

# SPIRITS TASTING

## COMPETITION JUDGES

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### SCOTT AUGSBURGER

Scott Augsburger is from Lexington, Kentucky and is currently the Head Bartender at Wiseguy Lounge, a Bourbon and Craft cocktail bar with over 280 American whiskeys, in Over the Rhine Cincinnati, Ohio.

He has been with Wiseguys for 3 years and was the winner of the first Gentleman Jack Sour Competition.



### RYAN BRAY

Ryan Bray graduated Denison University in 2000, with a degree in Political Science. With a brief stop in Dental School, he came to realize his passion for the food and beverage industry and began to pursue his true passion

on Martha's Vineyard.

Spending the next four years on Martha's Vineyard as Manager of Restaurants for a private club, Ryan immersed himself in the field by overseeing two restaurants and creating a beverage and wine program to keep its discerning membership happy.

With the ultimate goal of returning home to South Jersey, Ryan jumped at the chance to become General Manager/Wine Director of the Knife and Fork Inn and Wine Director of Dock's Oyster House. Each restaurant being legendary in their own rights with histories of 107 and 122 years respectively, and both offering fine dining and world-renowned wine at the Jersey Shore. It is here both wine lists would be recognized by Wine Spectator and wine drinkers alike.

With 2017 coming to an end a new opportunity presented itself, Linwood Country Club, here Ryan would assume the position of General Manager. Running day to day operations of the club he would also revamp the wine and beverage program while continuing to oversee the wine programs of the other properties.

Ryan lives in South Jersey and enjoys traveling, discovering new restaurants and drinking wine with his wife Heidi and their spectacular daughter, Briar Rose Bray.



## CINDY BUSI

Cindy has been the Director of Beverage for Darden Restaurants since August of 2017. Her primary responsibility is overseeing the spirits and beer program for all Darden concepts.

This includes, drink development, beverage purchasing, product placements, partner relationships, beverage marketing and training initiatives, cost controls, distribution and overall beverage management for the Darden Restaurant brands.

Prior to joining Darden, Cindy was the Worldwide Beverage Director for Hard Rock International for fourteen years, overseeing worldwide drink development, beverage standards, partner relationships, inventory/cost control systems, beverage sales, innovative drink promotions, menus, bartender competitions, beverage marketing and beverage music initiatives for the global Hard Rock brand.

Prior to joining Hard Rock, Cindy was the Beverage Manager for Smokey Bones BBQ for four years, which was part of the Darden Restaurant Group. During this time, she was responsible for assisting with bar designs, developing a solid bar training program, beverage promotions, drink development, new restaurant openings and liquor compliance.

Cindy has won numerous awards for the beverage programs she has developed, has been featured on TV segments as well has done countless interviews and presentations all focused on beverages. Cindy sits on the advisory board for Cheers Magazine, Nightclub & Bar, VIBE, Millennium and C.O.R.E

Before engaging in restaurants Cindy was CEO for three years of two international tourists-based companies who specialize in bars, water sports and diving in Mexico and the Caribbean.



## WILL CUMMINGS

Will Cummings IS the current bar manager of Liberty Bar and Restaurant, a high-volume craft cocktail bar with a focus on seasonal menus and introducing new spirits to patrons, in Tallahassee, Florida. Tallahassee is also

Cummings' hometown and where most of his hospitality experience has developed over the last decade. He briefly lived in Brooklyn, New York from 2014—2016 and managed a ramen and sushi shop in East Williamsburg where he discovered a love for sake and Japanese spirits. After returning to Florida and working for Liberty Cummings focused more on craft cocktails and community building efforts for our industry. He began participating and placing in local and regional competitions sponsored by whiskey companies like Buffalo Trace, Beam Suntory, and Jack Daniel's.



## ALEXA DELGADO

Alexa Delgado, Head Bartender at Lightkeepers at The Ritz-Carlton, Key Biscayne, Miami is a native Miamian who has always fostered a passion for the thriving food and beverage scene of the Magic City.

After graduating from the University of Central Florida with a double major in history and English literature, Delgado traveled to Milan, Italy to pursue her Master's degree in Management of Food and Beverage from Università Bocconi School of Management.

