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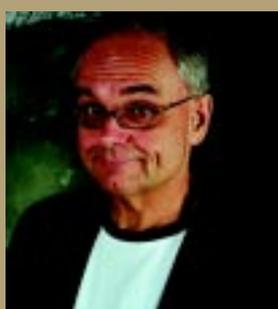


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# The Future of Wine Service Excellence



FRED TIBITTS JR. IS A GLOBAL WINE CONSULTANT BASED IN NEW YORK. HE ASSISTS SOME OF THE TOP HOTEL AND RESTAURANT CHAINS IN THE U.S. AND ASIA PACIFIC DEVELOPING THEIR WINE BY THE GLASS PROGRAMS, LEADING EDUCATIONAL TRIPS TO WINE PRODUCING COUNTRIES AND HOSTING VIP INDUSTRY DINNERS AT NEW YORK AND ACROSS ASIA.

We have explored the depths of the oceans, conquered the highest peaks, traveled into outer space and landed robots on Mars, but the future is the exploration of the human psyche, what many would consider the mind.

Of course our psyche is far more than our cognition; it encompasses all that is each of us, the most important aspect being our souls, the origin of our essence and the Mother of our spirituality and goodness. Accordingly, the future of wine service excellence will be about finding and developing inspired wine leaders who inspire those who serve wine and in turn inspire those whom they serve.

These inspired wine leaders will also be aware of an even greater truth: That one is never truly free until one has relinquished all one's attachments (human and inanimate), all of one's aversions and the "grand illusion": That all this is real. By the same token, the restaurateur, bartender or server is never free to introduce his guests to the joys of uninhibited wine experimentation until he has totally relinquished all of his attachments, aversions and his self concept of "what is correct" in terms of the world of wine.

The technical aspects of wine service will always be important: Wine server knowledge; proper storage; proper wine preservation, especially of all opened bottles; wine service at the correct temperatures; the artful pairing of wine and food as well as creative wine marketing and merchandising, however, the next frontier will be recruiting those who would become great wine leaders. These new team members will truly be our super stars of wine service excellence, bringing deserved recognition to the establishments that employ them and those whom they inspire to deliver wine service excellence with passion.

Passion always makes the difference in any relationship, be it personal or business or both. The passion that pours from the hearts of inspired wine leaders is not learned in the classroom or from the Internet or from reading books about wine: It is becoming One with one's wine program and creating a wine destination that seduces the guests such that they lose any inhibition that separates them from having a magnificent wine experience every time. The wine they partake becomes their communion with all that is beautiful, loving and that celebrates with reverence the hard work and artistry that made possible the fruit of the vine they enjoy.

In my global travels I have met sommeliers, food & beverage directors, beverage directors; in fact, every possible on-premise player type who is in part responsible for his operation's wine service: But there is only one credential that stands above all others and that truly separates the wine technocrats from the wine patriots: Passion. Inspired wine leaders are passionate about wine, wine service and wine training excellence: Others may be more technically proficient than some of our finest wine patriots, but without passion, servers will never know how to become one with genuine wine service excellence.

Our inspired wine leaders come in a variety of flavors, colors and textures; they have no common heritage, nor are they found in the yellow pages, yet you know them when you meet them: They make wine and wine service excellence come alive for anyone with the slightest inclination to embark on a personal wine path. They do not celebrate their wine magnificence, but the magnificence of the right glass of wine for each of us. Sante!