

For Hotel, Resort, and Casino Food & Beverage Professionals

Hotel F&B Executive

SEPTEMBER/
OCTOBER 2005

give your employees
something to build
on p.41

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they really want p.35

breakfast guests must
start the day with p.12

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BANQUET ROOM DESIGN

**Ritz-Carlton Takes
Banquet Spaces to
the Outer Limits**

Ritz-Carlton's Christoph Zbinden, Michelle Caporicci, and Erich Steinbock



special report

hotel wine, beer &
spirits, p.15

SPECIAL PULL-OUT SUPPLEMENT INSIDE—THE SPIRIT FILES: SINGLE MALTS & SUPER PREMIUMS



PINOT VALUES

Pinot Noir is a convenient choice for hotel catering, room service, and restaurant wine lists. The only caveat with Pinot, which doesn't always apply to Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot, is the difficulty finding a "good" Pinot Noir for under \$15 retail. Depending upon pricing in your market, here are a few California value Pinot Noirs to consider: Fetzer Vineyards Five Rivers Ranch, Chateau St. Jean Sonoma County, Meridian Vineyards Santa Barbara County.

While California wineries are turning out some of the New World's best Pinots, the Golden State doesn't have a lock on tasty Pinot Noir. Oregon's Willamette Valley is one of America's leading Pinot producers. New Zealand Pinots are especially noteworthy from Marlborough, Martinborough, and Central Otago. Australian Pinots are making their mark from Tasmania, and sub-regions of Victoria, like the Mornington Peninsula. And for traditional Pinot Noir, the Burgundy region of France is, for now, without peer.

PINOT PAIRING

Another pleasing feature of Pinot Noir is its adaptability to many different foods. While Cabernet Sauvignon and many of the bigger muscular Merlots overpower most fish dishes, Pinot Noir makes a pleasant and tasting match. Consider grilled salmon or other firm-fleshed fish like tuna with Pinot Noir; now there's a match made in heaven. Pinot is also a great match with poultry, especially roast chicken, and is at home on as many Thanksgiving tables as the bird itself. Oh, and Pinot Noir with prime rib is a pairing many Pinotphiles consider to be as good as it gets.

You don't have to rhapsodize about Pinot like Miles, but when you place orders for a red wine that will fit the demands of all aspects of your hotel food and wine operation, consider the Power of Pinot. ●

Gerald D. Boyd, based in Sonoma County, is a freelance writer, frequent lecturer, and panelist who specializes in wine and spirits, fine food, and travel.

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COMMERCIAL JUICERS

JUICY FRUIT

When asked to name the leading brand of oranges, you would probably think of Sunkist. However, Sunkist is also the place to go for fruit and vegetable processing equipment such as commercial juicers and fruit and vegetable sectionizers.

Sean Hardy, executive Chef of the famed Peninsula Beverly Hills Hotel, uses only Sunkist Citrus in his kitchen.

He uses the Sunkist juicer every morning for fresh grapefruit, orange, lemon, and lime juices.

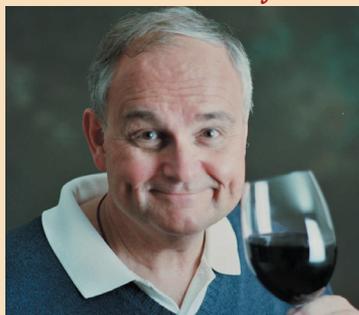
The Sunkist commercial juicer can extract between 10 and 12 gallons of juice per hour using pre-cut citrus. It also weighs 31 pounds, so it stands its ground while making light work of any task.

The Sunkist sectionizer is a convenient fruit slicing, halving, and wedging machine capable of producing between 10 and 12 cartons of sectioned oranges an hour. The fruit and vegetable sectionizer can be utilized on just about any firm (not hard), pitless fruit or vegetable.—KB

CONTACT: Diane Tilton, 800-383-7141, dtilton@sunkistgrowers.com, sunkistfs.com/equipment



The World of Wine BY FRED TIBBITTS



Fred Tibbitts, the Globetrotting Wine Guy

Fred Tibbitts talks with Paul Kirwin, president, Carlson Asia Pacific, about the company's wine program.

Paul, please update the readers on the brands and their star categories in the Carlson Hotels Asia Pacific portfolio.

Carlson has five brands: the Regent, our luxury brand; Radisson Hotels & Resorts, which includes Radisson Plaza (five-star) and Radisson Hotels (four-star); Park Plaza, which is upper mid-scale (three-and-a-half star); Country Inns and Suites by Carlson (three-star); and Park Inns (three-star).

We currently operate 42 hotels in the region, including one Radisson Plaza and six Radissons in Australia; one Radisson Plaza Resort in Tahiti; two Radisson Plazas, two Radisson Hotels, and one unbranded property managed by Radisson in China; seven Radisson Hotels, four Park Plazas, three Country

Inns & Suites, and seven Park Inns in India; three Radisson Hotels in Japan; one Regent in Malaysia; one Radisson in Nepal; one Regent in Singapore and one in Taiwan; and one Radisson in Thailand.

We expect to open 14 hotels in 2005, including one Regent in China; six Radissons in India, Bangladesh, and China; three Country Inns and Suites in India; two Park Plazas in China and India; and two Park Inns in India.

Branding is so important for success that you must spend a great deal of time communicating the positioning of your brands to hotel employees. How do you vary the wine selection to reinforce different brand positioning? Is it by region, country, or property, or a combination of all three?

It is difficult to equate wine selection to brand positioning. We have customers staying in our four-star properties who demand a wide and varied wine selection. Obviously, with our luxury Regent branding, we stock a wider selection of premium wines and Champagnes. But generally, customers' tastes and demands are not restricted or governed by branding and star ratings.

