



Walk past the wall filled with Binghamton/Ithaca edition *Police Gazettes*, approach the nondescript door, and ring the bell. A slot will open and, if you can be trusted, you'll be let in to a world from another time: The Wise Ash Lounge & Speakeasy.

WISE ASH LOUNGE

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and ladies who want to enjoy a good cigar and the socialization that goes with it. It's a place to speak to anyone who you may or may not even know on topics that could range to literally anything. We've actually solved the world problems in a couple of our meetings. Just no one listens to us!

Cocktail bars with themes are now cropping up across the country. Is one of the reasons you started this because it's part of a growing trend?

Actually not. When I had this all written out on paper it was about a year and a half prior to anything being opened in the United States, as far as I could do in research. I didn't hear about any of them. It was just something I thought would be a neat idea in the Binghamton/Broome County area, that the wealthy and middle-class people would be able to enjoy, as well as the youngsters who don't have the opportunity to really get dressed up and be able, if they choose, to wear suits and so forth during the winter time. Now there is no dress code for our place. It's just a place, though, for people to go and enjoy and have the freedom of not being pestered by what you might call "punks."

What do you offer as far as drinks, etc.? What can people expect when they go in?

The first thing is the atmosphere. When you walk through the door you leave 2012 on the outside. You walk to the large, wooden speakeasy door, ring the bell and get in. You have the fun of being on the borderline of what you would consider legal. It's totally legal, but it gives you that fun feeling of "Is it like a speakeasy?" Then inside you've got the luxury and exuberance of what was in the 1920s. You always had a front of a building that looked dilapidated, and it was purposely done so, so that it didn't look like what it was when you

walked in the door. And that was total opulence. You're looking at tables, chairs; you're looking at stools that are \$1000 a piece. You walk back in time and feel back in the days when doing that little bit on the wrong side of the law was a good thing. As we know, they repealed the law as soon as 1933 came around because they realized it wasn't in the best interest of the main public. We try to have live bands on Fridays and Saturdays. If not, we're playing a lot of music that would be from those same eras. We're talking jazz, blues, R&B. We're looking at doing things outside that realm where we're going to be doing a Spanish/Latin night once a month. We're looking to do a little rock-n-roll once a month. When you get inside you will find the largest martini menu in writing in the United States with over 132 martinis of various sorts that are on the menu. You'll also find that we have the largest menu of single-malt scotch in New York State. And the menu just continues to go like that. We have a huge selection of wines. We have a huge selection of top-quality champagnes. It's just a place where a person can really get their heart's desires. You can go there as a single person and meet nice women and gentlemen, as well as bring a date there and never have to worry about being pestered by somebody that's annoying.

So you're going to start mixing in some new things like rock-n-roll...

Yeah, because we want to get people from around the area to partake in it. We find that the type of people we want to attract are all very family oriented and they're only able to go out once or twice a month, and we want to make sure that one of those times they come here. But to keep the busyness of what the place should be we're going to expand to get a broader base, while keeping it an eclectic type of club where different days of the week or weekend will attract different types of crowds so that people can enjoy from all walks of



Once inside you'll meet your host Vinny Coiro, whose only goal is to make sure you have a good time.

life.

Any thoughts on doing something for Halloween?

Oh yes. I'm going to be having four separate Halloween parties. We're going to have Friday and Saturday, the weekend before, set up so that anybody can come in with any costumes based on the 1920s, 1930s. Women and men can come up with all kinds of different outfits, including mobster-type costumes and things like that. And of course all the sexy costumes that the mobster ladies all wore, cigarette girls, as well as the flapper outfits. Anyone who does that will have a second shot on us. We're going to be doing all kinds of drink specials. The following weekend is going to be an anything-goes type of weekend where on Friday and Saturday you can wear any type of costume and receive the same benefits. We're going to have prizes for the best costumes. It's just going to be a great time for all.

Why Cigars?

Aficionado Jay Kosta Tells Us the Appeal of a Good Cigar

While visiting the Wise Ash Lounge and Sir Vin Cigars we ran into regular customer Jay Kosta. He was enjoying his cigar as we spoke and had the relaxed demeanor of a man fully in his element. And that was the key, Jay said: "Relaxation." "Cigars are a relaxation. You light one up and you just sit and enjoy it." Cigarettes are quick and inhaled, Jay explained. But cigars are slower, mellower, and more gradual. You can really sink into the atmosphere and ambiance of the experience. Plus they're not inhaled; the smoke just sort of envelopes you. Even so, one still gets a bit of a nicotine buzz just from breathing the smoke in the air.

"It's better than psychotherapy," says Jay, explaining that the relaxation found in a good cigar helps to reduce the stresses of life. "Plus it's legal and not expensive." What could be wrong with that?