

■ THE SOMMELIER JOURNAL

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# THE SOMM JOURNAL

THE RIBOLI FAMILY  
GOES BIG IN PASO  
ROBLES

# ALL IN!



Fourth-generation  
winemaker  
Anthony Riboli in  
the vineyards.

PHOTO: JEREMY BALL





# CHEF'S ROLL | SOMM'S LIST

PRESENTATION IS EVERYTHING

*We've partnered with Chef's Roll & Somm's List, the global culinary and wine professional networks, to learn more about beverage experts from across the country.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF PETIT CRENN



## Courtney Humiston

*Former GM & Wine Director at Petit Crenn in San Francisco, CA*

**Q:** Have you noticed any new trends emerging? What are customers asking for at the moment?

Natural wine, for sure. I think the general population is beginning to realize there are wines that are mass-produced and unhealthy, and they are looking for alternatives. I also sell a lot of Champagne, sparkling wine and

rosé as well. I think guests are realizing the deliciousness and versatility of these wines as opposed to heavy red wines, which can really weigh you down.

**Q:** You've twice served as judge for the international competition *Concours Mondial*. What do you look forward to most about judging?

The *Concours Mondial* is a really amazing experience. You meet and taste with wine professionals from around the world who are all bringing different perspectives, experiences and palates to the table. I always learn so much from judging and it makes me a more disciplined taster as well. You really have to focus and pay attention to what is in the glass and be really honest about what you are experiencing.

PHOTO: JAMIE FRITCH



## Rafael Peterson

*Sommelier at Bracero Cocina in San Diego, CA*

**Q:** The wine list at Bracero favors Baja and Alta California labels, from wineries in Mexico's Valle de Guadalupe to Mexican-owned wineries throughout California. Which wineries should we be keeping an eye on right now?

One of my favorite small producers right now is Jorge Maciel of Cava Maciel in Valle de Guadalupe. I think he embodies perfectly the movement of boutique winemakers who take great care in sourcing their fruit and producing wines.

**Q:** What is a current favorite food-and-wine pairing at the moment?

One of my favorite pairings at Bracero is our albacore two ways—tartare and seared, burnt onion crème fraîche, tempura eggplant—served with a Sauvignon Blanc from Monte Xanic (Valle de Guadalupe). The wine has such beautiful citrus notes that match the tartare and cut through the crispy eggplant, and amazing acidity for Baja that refreshes after each bite.

## Stephanie Schwartz

*Sommelier at Le Coucou in New York, NY*

**Q:** What is your approach to pairing? Are there any rules you like to break or follow?

I like to have a conversation with the guests regarding likes and dislikes. That dictates what rules will or will not be followed. If a guest despises red wines, then for a beef course I will pair a richly textured white wine, perhaps something from Meursault or Savennières. My favorite thing to do is something unexpected. If dessert is chocolate, the guest may be expecting Port, but I bring out a Banyuls or aged rum.

**Q:** Do you remember a specific wine that made you want to pursue wine as a career?

I cannot remember the exact appellation or producer, but it was a Left Bank Bordeaux I tasted during one of my service classes at Johnson & Wales University. Up to that point, the wine I had been exposed to was so one-dimensional that the complexity of Bordeaux sent shock waves through me. *—SJ*



PHOTO: LIZZIE MUNRO

*If you are a mixologist or wine professional interested in being featured here or want more information on Chef's Roll and Somm's List, please email [featured@chefsroll.com](mailto:featured@chefsroll.com).*