

**Vinhos, Wine Lounge & Tapas (Vinhos LLC)**

**Andre Santos & Michelle Rosa**

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July 7, 2021

Public Convenience or Necessity Re: Wine Lounge & Tapas

Premises Address: 427 W Main St. Merced, CA 95340

Type of ABC liquor License: type 42 (beer & wine)

Dear Officials at the City of Merced Planning Division,

This is a formal request for a finding of Public Convenience or Necessity requested by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Below you will find the justification of Public Convenience and Necessity for Vinhos Wine Lounge & Tapas Bar (*Vinhos*) to be located in downtown Merced at 427 W Main Street.

**The character of this particular premises**

This upcoming new business, called *Vinhos*\* Wine Lounge & Tapas, will be located in the heart of downtown Merced in a multi-tenant building that includes other restaurants, a coffee shop and a cinema on the 400 block of W Main Street. This is a prime location for business with no schools, churches, or residents within a 500 feet radius.

**The aesthetics and ambiance of the proposed business**

The overall look of the building is modern (built in 2001), but fits the upcoming hip look Merced downtown is pushing for. The building is a one-story building, and has 3 big windows that allow patrons to look out to Main Street, as it will also allow Mercedians and visitors to look in and determine what type of business will be operating inside.

Vinhos will have an upscale, but comfortable décor and ambiance, featuring cozy seating in modern furniture and inspirational wall murals to decorate the lounge walls.

This location operated as a restaurant/bar in the past as well as a night club; however, it has been vacant for the last 4 years. Vinhos LLC has completed the lease agreement and has the keys to the premises. At this moment the design project is ongoing through Golden Valley Engineering & Surveying.

**The attractiveness of this proposed business**

This lounge will have an upscale feel and finishing, and add to the modern downtown vibe. The décor will be connected to the wine industry, as well as a celebration of the owners Portuguese wine making heritage. The lounge will offer 2 areas of seating: the lounge with comfortable couches, armchair and

coffee tables where patrons can enjoy brunch or dinner with friends, family or co-workers, and the bar, which is the centerpiece of the lounge, will provide 14-16 seats, where guest can enjoy tapas and wine tasting. The lounge will also feature a small stage for Jazz, Fado, Bossa Nova and comedy performances (no loud pop or rock music nor DJs will be featured at Vinhos). Vinhos will also create a gift corner for patrons to purchase wine, chocolate and gifts, and a wine club membership for regulars and/or wine aficionados.

There is no other bar, lounge or restaurant from here to Sacramento like the Lounge we are proposing with this project; it will be most definitely a great addition to Merced County!

#### **The manner in which the business is to be conducted**

All guest over the age of 21 are welcome to Vinhos. The food service (Tapas) will be conducted with the highest standards of hygiene and professionalism by trained personal (kitchen staff & servers/bar tenders). We are committed to invest in the training of our staff in order to provide great customer service from the beginning to the end of our patrons visit.

Vinhos has a very unique business model, mainly due to the life and business experience of its owners: Michelle and Andre. This lounge will feature a small menu of tapas which will change every 2 weeks with new gourmet Mediterranean bites. All tapas will come with a suggested pairing of wine. All wine will be poured in the correct glass, at the right temperature. The wine list will be international, but highlighting our fabulous California wines from the Santa Barbara hills all the way to Napa.

Vinhos is committed not only to offer a great experience to the people of Merced County, but also to visitors from other counties and states, namely tourists on their way to Yosemite "Merced the Gateway to Yosemite".

Vinhos will also make sure to partner with local and regional wineries, distributors and small farmers in order to support local businesses and get the best and freshest product for its tapas and wine pairings.

#### **The type of guests who are likely to be patrons**

Our target market is anyone over the age of 21, especially patrons that are interested in refining their palate and learning more about wine and wine pairings. Our prices will be competitive and fair given the quality and quantity offered of wine and food.

We are looking to attract all wine curious, aficionados and experts, as well as guest that are looking to try different pairing of Mediterranean food with a Luso-californian twist! We will be a great gathering location for friends, couples, business people, working women and men of Merced County, mainly because this will not be a high turn around table restaurant, but a lounge that can bring people together over a glass of wine, an international tapa or a jazzy beat.

#### **The predicted mode of operation**

Vinhos will opened Tuesdays to Thursday from 3pm to 10 pm, Fridays from 3pm to 11pm, Saturdays from 10 am to midnight and Sundays from 10 am to 8 pm. On Mondays, Vinhos will be closed to the public. This lounge will be open for dinner and brunch on the weekend. Live entertainment and other special events will be held from Friday to Sunday, or by special reservation.

The lounge will have a rotating staff of about 8 people, including the owners, who will be managing at all times. All tapas and desserts will be prepared in the kitchen and all wine will be poured at the bar.

Patrons will order their food and wine through the servers and make reservations by phone for special parties and events.

A website and social media pages are being worked on to promote Vinhos and facilitate the patrons access to Vinhos' schedule, menu, events and wine club.

**The ability of the business to serve a niche not filled by others**

Vinhos is a business that is directly connected to the wine industry and wine is the main product offered. This offer is enriched by gourmet tapas and desserts to accentuate the characteristics of each wine.

There is an absolute need for a business of this type in Merced: classy, no-rush, "I can listen to music and still carry a conversation type of place"! We are hoping to create a great atmosphere at Vinhos, and make it your go-to-place.

Over the last 10 years, California has tripled its wine production, and people have followed this trend quite attentively. Vinhos will fill the gap in Merced by having not only a great international list of wine, but also by featuring a wine club membership for patrons to sign up for, wine tastings, wine events and lectures by winemaker guests and experts.

**Convenience of purchasing alcoholic beverages in conjunction with specialty foods or sales.**

As mentioned above, wine and food pairings will be our main focus. Fresh and special ingredients will make our tapas unique and tasty. At Vinhos, patrons will be able to comfortably sit and enjoy their food and wine pairing: wine, tapas or desserts. They may also order food to go. All sales will be done through our POS system, which will also keep tabs on inventory and bestselling items. Tasting will be available at the bar, as well as wine club pickups and gift corners items.

**Conclusion**

We are so excited to bring this project to Merced. We are very passionate about Vinhos, because of how it portrays where we are in our lives at this moment. We feel that this project is the culmination of our history, heritage, personal and professional experiences.

Therefore, Vinhos LLC respectfully requests the City of Merced's approval.

Kind Regards,



Andre Santos & Michelle Rosa