

Splendor in the glass at Vino 100

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When La Costa residents Molly and Mark Pereira started looking into opening an upscale beverage franchise in San Marcos, they first thought of coffee. But after a little research on the Internet, Molly found out about a specialty wine franchise called Vino 100, a sister franchise of the Tinderbox, a high-end tobacco and accessory store.

With its foodie lifestyle image, wine fit the bill for the couple's investment, said Molly Pereira, but with considerably less competition than coffee.

"I think wine is working its way into the American lifestyle," said Mark, who still works full time as a mortgage broker for Countrywide. "It used to be a class kind of thing, but it's gotten very affordable, and now it has become mainstream America. I think I read that last year, white wine outsold beer for the first time. And that says a lot."

The concept behind the Pereiras' and other Vino 100 shops is to make buying wine consumer friendly, not intimidating. "I think personally that when you walk into larger wine



NOW SERVING



- **WHAT:** Vino 100
- **WHERE:** Grand Plaza/Nordstrom Rack, 133 S. Las Posas #102, San Marcos
- **HOURS:** 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mon-Thurs; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fri-Sat; 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sun. Closed Tuesday.
- **PRICES:** 100 wines for \$25 or less
- **CALL:** (760) 591-9113 or visit www.vino100sanmarcos.com.

Mark and Molly Pereira, the owners of Vino 100, open a bottle of 2004 Big Mouth Shiraz in their wine store in San Marcos recently.

HAYNE PALMOUR IV
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➤ GLASS

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shops, it's overwhelming," said Mark. "You don't know where to start, and those numbers (the 100-point rating system used by Wine Spectator magazine and others) are really just one person's taste."

Vino 100 uses a so-called wine barometer, cards below each wine providing an illustrative graphic indicating its level of dryness or fruitiness and its flavor. The bottles are also arranged around the store in order of taste, starting with the most fruity and light wines on the east wall and moving to the dry and full-bodied wines lining the west wall.

The Pereiras stock about 200 different wines — red, white, sparkling and dessert — from all over the world. And though their wines sometimes overlap with others that consumers might find elsewhere, the majority of the selection is unique to Vino 100.

Molly said 75 percent of the wines in their shop come from the company's extensive list, which, she added, is reasonably priced. The company is able to negotiate good prices with vineyards because it purchases wines in bulk.

"And they are constantly



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Bottles line the walls of the Vino 100 wine store in San Marcos.

bringing in new ones," said Molly. "Like in September, we're going to have a promotion of South African wines." Others, such as Carlsbad Coastal Winery's "Mellow Apathy," a sauvignon blanc from local vintner Brian Vitek, are unique.

The store opened in December, and Molly has already begun to organize a number of events. There is a Winey Mom's Club on the sec-

ond Wednesday and Thursday of the month which features a speaker (such as a relationship counselor) or an activity (paraffin waxing) and wine tasting. Wine tastings take place from 5 to 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays for \$15, and happy hour tastings are from 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday and Thursdays for \$5.

Molly has also organized several wine pairing events, such as tonight's Amuse Bouche pairing event at 6:30 p.m. at the Quail Restaurant at the Lake San Marcos resort.

"Growing up in Hawaii, my father and my grandfather made wine for our own consumption," said Mark, 44, adding the company has 44 franchises nationwide but no others in San Diego County besides theirs. "It was always a dream of mine to have my own little vineyard."

Vino 100 in San Marcos and Quail Restaurant at Lake San Marcos Resort hosts a "Wine and Amuse-Bouche Pairing" of wines and appetizers at 6:30 p.m. tonight at the restaurant. Cost is \$50 per person. Reserve to (760) 591-9113, or visit info@vino100sanmarcos.com.

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