



COURT OF
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AFTER AN INTENSE FIVE-DAY EXAM, 11 JOIN RANKS OF ADVANCED SOMMELIERS

Daniel Cobian of The Breakers wins prestigious Rudd Scholarship

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CINCINNATI, OH – After five days of intense lectures and examinations, and months, if not years, of study, eleven sommeliers successfully passed the Court of Master Sommeliers' Advanced Exam on Friday, August 13. Held at the Midwest Culinary Institute at Cincinnati State University, the Advanced Exam is the third in a series of four increasingly challenging tests of knowledge and skill offered by the Court, and is designed to distinguish those candidates with a superior understanding of wine theory and the beverage service industry, as well as a highly sophisticated tasting ability. Having successfully cleared this hurdle, these eleven individuals from across North America are now setting their sights on achieving the highest sommelier designation in the world, that of Master Sommelier.

The Advanced Examination is exponentially more challenging than the prerequisite Introductory Sommelier and Certified Sommelier Examinations, with only a small percentage of those who begin the Court's programs ever reaching this milestone. Despite thousands of new individuals enrolling in the Court's educational programs each year, only 105 individuals in North America have successfully gone on to earn the title of Master Sommelier. Thirty-three candidates in total sat for this Advanced Exam, with some traveling from as far away as California and New York to see if they have what it takes.

"To pass the Court's Advanced Exam is no small feat," said Tim Gaiser, the Education Director for the American Chapter of the Court. "These eleven individuals are among the very best in their field, yet only a fraction will ever go on to achieve the title of Master Sommelier," he added.

With each Advanced Examination, the Court awards the prestigious Rudd Scholarship to the highest scoring candidate. Daniel Cobian is the latest recipient of this award. The scholarship offers funds toward the coursework needed to prepare for the Masters Exam and an invitation to attend the Rudd Master's Round Table in Napa Valley, a two-day intensive tutorial about wine theory, tasting and service. A native Floridian, Cobian began his career at the Mandarin Oriental in Miami and currently serves as a sommelier at L'Escalier, the flagship restaurant at The Breakers Palm Beach.

"I have been very fortunate to study under two accomplished Master Sommeliers at The Breakers, Virginia Philip and Juan Gomez," stated Cobian. "Their continued support, along with the rest of the sommelier community in South Florida, was instrumental in helping me prepare for this challenge. I am thrilled to have reached this stage of the Court's educational programs and look forward to working towards my Master's credential."

"With each exam, it is always exciting to see who will walk through those doors," said Frederick Dame, Chairman Emeritus of the American Chapter of the Court of Master Sommeliers and current President of the Guild of Sommeliers Education Foundation. "Working with sommeliers provides the Court a wonderful opportunity to ensure that the next generation of wine professionals shares our passion for wine and wine service. Each of these candidates has the potential to be the next great Master Sommelier."

The complete list of candidates who earned the title of Advanced Sommelier at the recent Cincinnati exam include: Brahm Callahan of Post 390 Restaurant (Boston, MA), Dilek Caner of Tasting World (Dallas, TX), Daniel Cobian of The Breakers (West Palm Beach, FL), Jared Fischer of Le Bernardin (New York City, NY), Mary Horn of Wine Trends, Inc. (Cincinnati, OH), James Lechner of Bastille Café & Bar (Seattle, WA), Pascaline Lepeltier of Rouge Tomate (New York City, NY), Michael Shearin of Drago Centro (Los Angeles, CA), Clint Sloan of McCrady's Restaurant (Charleston, SC), Luke Wohlers (Seattle, WA), and Daniel Jake Young of Chas Rothmann's Steakhouse (Miller Place, NY).

About the Court of Master Sommeliers

The Court of Master Sommeliers was established in England in 1977 to encourage improved standards of beverage knowledge and service in hotels and restaurants. The first Master Sommelier Diploma Exam to be held in the United States was in 1987. The title Master Sommelier marks the highest recognition of wine and spirits knowledge, beverage service abilities, and

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professionalism in the hospitality trade. Education was then, and remains today, the Court's charter. There are four stages involved in attaining the top qualifications of Master Sommelier: 1) Introductory Sommelier Course; 2) Certified Sommelier Course; 3) Advanced Sommelier Course; and 4) Master Sommelier Diploma.

There are 105 professionals who have earned the title Master Sommelier in North America. Of those, 90 are men and 15 are women. There are 170 professionals worldwide who have received the title of Master Sommelier since the first Master Sommelier Diploma Exam.

Photograph from the Advanced Sommelier Exam on August 13, 2010



From left to right: Michael Shearin, Daniel Cobian, James Lechner, Daniel Jake Young, Pascaline Lepeltier, Clint Sloan, Mary Horn, Jared Fisher, and Brahm Callahan. *Not pictured: Dilek Caner, Luke Wohlers.*

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