

ALL OVER THE MAP

LOS ANGELES

VINO VENDOR

Who needs a sommelier? At **Vinum Populi** (“wine for the people”), all you need is a debit card. This hi-tech, self-serve wine bar in Culver City dispenses one-ounce pours with the touch of a button. Just insert a prepaid card into the Enomatic (a vending machine for wine), and you’re ready to sip and savor. With 48 wines to choose from, deciding which one to taste first is the only difficult part. The cost for each glass — from \$0.68 to \$16 — is deducted from your card, making this a great way to taste several wines, especially the more expensive bottles.

Italian reds are Vinum’s specialty, but you’ll find selections from around the world, including a few whites. (10–20 bottles are rotated each week.) Each bottle is kept fresh in the Enomatic machine by a layer of Argon gas that creates a seal to keep it from oxidizing. (The ancient Romans floated olive oil for the same effect.)

Enomatics originated in Tuscany and can be found at venues throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Vinum was the first wine lounge in L.A. with Enomatics. The cozy, elegant space features exposed brick walls, dim lights, and candles that add old-world charm to the otherwise modern decor. The atmosphere is welcoming and creates a sense of community conducive to mingling; customers enjoy gathering around the Enomatics to discuss their favorite wines. Plus, you don’t have to wait and get a bartender’s attention in order to be served: Just press a button and savor.

— *Liz Laing*