

The Magazine for Hospitality Food & Beverage Professionals



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Las Vegas
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Hotel F&B Executive



**pouring
profits from
martini bars**

**starring the
hotel kitchen**

**build
better
breaks**

**stop brewing
bad coffee**

**George Vizer
on Hyatt
wines**

**10 mantras
for great
managers**

GREAT STEAK BONANZA

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2004

Restaurant Turnaround Strategies

*Chef Ed Trinkaus and F&B Director Tim Gourley,
Radisson Hotel, Alsip, Illinois*



Attend 5th Hotel F&B Educational Forum, Las Vegas—pages 6-8



Wine Strategies

The Globetrotting Wine Guy

focus on:

HYATT

Hyatt Hotels & Resorts Vice President of Food & Beverage, George Vizer, sees the "New World" emerging with style.

What trends do you note among your wine-drinking guests?

At Hyatt, our wine lists reflect guest preferences. Guests are interested in boutique wines, pay closer attention to vintages, and are more adventurous than ever before. They look for wines from California, Oregon, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Chile, and France.

How do you view the increasing demand for "New World" wines in the United States, and do you see the trend continuing? What effect will the new marketing initiatives by the "Old World" producers, namely France, have on the "New World" momentum?

I believe Americans have become significantly more wine savvy over the past 10–15 years. They are by and large patriotic and support American wines. Political differences with France don't help France's marketing efforts in the United States. I believe Americans also prefer to order and drink wines they can pronounce and feel comfortable ordering.

What are some of the most successful wine promotions you have done to increase sales and profits, and how did you ensure they would entertain your guests?

Successful Hyatt wine programs include:

- Salmon, Sauvignon & Syrah
- Bordeaux Promotion
- Pasta Pesto Pizza
- Washington State Wine Promotion
- Mangia

Programs are always paired with food, invoking a feel-good approach and creating an experience of "being there."

Do you have a formalized in-house wine training program?

We collaborate with wine program partners and utilize their winemakers to produce training sessions. We encourage our management to go through professional Master Sommelier development programs. We also encourage online training such as Marvin Shanken's Wine Spectator programs, which are excellent.

Do you set the specifications for wine preservation, or does each hotel decide how to best preserve their wines-by-the-glass selection? What in your opinion are the most sophisticated wine preservation systems you would recommend?

We don't specify a wine preservation system for the company due to the varied needs of our hotels. Personally, I am fond of a straightforward system like Le Verre de Vin. It works well and isn't complicated. It's easy on the people who work with it daily.

What are your favorite wines?

I have varied tastes. Just as a diner goes to a certain restaurant because they execute a certain set of dishes well, so I like: Pinot Noirs from Oregon, Syrah (Shiraz) from Australia, Chardonnay and Cabernets from California, and Sauvignon Blanc's from New Zealand.

Fred Tibbitts, president of Fred Tibbitts & Associates, is the foremost wine by the glass consultant for chain hotels.



Wine Selling Starter Tip #1

DON'T PREJUDGE GUESTS

Have you seen your servers let down at the mere sight of certain kinds of guests?

One of the greatest enemies of sales is prejudging. You can't tell by the way someone dresses, how they speak, or the drink they carry from the bar—be it a cranberry juice or a water with lemon—if they are interested in buying wine. Make certain your servers have a fresh attitude, and give each guest the opportunity to choose or refuse wine. Your servers may be surprised, delighted, and richer in finding out that stereotypes don't hold true. Remind your staff that "lousy tips are self-fulfilling prophecies for servers who prejudice."

Bob Brown, president of Bob Brown Service Solutions, rwbyes@aol.com, is a regular columnist for Hotel F&B Executive.

Veramonte's Chilean wines spice up menus

One of the allures of travel is to experience new foods and wines.

That's why Carlos Kuscevic believes hoteliers and restaurateurs have the perfect opportunity to feature Veramonte Estate wines, grown and bottled in Chile's Casablanca Valley.

Kuscevic, director of sales and marketing,

Veramonte Estate, headquartered in Napa Valley, California, says Veramonte wines are high quality at a consumer-friendly price, unique, and pair perfectly with food. Veramonte produces six varietals: Cabernet

Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, and Primus. Three are featured here.

Primus is Veramonte's proprietary blend that includes Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, but showcases the rare Carmeñere grape, sometimes referred to as 'The Lost Bordeaux Grape.' Kuscevic describes the 2001 Primus as the quintessential terroir wine. "All great wines do not have the ability to reflect where they come from," Kuscevic says. "Primus is a true expression of the Casablanca Valley and Veramonte Estate." Primus, he says, is "exotic, wild and spicy." He recommends pairing it with duck, beef tenderloin, lamb, and creamy dishes.

Chile's Casablanca Valley climate is one of the best places to grow Sauvignon Blanc

grapes, which helps explain why their 2003 vintage received the prestigious Gold Medal from Guia de Vinos de Chile. Made from 100 percent Sauvignon Blanc grapes and aged in stainless steel to produce rich fruit flavors, Kuscevic calls this the "perfect wine-by-the-glass wine," though bottle sales are equally strong. It pairs well with appetizers, cheeses of all kinds, and seafood, especially oysters.

The 2002 Veramonte Merlot becomes available in February, and if previous vintages are any indication (the 1999 garnered 91 points from Wine & Spirits while Wine Enthusiast awarded 90 points to the 2000), this 100 percent Merlot will be well worth trying with pasta dishes or pepper-crusted tuna. —SBH

Contact: Carlos Kuscevic, ckuscevic@franciscan.com, 707-967-6342

