



For Immediate Release

White Point's Sommelier heads up Atlantic Canada Association

August 30, 2010, White Point, Nova Scotia - White Point's Food and Beverage Services Manager, Dan Tanner's passion for knowledge and his job has led him to the top of Atlantic Canada's Sommelier world.

A Sommelier is a wine expert. Dan, after only three years of achieving his status as a Sommelier, is the new president of Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers (CAPS) Atlantic Chapter for 2010-11.

"Wine is a passion of mine," he says with a grin. "So much so my girlfriend has let me put in 200 vines (at our property) and we're looking at two more acres." He adds, "I became president of the CAPS to help give back to the industry I enjoy so much while helping to create awareness of the profession as well. It was an honour. We're such a young association here in Atlantic Canada and are striving to better communicate what a Sommelier is and what we add to a dining experience. I'm happy to jump in to help and be a part of the effort. We're also really working to help the Nova Scotia wine industry as much as possible."

Efforts involve competitions, administration, promotion, partnerships (for example, Taste of Nova Scotia and Wine Tourism) and marketing. He explains Nova Scotia wines are on track to become world famous despite the industry's youth. As a champion, under his guidance White Point has the largest selection of Nova Scotia wines in the province.

Although modest about his accomplishments, Dan's work ethic appears to be extraordinary. He entered the Nova Scotia Community College tourism program a little over a decade ago. One of the programs included a site tour to White Point. He remembers that day. "I stood in the conference room, looked out the window over the ocean and said I have to work here."

He was permitted to hold his cooperative work term at White Point and was subsequently hired as a member of the dining room and then transferred to the Guest Services department where he worked until his employers noticed his unusual work ethic and desire for knowledge. Dan returned to the dining room and promoted to supervisor and eventually worked his way into his current position of Food and Beverage Manager.

Upon reflection of what led him to becoming a Sommelier, he recalls his time as a waiter in the Dining Room. "As a waiter, I thought I would be better if I learned more about food and wine to enhance the meal experience for our guests." He started taking courses. Two years later, after travelling to Halifax and back while holding down his full-time job at White Point, he earned his Sommelier designation. He immediately joined the aforementioned association as a member of the board of directors.

He discovered something along the way, however. "While it was approached as a career builder, it became a passion. It's so complex. With every glass, you pick up a different set of aromas and taste. No

two wines are the same. The complexities of the wines themselves are a challenge, becoming familiar with the style of wines. I often challenge myself to blind-tastings. It's like an ongoing competition all the time to learn more about wines.” However, he can't do this as much as he likes. He explains through his laughter that he can't spit out wine, as often seen at competitions. “I have to limit how much I drink because I think the spitting part is a waste of good wine.”

At White Point he works closely with Executive Chef Alan Crosby to offer guests wine paired menus that showcase international and Nova Scotia pairings. He also offers two hour “crash courses” in his “Off the Vine” wine tastings which are extremely popular. “It’s gone over really well; we get a great response from people and it takes some of the pretentiousness (sometimes associated with wine) out of it. People think wine and pairing is difficult and scary but it's really simple. Besides, when you listen to a South Shore boy like me talk about wine the accent takes a little bit off it.”

He says he can't thank White Point enough for supporting his efforts. He has even travelled to Spain, Chile and Argentina on wine tasting tours and hopes to head to France in the near future. “Every time I want to start something new they say, 'How can we help?' They're always very supportive.”

Dan is now often found in the White Point (and home) kitchen. He is nurturing his growing passion for cooking and, as usual, his efforts are not half-baked. He is taking Culinary Arts at Nova Scotia Community College with the goal to eventually earn his red seal as a certified cook, while still working full-time and performing his duties as Sommelier association president.

White Point, their guests and the Nova Scotia wine industry have grown to rely on Dan’s thirst for knowledge and desire for sharing his passion for wine and food. “It keeps it exciting, continuing to learn,” he explains. “Besides, all the food-based learning is helping me with my job. I just want to contribute more.”

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