



## Entertainment

### Verde is a Find

By Varnit Pickeral | Richmond.com  
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First we saw the wine: **Domaine Tariquet Sauvignon Blanc**, a ripe melon of a wine from SW, France; Rentas de Fincas Rioja Reserva 02, the Wine Spectator-rated-red that tastes of cedar, smoke and cherries; and Kenwood Jack London Cabernet, an elegant oddball that smells like a field of eucalyptus.

Then we saw the tapas; Marinated Garlic Mushrooms, Almonds and Olives, and Pili's tortilla de Patata. Finally, we saw the prices: Cheap. All the wines were well under \$30 and the tapas were \$2.99 for a small serving and \$5.99 for a large one.

Initial Conclusion: [Verde](#) is managed by a waiter who likes to travel or a wine rep.

As it turns out, Verde, the far West End's newest wine bar and take-out spot, is run by both.

The restaurant is a partnership between a couple of local sports bar owners and a previous **Robins Cellars** wine rep, formerly of [Patina Grill](#). **Brian Munford**, chef at Patina, should be proud.

Verde strives to serve healthy food, and they do, but what is most exciting to me is the fact that the food at Verde, a "wine bar," actually goes with wine.

It is possible to get a handful of Marcona almonds and fat, green olives, swimming in good olive oil with crushed red pepper and roasted garlic with a dry, Spanish white wine – for about \$10. I can't think of a better way to end a workday than with a glass of wine and this snack.

Pili's tortilla de Patata, an omelet stuffed with potatoes, sliced thinly and served chilled, goes with almost any wine on the menu of the 20 or so Verde offers by the glass. The house-made, Marinated Garlic Mushrooms are packed with fresh and dried herbs and bitsy garlic. Both of these tapas are perfect for after work grazers.

European wine bars often are casual places where a lot of the food is pre-made and readied for quick stop-ins. Verde is no different.

For the most part, it doesn't affect the quality of their food.

The Spanish Serrano Ham & Cheese Panini, \$6.99, is made in advance and then finished in a sandwich press. It arrives molten and gooey, the ham pleasantly salty with the bread offering just enough substantial resistance. The Roasted Beef and Mushroom Panini \$6.99, is a wine and garlic soaked combo of 'shroom and thinly sliced beef. Both sandwiches are simple, salubrious bites served with chips and pickle. Nothing crazy good, but factor how quickly you can stop in and pick up lunch (or have it delivered) and it's easy to imagine becoming a regular at Verde.

One area where Verde suffers is in the salad department.

The Grilled Pear and Goat Cheese Salad, \$5.99, fell short of stellar as I picked around wilted field greens to get to the baking spice studded- poached pear and creamy, local goat cheese. Field greens do not hold well in an aerobic, plastic clam shell to-go container. This salad would be so much better made ala minute. Had I had the salad just-made, instead of picked out of a deli case on my way home, I would have been over the moon.

One other small complaint I have about Verde is the amount of packaging used to pack to-go orders. The Tortilla de Spinach, a lovely omelet sliver with fresh spinach, came in a huge plastic to-go container when a little ol' piece of tin foil would have served the purpose just as well. I recognize that restaurants want food to travel well, but it doesn't have to be enshrined – just packed correctly to prevent crushing.

Verde opened in April and has developed a huge **Innsbrook** and office clientele following. It's cute, fresh interior painted in ecru and green



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with a jewel box sitting area is inviting, though dead, weeknights.

But with so many well-chosen wines and snacks to pillage, it won't be for long.

**Verde \*\*1/2**

10325 W. Broad St.

Phone: 804-217-9333

Atmosphere- Contemporary, green chic

Wheelchair Access-Yes

Recommended-Tapas, fair trade coffee, Italian sodas, huge selection of salads (get 'em just made)

Wine list –Casual European with boutique California /US wines

Hours-9-9 M-F and 11-8 Sat and Sun

Payment- major forms of payment accepted

 **READERS COMMENTS**

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Posted by cornONthecob on June 10, 2009

where exactly is it? is it in Innsbrook?

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Posted by varmit on June 11, 2009

No, not in Innsbrook.It is across Broad Street, up the road from Innsbrook, in a strip mall (surprise) visible peripherally only, not head on. You'd better MapquestVP

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