



BOISE WEEKLY - SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

Vivo Il Vino

BY [RACHAEL DAIGLE](#)

En route to a seedy establishment for the sole purpose of fulfilling the requirements of this editorial space, the surly hand of fate instead steered me in the unexpected direction of La Cantina Sociale. Last year, the wine bar and store took up residence in the shopping center--where a U.S. Post Office and Ace Hardware make for incongruent neighbors to a wine bar--at Cole and Ustick roads.



Owner Sicily native Giuseppe Veneziano caters to a very specific niche of Italian wine drinkers, with a range of wines as diverse as the north of Italy is from its southern and island regions. When I stopped in on a Saturday afternoon--thinking I'd have a quick look around in between a tight schedule of errands--Veneziano gave me a minute to wander the racks before sidling up and coercing me into a quick tasting. An admitted novice in Italian wine, I sampled all three bottles (the last of which he rightly described as the grandfather of the family) that had been opened for the day's tasting before ordering a glass of Majus for myself and a Barbera for my friend. The wine bar, a quaint little space reminiscent of European cafes, is enclosed by wooden lattice and extends out into a simple umbrella-covered patio. The modest collection of tables plays host to rather exclusive authentic Sicilian dinners, as well as weekly open houses with hors d'oeuvres and frequent wine classes.

Veneziano himself is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable host, who, in true Italian fashion, made immediate friends out of us and spent the better part of an hour drinking wine with us and enlarging photos of his hometown, Motta Sant'Anastasia, on Google Earth. In all, it was an afternoon nonpareil, and one which I soon hope to follow with a Sicilian spread and more Italian wine.

--Rachael Daigle

La Cantina Sociale, 3395 N. Cole Rd., 377-0224, www.lacantinasociale.com.