

Sommelier

Join The Herbfarm as Sommelier at one of America's premier restaurants with one of the top wine programs and the most attentive service. You'll be on the floor for service most Thursdays through Sundays during our nine-course seasonally and regionally influenced tastings menus that have been paired (by you) with 5-6 Northwest wines. As a key staff member on the wine team of one of America's most-visible destination restaurants, it is The Herbfarm's goal that its sommeliers achieve national recognition and awards. The Herbfarm will support and promote these efforts.

DETAILS

Currently many of these tasks/roles are performed by various members of the wine team.

Reporting

Reports to Carrie Van Dyck, GM and Ron Zimmerman, Wine Director
Both are proprietors of The Herbfarm Restaurant

Food & Wine Pairing and other Beverage Selection

- Recommends wine pairings for each day's menu-from cellar and/or purveyors
- Recommends wine for replacement /addition to The Herbfarm's list and inventory
- Recommends and maintains inventory for glass pours and samplers
- Creates and serves non-alcoholic beverage options to match the menu.
- Recommends and maintains inventory for beer, water, herbal non-alcoholic beverages
- Weekly Wine team meetings on "prep day"
- Recommends, explores, updates coffee/tea menu listings

Nightly Service and Prep

- Pulls and prepares wine before dinner, bringing each wine to the proper serving temperature
- Opens (and decants) wine, Insures that each bottle is sound.
- Educates staff in nightly, pre-dinner meeting of changes & updates of served wines
- Presents nightly menu talk to guests with chef in front of dining room
- Management of beer, herbal, non-alcoholic beverages including bottled waters
- Discusses beverages with guests
- Assists guests to make additional beverage selections
- Presents, opens, serves wine table-side for bottle sales
- Manages sales tracking to be sure all extra beverages served (incl comps) are in POS
- Assists general service when possible by helping serve and present food, remove plates/silver/glassware, as well as refreshing napkins
- Closing responsibilities for restaurant 2-3 nights per week
- Take lead in retaining Herbfarm's 5-Diamond service rating

Inventory Management

- Responsible for maintenance and inventory/location of 24,000+ bottle cellar
- Responsible for accurately receiving wine
- Manages pricing of wine in guest wine lists
- Responsible for nightly and weekly breakage report
- Maintains an attractive cellar
- Maintains inventory of beer and non-alcoholic beverages
- Inventory management of supplies for samplers, alternate pours, etc
- Shares monthly inventory responsibility of all pantry items with kitchen

Beverage Sales

- Responds in thymely manner to guest beverage inquiries via email, phone or in person
- Supports retail sales of bottles--silent salesmen in wine cellar displays
- Support Ron with descriptions for nightly Wine Tales, new samplers, glass pours
- Always conscious of potential for additional sales opportunities without losing the “we’ll take care of you feel”

Staff Management and Education

- Develops and increases staff education through daily line-ups and after dinner tastings
- Beverage education at dining room meetings or other monthly times with advance notice so all staff can attend.
- Twice annual all-staff education
- Lead role in service staff development and continual service improvement
- Work closely with GM / DR Manager (carrie) in hiring, training, managing DR staff and nightly “expediting”. Eventually take the lead role here.

Public Relations and Professional Exposure

- As a key staff member on the wine team of one of America’s most-visible destination restaurants, it is The Herbfarm’s goal that its sommeliers achieve national recognition and awards. The Herbfarm will support and promote these efforts within reason with advance planning
- Maintain and develop professional business relationships with local winemakers and distributors.
- Represent The Herbfarm at trade and consumer tastings in a professional manner
- Represent The Herbfarm at promotional events
- Develop and grow The Herbfarm’s public representation in a positive way

Personal Education

- Continues with formal wine education through classes, tasting group study, and certification
- Focus on local and regional wines as well as wines of the world

REQUIREMENTS to APPLY

- Way above average skills in pairing food and wine
- At least 8 years professional wine service experience
- Able to share passion and enthusiasm for wine with down-to-earth openness without alienating beginners while capturing the interest of experienced wine folk
- Extensive knowledge of the world’s wines with particular emphasis on the wines of the Pacific Northwest; including but not limited to northern Italy, Rhone, Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne, California, Australia, and New Zealand, and the rest of the United States
- Previous people management experience
- Good posture, body language, personal grooming, and steady hands
- Pleasant personality with a winning smile
- Stamina and the ability to be on one’s feet for 10 hours (with the pleasant attitude above)
- Willingness to help in all front of house facets of restaurant operations-5 years hands-on experience at least
- Capable public speaking abilities
- Team player and communicator
- Ready to assume leadership responsibilities as appropriate
- Above average command of English language

CHARACTERISTICS

- Intelligent, quick, witty yet serious and focused
- Emotionally mature with natural leader qualities
- Energetic, Enthusiastic, Consistent, Persistent
- Caring, communicates well (about the good and the bad) with guests and staff
- Graciousness, ability to be “owner”
- Calm under pressure, think on your feet

SCHEDULE

- Generally Thursday through Sunday service
- Typically 4 evenings per week, plus one daytime inventory/preparation (generally Wednesdays)
- Slow nights, extra service nights, salaried folks step up before hourly folks
- Approximate 40-50 hours per week schedule is prepared a month in advance
- Weekly visits to wineries are expected
- Closing responsibilities 2-3 nights per week (2am finish Th-Sat)
- Currently The Herbfarm is closed for vacation one week in March

COMPENSATION

- Salaried at a competitive rate.

