JULIAN MERCER

SOMMELIER

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Certified sommelier with 6+ years in fine dining wine service and cellar management. Guides guests through a 1,200-selection list, pairs wine with tasting menus, and manages purchasing and inventory with a disciplined eye on margin. Holds Court of Master Sommeliers and WSET Level 3 credentials.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sommelier Feb 2024 - Present
Union Square Hospitality Group, Gramercy Tavern, New York, NY

- Manage wine service for a dining room serving about 250 guests a night and recommend bottles and pairings on a 1,200-selection list.
- Increased average wine spend per table by about 14% by training servers on a simple pairing script and offering a by-the-glass flight with the tasting menu.
- Review the cellar weekly with the wine director, trimming slow-moving bottles and keeping inventory variance below 1.5%.
- Re-wrote the by-the-glass program with six new producers, improving wine beverage margin by three points.
- Teach a weekly 20-minute tasting for 30 front-of-house staff covering regions, styles, and service technique.
- Source allocated and rare bottles through importer relationships and set pricing that keeps cost of goods near 32% on the reserve list.
- Plan and host four winemaker dinners a year for 40 to 60 guests, selling out each event and building a repeat guest list for the cellar.

Assistant Sommelier Mar 2021 - Jan 2024
Thomas Keller Restaurant Group, Per Se, New York, NY

- Supported a 2,000-label cellar through nightly service, decanting and serving rare and aged bottles for tasting menu guests.
- Managed receiving and binning of wine deliveries and updated the cellar management system the same day.
- Prepared pairing flights for nine-course menus in partnership with the sommelier team and the chef.
- Resolved guest concerns over corked or flawed wines promptly, protecting guest relationships and logging items for vendor credit.
- Wrote tasting notes and service guides for 60 new listings so the floor team could describe each wine in a sentence.

Wine Steward Jun 2019 - Feb 2021
The Capital Grille, Miami, FL

- Recommended wines from a 350-label list and reached a wine-per-guest figure above the restaurant average.
- Ran monthly staff tastings for 40 team members, covering varietals and regional styles.
- Maintained cellar organization and a par-stock system that reduced stockouts of the top 30 selling wines.
- Handled guest wine questions at 40 tables a night and escalated special requests to the sommelier for tasting-menu pairings.

CORE SKILLS

Wine pairing | Cellar management | Wine list development | Inventory and purchasing | Decanting and service technique | Blind tasting | Staff training | Guest relations | Spirits, sake, and beer knowledge | Margin and pricing strategy | Vintage and region knowledge | Wine inventory software (CellarTracker, Bevspot)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management, Florida International University, Miami, FL

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Sommelier, Court of Master Sommeliers | WSET Level 3 Award in Wines | ServSafe Alcohol