Delgado began a career in the hospitality industry in 2013 working at the Loews Hotels and Resorts in Orlando, eventually transferring to their property in Miami to serve as club concierge. In 2015, Delgado took her first restaurant position as a server at John Martin's Irish Pub & Restaurant in Coral Gables. It was there that she learned the ins and outs of bartending, eventually working her way up to shift supervisor.

In search of a new professional challenge, Delgado went on to serve as Food and Beverage Supervisor at the Holiday Inn Miami Beach Oceanfront where she oversaw operations for four food and beverage outlets as well as spearheaded new initiatives to ensure Intercontinental Hotels Group guest service standards were in compliance. In 2016, she joined the team at The Ritz-Carlton, Key Biscayne, Miami as Food and Beverage Supervisor of Rumbar. It was here that she was able to hone in on her creative talents, crafting signature cocktails for various outlets and events on property. Now as Head Bartender, Delgado is contributing towards Lightkeepers ingenious cocktail program, crafting refreshing libations inspired by Florida's rich history.



## CASSANDRA FELIX

Cassandra Felix began her career at The Breakers Palm Beach in 2010 while studying Dance and Fine Arts at Palm Beach Atlantic University. In 2014, after passing the Certified Sommelier exam, The Breakers awarded her

the position of Lead Sommelier & Beverage Manager of Flagler Steakhouse, whose wine program is comprised of over 665 selections. Under her supervision, the restaurant has won the Wine Spectator Best of Award of Excellence every year since 2014. Cassandra is also a contributor to The Breakers Grand Award-winning wine list of over 2,100 selections at HMF. Cassandra was the Southeastern Regional Winner and a National Finalist of the Chaine des Rotisseurs Best Young Sommelier Competition in both 2017 and 2018 and passed the Court of Master Sommeliers Advanced Sommelier examination in October 2018.



## KEN FREEMAN

Ken Freeman was born on Hilton Head Island in the lowcountry of South Carolina. After graduating from Clemson University in 2010, Ken made his way out west to Colorado. There he found his love for wine and food working in local vineyards and restaurants. Becoming a certified Sommelier in June of 2014, he then took on his next challenge of opening Italic in downtown Austin, TX using his love of Italian wine. As of February last year, Ken is still working to fulfill his thirst for knowledge and passion for hospitality in Dallas, Texas as the opening Beverage Manager for Sixty Vines Uptown. Ken's accomplishments include winning Cochon555 2017 (Austin) paring competition, Ruinart blind tasting competition 2016 (Austin), and taking 1st place at TexSom Best Sommelier competition this past August.



## TIM HERSHBERGER

Tim Hershberger pays homage to his hometown of Goshen, Indiana with the green bowtie he superstitiously wears on every Saturday service to ensure a Fighting Irish win. But Tim is not just a fan of his home team, he's a fan of his craft. A fan of a beautiful plate, of a complex cocktail, of the electricity in a top-notch service when the timing is perfect and the guests radiate with a warm glow that can only really be achieved by a good meal. At his core, Tim is a fan of the industry, and the industry has, in turn, been a fan of his since he began working at age 14. Excelling at every position from dishwasher to line cook to server to bartender, Tim credits Denver as the place that opened up his world and led him to his home at Mizuna where he began as Bar Manager in 2016.

Holding second level sommelier certifications with The Court of Master Sommeliers of America and the Wine and Spirits Educational Trust, London, Tim has a palate both mesmerizing and enviable, yet he never appears intimidating. Instead, he shares his knowledge with such infectious enthusiasm that staff and guests alike feel they've been let in on a little secret. As the current General Manager, Tim glides around the dining room effortlessly. He is somehow simultaneously wiping plates at the pass, guiding guests through the wine list and greeting people at the door like old friends (by now, many are). A Rumi quote proclaims that "Everyone has been made for some particular work, and the desire for that work has been put in every heart." Those who know Tim, or have been lucky enough to experience his unparalleled talents in service, would be remiss to argue that theory.



