience. The room has one long table that seats twelve people. The wood bins on the sides of the room are filled with wine bottles. This is a wonderful space to celebrate with friends, host a private party or a wine tasting event.

Kristin and her staff are accessible, knowledgeable and eager to challenge the long time wine lover and entice the wine novice. If you are in the Ann Arbor area, stop for a glass or bottle at Vinology. I suggest trying a glass of Can Feixes, a white blend from Spain or, for the adventurous types, Chateau D'Orignac a fortified wine from France.

