

# Toast to new tasting room at Jimmy's

By **TINA DANZE**

Special Contributor

A capacity-crowd of 43 jammed into the "back room" at Jimmy's Food Store last week for the first Italian wine tasting and dinner in the new tasting room.

The opener featured a three-course Italian dinner with wines from the Cecchi Family Estates, presented by fourth-generation Tuscan winemaker Andrea Cecchi.

The room was conceived as a venue for Italian winemakers and vendors, says Paul DiCarlo, co-owner of Jimmy's with brother Mike. "It's special to meet the winemaker," he says, "especially if you don't have a chance to go over there."

Guests got to sample seven Cecchi wines, including a brooding vermentino and the 2001 Sangiovese Super Tuscan, Spargolo, along with a hearty antipasto platter; gnocchi in tomato-cream sauce; sun-dried tomato and artichoke ravioli; and a mixed grill of beef tenderloin, lamb chop and Italian sausage, accompanied by potatoes and asparagus.

Mr. DiCarlo added some drama, awarding Cecchi wines as door prizes to a few lucky guests.

Afterward, attendees shopped the store while sampling Italian cookies made by Mary Martha Francis, the DiCarlo brothers' sister.

The new tasting room evolved after fire ravaged the family-owned

Italian-neighborhood market two years ago.

When the neighboring hair salon opted not to return to the building, which the DiCarlos own, the brothers annexed the adjoining space to create a back room.

With its original stamped-tin ceiling, burgundy-colored walls lined with wine racks and mural of Taormina, Sicily, the intimate room has the charm of an old-world Italian restaurant. For the Cecchi event, the wine racks on the wall were all filled with the winemaker's wines.

Mr. DiCarlo says tasting events with wines from Sicily and Umbria are also in the works, although dates have not been set.

To keep abreast of upcoming wine events, request Jimmy's online newsletter by e-mailing [paul@jimmysfoodstore.com](mailto:paul@jimmysfoodstore.com).

*Tina Danze is a freelance writer in Dallas.*