



COURT OF
**MASTER
SOMMELIERS**
Americas

P.O. Box 6170
Napa, CA 94581
Phone 707.255.5056
Fax: 707.255.2868
www.mastersommeliers.org

AFTER AN INTENSE FIVE-DAY EXAM, TEN JOIN RANKS OF ADVANCED SOMMELIERS

*David Kristiansen of The Lodge at Pebble Beach wins
prestigious Rudd Scholarship*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, November 1, 2010

Contact:

Libby Smiley

415.364.0000

smiley@barcoast.com

ASPEN, CO – After five days of intense lectures and examinations, prepared for by months, if not years, of study, ten sommeliers successfully passed the Court of Master Sommeliers' Advanced Exam on Friday, October 29. Held at The Little Nell in Aspen, the Advanced Exam is the third in a series of four increasingly challenging tests of knowledge and skill offered by the Court, and is designed to distinguish those candidates with a superior understanding of wine theory and beverage service, as well as a highly sophisticated tasting ability. Having successfully conquered this hurdle, these ten individuals from across North America are now setting their sights on achieving the highest sommelier designation in the world, that of Master Sommelier.

The Advanced Examination is exponentially more challenging than the prerequisite Introductory Sommelier and Certified Sommelier Examinations, with only a small percentage of those who begin the Court's programs ever reaching this milestone. Despite thousands of new individuals enrolling in the Court's educational programs each year, only 106 individuals in North America have successfully gone on to earn the title of Master Sommelier. 53 candidates in total sat for this Advanced Exam, with some traveling from as far away as Mexico to see if they have what it takes.

"To pass the Court's Advanced Exam is no small feat," said Tim Gaiser, the Education Director for the Court of Master Sommeliers Americas. "These ten individuals are among the very best in their field, yet only a fraction will ever go on to achieve the title of Master Sommelier," he added.

With each Advanced Examination, the Court awards the prestigious Rudd Scholarship to the highest scoring candidate. David Kristiansen is the latest recipient of this award. The scholarship offers funds toward the coursework needed to prepare for the Masters Exam and an invitation to attend the Rudd Master's Round Table in Napa Valley, a two-day intensive tutorial about wine theory, tasting and service. With a background in bartending, Kristiansen brings a unique perspective to the Court's educational programs. He currently serves as bartender at The Lodge at Pebble Beach and has devoted the last eleven months to preparing for the Advanced Exam.

"Going through the Court's programs has been an amazing experience," stated Kristiansen, who passed the Introductory Exam in 2007. "Having served as a bartender for over a decade, I was particularly nervous about the service portion of the exam. Fortunately, my commitment and dedication, along with the guidance and help of accomplished Master Sommeliers, paid off."

"With each exam, it is always exciting to see who will walk through those doors," said Frederick Dame, Chairman Emeritus of the Court of Master Sommeliers Americas and current President of the Guild of Sommeliers Education Foundation. "Working with sommeliers provides the Court a wonderful opportunity to ensure that the next generation of wine professionals shares our passion for wine and wine service. Each of these candidates has the potential to be the next great Master Sommelier."

The complete list of candidates who earned the title of Advanced Sommelier at the recent Aspen exam include: Yuchi Angie An of Alexander's Steakhouse (Cupertino, CA), Jason Castle of Merriman's Restaurants Hawaii (Lahaina, HI), Ted Glennon of Hotel del Coronado (San Diego, CA), David Kristiansen of Pebble Beach Company (Pacific Grove, CA), Vilma Mazaite of The Little Nell (Aspen, CO), Lisa Redwine of The Shores Restaurant (La Jolla, CA), Kevin Reilly of Cyrus Restaurant (Santa Rosa, CA), Frank Seidl of Trinity Fine Wines (Littleton, CO), Roxanne Shafee-Moghadam of The Breakers (West Palm Beach, FL), and Mark Warren of Beau Rivage Resort & Casino (Biloxi, MS).

About the Court of Master Sommeliers

The Court of Master Sommeliers was established in England in 1977 to encourage improved standards of beverage knowledge and service in hotels and restaurants. The first Master Sommelier Diploma Exam to be held in the United States was in 1987. The title Master Sommelier marks the highest recognition of wine and spirits knowledge, beverage service abilities, and professionalism in the hospitality trade. Education was then, and remains

today, the Court's charter. There are four stages involved in attaining the top qualifications of Master Sommelier: 1) Introductory Sommelier Course; 2) Certified Sommelier Course; 3) Advanced Sommelier Course; and 4) Master Sommelier Diploma.

There are 106 professionals who have earned the title Master Sommelier in North America. Of those, 90 are men and 16 are women. There are 171 professionals worldwide who have received the title of Master Sommelier since the first Master Sommelier Diploma Exam.

Photograph from the Advanced Sommelier Exam on October 29, 2010



The ten newly-minted Advanced Sommeliers celebrate their successful exam results. From left to right: Mark Warren, Kevin Reilly, David Kristiansen, Yuchi Angie An, Frank Seidl, Roxanne Shafee-Moghadam, Vilma Mazaite, Lisa Redwine, Ted Glennon, and Jason Castle.

###