



The sweet smell of success

Knoxville Cigar Company opens its doors to the sophisticated Knoxville aficionado

SOMETHING ABOUT THE poignant smell of fine cigars speaks of masculine sophistication. It's inviting, polished but relaxed. Add to that a glass of premium scotch and a full menu and you're no longer just shopping or lounging.

Knoxville Cigar Company began with a retail store that to this day isn't exactly your local tobacco pusher. KC Co. sells hundreds of premium cigars via a walk-in, state-of-the-art humidor and is proudly known as East Tennessee's exclusive carrier of Dominican-born Davidoff cigars. Boasting all the necessities, like punchers, lighters and cigar cutters and experts to help you shop to your tastes, KC Co. is paradise for the cigar aficionado and novice.

But, don't let the name fool you: the store also carries high-quality men's leather goods, handmade pipes and gentlemen's shaving supplies.

Just steps from the center of the historic Old City, KC Co. is surprisingly something of a downtown oasis, sheltered by the charm of its 19th

century Central Avenue location. Originally opened strictly as a retail tobacco store, owner Pete Zaring's brainchild expanded last year to include a scotch and cigar bar. And with Knoxville's largest selection of scotch and bourbons, over 180 types of beer and premium cigars, it's no hole-in-the-wall establishment.

"This has kind of been an evolution," Zaring says. "We wanted to add the bar because we had customers come in that wanted to buy the cigars and go somewhere else to smoke them."

His solution came in the form of a deep-seated lounge area providing the perfect place for a little male, lunchtime camaraderie and a walnut and granite bar ideal for a late night smoke. Stitched together with subtle, whining strains of radio jazz and upscale finishings, the bar is as elegantly masculine as its cigars.

"This is a guy place," Zaring says. "This is where most of the doctors, lawyers go to hide. It's like a modern-day speakeasy." 