## MAT HOWERTON

Mat Howerton graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in 2010. After graduation, he helped open ChoLon Modern Asian in Denver, CO. Since then, Denver's 5280 Magazine has placed ChoLon on their "25 Best Restaurants" list each year. Howerton went on to oversee the beverage programs for each restaurant in the ChoLon Restaurant Concepts group as they opened: Cho77, Concourse Restaurant Moderne, BorraCho Tacos, and most recently LeRoux. Howerton is currently managing the beverage program at LeRoux, a wine-centric European concept serving focused, elegant cuisine.



## MAKINA LABRECQUE

Makina's love of food, wine and spirits brought her to the Calgary hospitality industry after years of performing professionally as an Irish Dancer. After working her way through many industry jobs in all positions Makina finally found herself working her dream job at Proof Cocktail Bar. Two and a half years later she has progressed from bartender, to bar manager/head bartender and now sits currently in the general/bar manager and creative director position.

Makina has gone on to compete in and win many local and national cocktail competitions, most recently representing Canada in the Patrón Perfectionists Global Finals for 2017 and 2018. When she isn't at the bar you can find her organizing hospitality related community initiatives. Proof Cocktail Bar recently got named Canada's fourth best bar, and she can't wait to lead the team to number one in the future!



## LEONARD LOPP

A bartender of twenty years, Leonard Lopp began his career in New Orleans in the late 90's. In 2012 he moved back to his home town of Detroit, Mi and three years later he opened The Keep, a trendsetting subterranean cocktail bar/dive bar hybrid.



## CATERINA MILTENBERGER

Caterina Miltenberger is the Founder of Caterina Creative Culinary, LLC. She continues to be the sweetheart and preferred mixologist for many national accounts. As an award winning Culinary Bar Chef and Mixologist in Dallas, TX, Caterina has 25 years' experience in the Alcohol Beverage Industry and is acknowledged as one of the country's premier mixologists. She has worked with Stephan Pyle's "The Father of Southwest Cuisine", Celebrity Chef's Mario Batali, Guy Fieri, and her friend Chef Todd Erickson of Haven South Beach. In 2017, Caterina created cocktail pairing with Network Celebrity Chef Bobby Flay's non-profit event at Trinity Groves 3015 in Dallas, TX. In 2018, Caterina participated in the AIR (Arts Incubator of Richardson) PODCAST – Titanic The Movie. In 2019, she has worked with PF CHANGS Year Of The Pig to develop a trio of cocktails to celebrate Chinese New Year.

Caterina is a member of the Dallas Honey Guild, and promotes the use of "Local" honey and its benefits. In 2006, Caterina helped create the NOW famous Jalapeño Margarita that has influenced many bars and restaurants in the USA and was awarded Best Margarita in Dallas 3 years in a row. Her talent and ability to drive cocktail creations on a very approachable level has provided her opportunities to work with the largest restaurant accounts in the world. As a member of the prestigious Les Dames D'Escoffier Dallas Chapter she worked with A Dame Good Party – Les Dames Escoffier Dallas Chapter non-profit helping create scholarships for women in the culinary arts. In 2016, she worked with Les Dames Escoffier Raiser Grazer Non for Profit helping create awareness in the culinary arts for women.

Caterina also worked with the WSWA Women's Leadership Council creating a custom cocktail for their inaugural event in 2015. Caterina has competed in the WSWA Iron Mixologist Competition where she was awarded the 2011 Best of Show, Best Long Drink, Best Dessert Drink, and the 2015 Best Long Drink. Her success at the WSWA Convention & Exposition led her to be invited to judge the WSWA Iron Mixologist Competition and WSWA Call for Cocktails Mixology Competition, as well as participate in the prestigious WSWA Toast to Congress in Washington, D.C. Caterina has also participated as a judge at Los Angeles International Spirits Competition 2016, 2017 and 2019.

Caterina was in *Forbes* magazine (digital) featuring Valentines Cocktail Casa Dragonos Tequila Caterina has many of her cocktails published in the famed *Neiman Marcus Cookbook*. She has been featured in multiple magazines including *Tasting Panel* for her Farm to Table cocktail programs, *Cosmopolitan*, *Cheers*, *Chilled*, *FD Luxe*, and *D* magazine.