BENEFITS *(details in Employee Handbook)*

- Health Insurance- medical, dental and vision paid 50% by The Herbfarm after 3 months
- Paid Vacation: 2 weeks per year. Vacation increases to 3 weeks per year after 5 years employment
- Good Health days--maximum two per year--paid days off for being healthy
- Wine-Travel Education (after being here 6 months): By advance scheduling and approval (preferably not on service nights), 5 compensated days off per year and a \$200 per diem to use as you wish to further your wine knowledge. Your written report will be shared with the rest of the staff
- Dining Education: Up to \$1,000 reimbursement per year for dining at mutually agreed upon restaurants. The dining benefit is contingent on a written report of the experience (required for reimbursement), which will be shared with The Herbfarm staff
- Participate in the annual Wine/Food education 3 day annual trip-usually October
- Participate in employer matched 401K plan after one year of service

A SUCCESSFUL SOMMELIER AT THE HERBFARM WOULD

At the end of ONE MONTH

- Be on time
- Follow through on promises with co-workers and guests
- Be honest and ethical in all dealings
- Be working with Wine Team to select wines for the week's menu
- Be working with Wine Team each week for receiving/inventory control/organization of cellar
- Be able to find wine in the cellar
- Familiar with current non-alcoholic program/ingredients/sources/inventory
- Conversant with guests about wines we are serving each night
- Able to do wine talk with Chef and Ron during service with little difficulty
- Familiar with dining room handbook
- Able to serve, clear, explain courses to guests
- Comfortable using office computers

At the end of 3 MONTHS

- Be able to setup wine and other beverages for nightly service with little direction
- Meet with wine reps for wine sampling
- Manage weekly inventory stuff--sampler supplies, wine by glass inventory, weekly usage, receiving and storing wine deliveries.
- Invent new NAs as menu demands
- Regular communication with chef regarding dietary specials that may require different wine match.
- Incorporate weekly cycle counts of cellar into prep schedule
- Be fully aware of menus and changes that affect wine matching
- Have strong knowledge of all Woodinville wineries
- Be developing knowledge of all the Pacific Northwest wine regions
- Share information about matched wines with service staff weekly/nightly
- Thoroughly understand the details of FOH dining room service, able to fill in as needed, understand /perform all purple prep sheet items.
- Familiar with all existing samplers, wine by glass
- Be exploring new samplers
- Be conversant with guests/staff about most of our NW wines on a down-to-earth level
- Be able to do wine talk with Chef and Ron during service with ease
- Familiar with computer network programs and files
- Time in office to learn “scripts” for educating guests about dinner, understand basics of reservation process.

At the end of 6 MONTHS

- Be conversant with guests/staff about most of the wines on our list
- Setup regular wine education with Carrie for staff
- Come up with promotional ideas with wine team and set them in motion
- Keep wine hall signed, stocked, and inviting for shoppers
- Be able to order wines and work with purveyors to get wine for restaurant
- Have full knowledge of most Washington and Oregon wineries
- Be able to take a reservation
- Take role in regular dining room meetings
- Involved in selecting and training FOH staff
- Maintain sampler and glass sales average of \$13.70 per guest
- Maintain or increase consumed bottle sales average of \$7.20 per guest
- Familiar with wine inventory spreadsheet
- Regular maintenance of pricing in guests wine lists as compared to wine costs
- Take charge of coffee/tea menu selections

At the end of 1 YEAR

- Demonstrate increase in wine sales over previous quarters
- Develop wine education/award program for staff
- Have full knowledge of most Pacific Northwest wineries
- Working closely with GM in management of daily staff performance and guest service
- Involvement in potential, additional, casual Herbfarm Two
- Assume responsibility for weekly wine ordering
- Become familiar with wine inventory spreadsheet
- Become familiar with Wine List files

At the end of 2 YEARS

- Increase retail wine sales by 5% over previous year
- Increase consumed wine sales by 5% over previous year
- Explore/create? a fee paid wine education program for guests and/or restaurant industry
- Be in process of assuming more overall dining room management role
- Maintain wine inventory spreadsheet to Ron's specifications
- Together with Ron, maintain accurate updates and reprints of wine lists.

To Apply for the Position

Download the application from our web site. Then, visit The Herbfarm offices between 10am and 3pm, Monday through Saturday, or 10am and 2pm on Sunday, to complete quizzes.