Do you leave wine decision making to the management team at each hotel? Or do you have a core program that

promotes a sense of comfort and consistency for frequent guests, yet permits some local options?

We seek a balance between the benefits of a core program and local autonomy. When we can achieve benefits (consistency, pricing, convenience) from a core program, we use that approach while providing local management teams with the autonomy to select wines that meet their local tastes, preferences, and/or pricing opportunities.

Customers' tastes and demands

ARE NOT
restricted by
branding and star
ratings.

—Paul Kirwin



In Asia Pacific, do guests prefer "New World" (Australia, Chile, New Zealand, California) wines over "Old World" (France, Italy, Spain) wines? How do you cater to these preferences?

Our approach is dictated by each hotel's consumer profile. If a hotel has a significant European customer base, it must offer a "balanced" wine list, featuring both Old and New World wines.

Generally speaking, our Asian hotels, which serve a wide variety of international clients, offer a wide variety of wines. Our Australian hotels, with the exception of Champagnes, offer a large number of Australian and New Zealand and a lesser number of Old World wines.

Have you encountered barriers to succeeding with your wine programs, such as import duties, taxes, cultural issues, or lack of interest in wine?

Not to any great extent. But, to clarify, one must address the different regions. In Australia, wine consumption is part of everyday life, extensively produced, and, therefore, available without major restrictions.

Do you find your guests to be more wine knowledgeable in some countries than others?

Because of the wine culture that exists in Australia, wine knowledge is extensive among consumers. In the Asian region, particularly in China, wine has not been a primary alcoholic beverage. However, that is changing, and wine knowledge is rapidly increasing.

Some speculate China will become the largest consumer of better wines with the increase in the middle and upper sectors of their society, disposable income, and interest in Western products? What kind of increases in wine

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Anderson Valley Brewing Company. Executive Chef Bruce Paton and Master Brewer Fal Allen proposed a three-course menu with such delights as Smoked Sturgeon Nicoise served alongside Deep Enders Dark Porter. As is often the case with these events, the dinner was sold out.

Keeping the risk low and rewards high with any emerging trend requires management commitment and staff creativity. Due to the relative novelty of brewmaster's dinners in lodging establishments, the biggest obstacle for the F&B manager is getting people to sit down at the dinner table for their first beer dinner.

Enticing guests to depart from the usual is best done by combining something familiar

(cuisine, ambiance, celebration) with something new (beer, hard ciders, beer-infused dishes). Structuring the menu on a theme, such as holiday traditions, the seasons, or local festivals, will point you toward a successful experience.

Cultural festivities like Oktoberfest, Saint Patrick's Day, and Cinco de Mayo are immersed in beer-friendly culinary traditions. Resort destinations in Park City, Vail, and Breckenridge have tapped into the idea with lodging packages that include beer events, dinners, and even trips to local breweries.

The Swans Suite Hotel of Victoria, British Columbia has taken the concept even one step farther. The 30- room boutique property

includes its own brewery and gourmet restaurant. Nearby is the Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub where house brews are served with a revolving menu of fresh seasonal dishes. The city even promotes the Victoria Ale Trail as a fun touristic activity and a way for visitors to tour several breweries all within walking distance.

Fine beer has many gracious qualities. Versatility and congeniality rank high. Whether to cater for a conference or promote your restaurant to local customers, brewmaster's dinners are exciting to devise and fun to promote. Improving your knowledge of food-beer pairings will also benefit in beverage selection and hotel distinction. ☛

Matt Stinchfield is Hotel F&B Executive's beer and ale editor.

Making Dreams Come True with a FANTASY ISLAND...

French Laundry
YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA

Bastide
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Ambria
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Mezzaluna
FLORIDA

Norman's Mundo
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

Saloon at Neonopolis
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Eleanor Roosevelt College-UCSD
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Great Bay at The Commonwealth
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Lacroix at The Rittenhouse
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Harvard Club
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

And The List Goes On...



Excalibur Island Suites



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WORLD OF WINE continued

sales are you seeing in China?

Demand for both locally produced and imported wine continues to grow in China. We are seeing a significant increase in wine consumption year on year.

What wine trends are emerging in Asia Pacific, and how do you plan to exceed guests' expectations regarding wine selection, service, and server training?

In Australia, a demand for boutique wine, wines produced by small-to medium-size vineyards, is growing. In Asia, as wine knowledge increases and locally produced wines become more sophisticated, an expanded product range will be necessary to keep pace with expectations. Similarly, the requirement for server wine training will increase. And it will be a requirement of the retailer to expect the producer/distributor to form an integral part of the training process.

Which of your competitors, in terms of chain hotels with three to five stars across Asia Pacific, do you see as having the best overall wine program and therefore one you truly admire?

I particularly like the approach taken by the Hyatt group, not only to the issue of wine selection but to their overall approach to F&B operations in the hotels.

If you had to isolate two red and two white wine types you think will be the most popular over the next five years, what would they be and why?

I think the demand for Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, and Merlot will continue, but I also expect to see unique varietals such as Malbec gain in popularity. Regarding whites, I think both Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay will continue to be the leaders.

What are your favorite wines and why?

Since coming to this part of the world, I have been fortunate to experience the Penfolds Grange Hermitage. This is an Australian icon and set the benchmark against which all other Australian red wines are judged. A Grange normally has to lie for around 15 years to get the maximum enjoyment. It is an extraordinary wine. I don't have a favorite white wine. However, I recently had a bottle of 2002 Gaja Chardonnay Rossj Bass from Italy's Piedmont region. It builds slowly and broadens out impressively on the back, finishing rich, firm, and long. A real enjoyment. ☛

Fred Tibbitts & Associates Inc., is the foremost global wine-by-the-glass consultant, working with on-premise chains around the world. fredbev@fredtibbitts.com