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# Come dine in THE CITY



## WINE IN THE CITY

The base economics of online sales and supermarket price discounts have long since driven bookstores into the coffee shop trade, but are other stores taking similar steps? While the local florist is unlikely to be serving your morning caffeine fix sometime soon, how about a wine store offering a small menu to accompany a selection of well-chosen tipples? Well, that seems like a happy marriage to me.

And, though I cannot vouch for finer points of its business strategy, Wine in the City on Place Astrid in Jette does appear to be succeeding – that is, if the goal is to pull in potential plonk punters to its wine store with the pleasant waft of gourmet cooking. The store is only open late one day a week (Friday) and was nearly full on the night that we visited.

The open kitchen is located in the rear half of the shop, which can accommodate a good 20 or so diners in a space that is optimistically described on the

store's website as playful. It is, in truth, Ikea functional – all white wood shelves and spot lights, but the 500-plus bottles on sell are intriguingly arranged according to their ideal accompaniment, whetting your appetite for the combinations that you might like to try.

The menu, however, is very limited, but nevertheless, I found the truffle soup (€6) to be really quite tasty. And with entrées priced at €8-12 and main courses at €9-18, you might just have enough cash leftover for your wine shopping. My friend also enjoyed his starter of pheasant ravioli in a butter-lemon sauce and chanterelles. The portion sizes reflect that this place is mostly open for lunches, but that said, my mushroom risotto was perfectly satisfying – and the staff were quite helpful when it came to selecting the right wine, as you might expect.

Jon Eldridge

### Wine in the City

Place Astrid, 34  
1090 Brussels  
Tel: 02 420 09 20  
Website: [www.wineinthecity.be](http://www.wineinthecity.be)

Open: Tuesday to Saturday, 10.30 am to 6.30 pm; Friday evening

## CÉLESTINE

The elegant and softly-lit dining room at Célestine is the perfect place for an intimate dinner for two. The décor is fresh and modern: fuchsia pink napkins and candles add pops of colour to the background of light grey walls. At the back of the restaurant, there is an open kitchen where diners can glimpse chef and proprietor, Ronald Lapage, conjuring up his top-notch dishes. Guests will return not just to savour the authentic flavours of the food, but also to enjoy the exceptionally warm welcome of his partner and co-owner, Vanessa Hogne.

I started with a dish of succulent prawns, served on a bed of perfectly cooked taboulé (€16). My companion said his crème brûlée of foie gras, which was accompanied by an apricot compote and gingerbread (€15) would satisfy the most demanding sweet tooth. My main dish of fresh ray, flavoured with truffle oil, had a subtle and satisfying flavour, and was served on a bed of tasty crushed