



## Vino Volo Ready For Bethesda Takeoff

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Doug Tomlinson's first "city" location of his [Vino Volo wine lounge](#) will have to wait an extra week before it makes its public debut — Hurricane Sandy delayed the delivery of some inventory traveling through Newark Airport in storm-battered New Jersey.

But the CEO and founder of the upscale wine bar was more than pleased with the first non-airport edition in Vino Volo's portfolio, which now will open to the public on Friday, Nov. 16 at 7243-7247 Woodmont Ave.

"The people who live in this neighborhood are the same people who travel a lot, so they've already fallen in love with us and we have a lot of loyal fans here," Tomlinson said during an introductory VIP and media reception at the lounge on Thursday night. "We wanted to be in a market where we were already known and where we were getting requests to do this and the Bethesda market is one of those."

Tomlinson started the company in 2004 after noticing something missing in airport terminal eateries — a dedicated wine bar featuring a top-notch wine selection. After opening the first Vino Volo in 2005 in Dulles Airport, the company took off with 17 more airport locations since.

In the spring, Vino Volo will open another city location in Tysons Corner.

The formula will remain mostly the same. Staff will offer flights of three wines with a menu of upscale small plates dishes, sandwiches and deserts that match those wines.

A typical tasting of three wines ranges from \$8 to \$16. The lounge and restaurant will also serve as a wine retail store. The menu includes a wide range: California wines, local labels, seasonal (a Thanksgiving flight of Cabernet Franc, Grenache and Riesling was on the menu Thursday), Italian and a number of other categories.

Tomlinson was confident the San Francisco-based company could make the transition from captive audience behind airport security gates to Bethesda Row restaurant-goers.

"We never really took for granted people in an airport. We said let's make it really meaningful with an educated staff and quality selection," Tomlinson said. "You can force somebody to buy a bad glass of wine, but you can't force them to sit down and buy a flight of three."

"At the end of the day, when I first founded this company my goal was not to be the best wine lounge in an airport," Tomlinson said, "but to be the best wine tasting destination period."