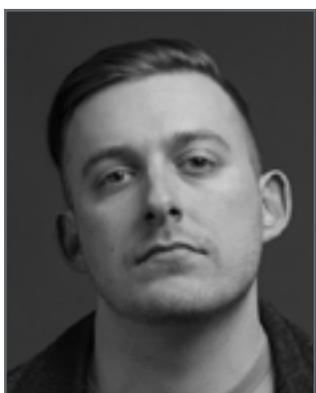
## ROBBI JO OLIVER

Robbi Jo Oliver is the Sr. Director of Wine & Spirits and Training for Mastro's Restaurant's. She has worked for Mastro's going on 20 years. Robbi Jo is a judge at LA Wine Competition and has participated in numerous wine events and judging. What Robbi Jo most loves about her job is working with all the amazing people that belong to Mastro's organization. It's a family environment and it has been and continues to be an incredible experience watching it grow.



## NATASCHA PATERER

Born and raised in Miami, Natascha Patterer is a Certified Sommelier and Certified Cicerone that has been working in restaurants since the age of 15. Wine has become a passion of hers over the years and she has had the opportunity to work with a number of extremely talented people, from Michelin-starred Chefs to Master Sommeliers. She lives life through learning and always try to surround herself with people I can learn from.



## DOMINIC PETRUCCI

Dominic Petrucci, a Chicago native, got his first taste of the spirits world in Kansas City. In 2012, Petrucci found himself behind a bar and fell in love with mixing and experimenting with different cocktails at a small local liquor store. Overtime, Petrucci was able to develop his craft, bringing inspired libations to some of Kansas City's favorite hot spots such as Julep, Il Lazzarone, The Monarch Bar, and The Savoy. When he is not pouring, mixing, and serving cocktails, Petrucci is freezing and cutting custom ice cubes for the local cocktail community through Liquid Minded Commissary.

As the Beverage Director of The Savoy, Petrucci has created a more traditional cocktail menu — inspired by an old bar book salvaged from The Savoy Grille during its four-year renovation. There was very little needed to change what worked about these classic cocktails, other than taking advantage of today's modern spirits. Coupled with a minimalist cocktail menu is an expansive spirits selection with a heavy emphasis on whiskey and vintage spirits.

With 10 years of experience in hospitality, and being entirely self-taught, Petrucci has a strong passion for all things distilled and champions bringing new forms of education and training to the bar community.



## GREG RICHIE

Chef Richie's awards include Chef of the Year and Orlando's Best Local Chef. His restaurant Soco has received many awards, such as Best New Restaurant, Orlando's Best Brunch and Best Southern Restaurant by Orlando Magazine and other notable publications.

In 2018 Soco was named Orlando Magazine's Reader's Choice for Best Restaurant!

Previous restaurants under Chef Richie's direction were awarded Best Seafood in Orlando and Best Signature Dish. He was also perennially named to Restaurant Forum's List of the Top 20 Chefs in Central Florida. He has made numerous appearances on local and national television and participates in many food and wine charity events.

In addition to being a highly awarded chef, Chef Richie competed in and won First Place in the national mixology drink competition hosted by Duke Bourbon and Tasting Panel Magazine - "Meeting of the Masters." The finals, held in Las Vegas, hosted some of the top craft mixologists from around the country.



## PERCY RODRIGUEZ

A native of Missouri, Percy Rodriguez joined legendary Chef and Restaurateur Laurent Tourondel in 2015 as Beverage Director for L'Amico, The Vine, Hidden Bar, and second.

A veteran of the Batali & Bastianich Hospitality Group, Rodriguez started as a bar-back at Otto Enoteca Pizzeria in 2007 and had the privilege of working under Dennis Mullally, B&B Hospitality's well-known resident bar manager. While at Otto, Rodriguez rotated through a number of front of house positions — taking every opportunity to expand his knowledge of wine and spirits.

Rodriguez's dedication and commitment landed him a position within B&B Hospitality's corporate team, providing him with the opportunity to assist in opening Babbo Pizzeria e Enoteca in Boston in 2015. There, Rodriguez served as the lead service director, working closely with mentor Mullally, and assisting the wine team with the program and staff education. The restaurant was awarded 2 stars by the Boston Globe, specifically recognizing the excellence in the wine program and the well-versed staff. That same year, Rodriguez returned to New York City, where he continued to oversee the creation of the wine and beer program at the Washington Heights' cafe, Taszo Espresso Bar, with a focus on craft products.

Following the tragedy that followed Hurricane Maria, Percy created a fundraising program partnering with Macallan and Unidos Por Puerto Rico. Sales from a special cocktail Olde Fashioned will benefit the rebuilding program in Puerto Rico. To date, it is the highest grossing cocktail in L'Amico and the Vine.

Percy's beverage program has been featured in TimeOut NY, Forbes.com, NYTimes, New York Magazine, Food & Wine, Food Network, The Tasting Panel Magazine, Meininger's Wine Business Intl, among others.



## ELIZABETH SAMMURI

Elizabeth Sammuri is a Colorado Native who spent her younger years growing up in the Rocky Mountains as an avid snowboarder. Elizabeth was a member of the ISTC Team (International Snowboard Training Center), where she traveled around the world competing in the snowboard event of boardercross.

Elizabeth was first introduced to the wine business at the age of 21 when she began working for a small winery in France for a summer, though her true love for wine was passed along to her from a passion of her father, who is an avid collector of fine wine.

Working in wine shops, wineries and restaurants, Elizabeth found her calling as a sommelier. Her desire to grow brought her to Italy to study the wine region. While living in Italy, Elizabeth spent time studying viticulture and enology, taught about Italian wine in Sienna and found true love where she first met her now husband.

Elizabeth now oversees one of the most well established and internationally recognized wine lists in the world. To ensure that her guests' expectations are not only satisfied, but also exceeded, Elizabeth takes great care and attention to staff education. Much of Elizabeth's time at the Flagstaff House is spent roaming the cellars, reading literature based upon the wines of the world and of course dabbling in taste as a necessary perk. Elizabeth is an aspiring Advanced Level Sommelier and seeks to further her education through "The Court of Master Sommeliers."



## NICK STEINBERG

NYC bred Musician/Bartender with over 20 years of experience in Los Angeles's premier bar and restaurant industry, Nick Steinberg is currently a Philadelphia based bar consultant.



## ERIC "ET" TECOSKY

ET has spent years behind the bar mixing drinks at some of Los Angeles' most famous, and in some cases, infamous watering holes. Most recently he held court as Bar Manager at Jones Hollywood. In the early 90's ET created the Jägermeister-based shot "Surfer on Acid." His taste and inventive spirits have evolved and over the years, ET's been featured in countless local and national press for his cocktails and innovations and as he likes to say, "Everything I learned behind bars has helped shape where I am right now — and I'm grateful for it."

With the launch of Dirty Sue, ET was the first to bottle premium olive juice for Dirty Martinis. What started as an idea funded with a pocketful of tips has grown into a nationally distributed brand that remains the best reviewed product of its kind on the market. Since launching he has added a line of hand-stuffed olives; a bitters and Bloody Mary mix are in the works.

Perhaps the crown jewel in his long career is becoming the U.S. Brand Ambassador for Jack Daniel's, a whiskey he has always loved for what's in the bottle and for what it represents in the world. He gets to travel the country telling stories about what Frank Sinatra called "The Nectar of the Gods." For ET, the only thing that could top that would have been able to share a drink with the man himself.



## JILLIAN ULANSKI

Jillian Ulanski is mixologist in Chicago, IL. Ulanski has been behind the bar for six years and in the restaurant/bar industry for the past ten years. She is proud to say that she recently crafted a cocktail that was featured in Jack's Black Book Volume 4. One of her core values in life is passion, it's also the reason she was inspired to become a mixologist. Mixologists to Ulanski exude passion with everything they do behind the bar, especially with their hand craftsmanship and close attention to detail. Ulanski is extremely passionate about the history of liquor, from modern day to prohibition cocktails. She loves being a complete book worm and buries herself in books about liquor and cocktails. She enjoys sharing a short story or a fun piece of history she has come across in her readings with family, friends or even strangers. Who doesn't love to learn something while sipping a tasty beverage? Ulanski does it for a living! One thing a mixologist does every day is learn something new, and she plans on growing and evolving each day!