



PENNSYLVANIA WINERY ASSOCIATION

Meet the Judges!

Noelle Allen | PhillyWine School

Noelle began her career in finance and earned her MBA, but quickly decided Corporate America wasn't for her, so she began studying wine with the London-based Wine & Spirits Education Trust (WSET) in 2014 because it was a globally recognized certificate and was recommended by international colleagues. She became an instructor with PhillyWine in 2017, and eventually the business was handed to me and my business partner by the previous owner, who was retiring. In the interim, she became a partner at a wine import company, and wrote wine articles (on the PA wine scene!) for Eater Philly, as well as post for her now-defunct blog, Wine LALA. Now she spends her days running and growing PhillyWine, teaching WSET classes, and hosting wine events... and I just love it.

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Arindam Basu | Total Wine & More

Arindam Basu is a trained molecular biologist and a wine educator at PhillyWine LLC where he teaches all levels of WSET courses. He has his own consultancy business, Perfect pour Experience LLC where he offers private wine tasting, wine classes and wine pairing dinners. He also works at Total Wine & More.

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Cheron Cowan | Craft Restaurant NYC and Wine Enthusiast

Cheron is an Advanced Sommelier (Court of Master Sommeliers) with over 25 years of experience in New York City's hospitality scene, including notable roles at Gramercy Tavern and Blue Hill NYC. He currently serves as Beverage Director for Craft NYC and Vallata, Tom Colicchio's flagship restaurants. Cheron is also a member of the Wine Enthusiast tasting panel for East Coast wines and contributes as a writer at large.

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Mark Cochard | Franks Wine and PhillyWine.com

Mark has worked in the wine industry for over 30 years, including 22 years at Chaddsford Winery and his current role at Frank's Wine in Wilmington, DE. A 28-year member of the Society of Wine Educators, he also teaches WSET Diploma (Level 4), focusing on cool climate regions such as the Loire, Rhône, and North America.

He has visited top cool climate regions including the Santa Rita Hills, Willamette Valley, Finger Lakes, Niagara, Okanagan, Loire, Burgundy, Champagne, Mosel, Rheingau, and Southeast England. His teaching and travels have given him deep insight into varietals like Riesling, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Franc, and the unique expressions they achieve in cooler climates.

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Tom Dean | DiLisi Imports

Former Center City sommelier and service captain turned wine sales rep, with experience running a liquor store in Delaware for two years. Now back in wine sales.

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Bryant Fennell | Somm Guidance Consulting

Bryant is a former floor sommelier turned retail wine specialist, now working as a wine critic. He is also the creator and host of the informative podcast Wine Unknown, where he explores the stories, styles, and people behind the world of wine.

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Matt L. Kirkland, DWS | Co-Owner PhillyWine

Matt holds the WSET Diploma and is a Certified Diploma Educator, with Wine Scholar Guild certifications in regions including Bordeaux, Rhône, Champagne, and others. He is the co-owner of PhillyWine, a business he co-founded to advance wine education in the region. Also a Professor of Surgery, Matt brings a unique blend of academic rigor and wine expertise to his work.

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Kevin Ostrowski | American Wine Society and Butler County Community College

Kevin holds a range of certifications including CSW, WSET Level III, AWS Certified Wine Judge with Merit, Master of Champagne (Wine Scholar Guild), and PA RAMP Certification. He currently serves as Director of Education for the American Wine Society and teaches wine appreciation classes at Butler County Community College. Kevin recently judged the Texas International Wine Competition and is slated to judge several others this year, including the Winemaker Magazine Competition, the New York State Fair, and the Big E Northeast Gold Competition, among others.

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Bailey Place | Vine Bar Collective

Bailey is a WSET Level 2 certified wine professional (with distinction) currently preparing to sit for his Level 3 exam. A lifelong Pennsylvania resident raised by teacher and foodie parents, he developed an early passion for food and wine education. After spending five years in college in Pittsburgh, Bailey discovered his love for wine during the COVID-19 pandemic while working at a local winery in western Pennsylvania. He has since embraced hospitality as a sommelier in Lancaster and continued to deepen his wine expertise. Currently, Bailey works with The Log Cabin in Leola, where he was hired to help the team pursue a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. Collaborating with the staff and leading training efforts has been both a rewarding challenge and a career highlight. Passionate about education and community, Bailey is committed to enriching and expanding the wine culture throughout Lancaster and across Pennsylvania.

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Joseph Quintela | Amada; SPB Hospitality

Joseph Quintela is the Director of Operations at Amada & Village Whiskey, where he is currently leading a National expansion of the brands as part of SPB Hospitality. He moved to Philadelphia in 2019, and re-opened Garces restaurants after Covid-19, including the creation of a Local & Latin Wine Program at Garces Trading Company. He worked as a Sommelier at the Michelin-starred Public & The Monday Room in NYC and oversaw a Grand Award of Excellence wine program at Fhima's in St. Paul, MN. He is an advocate for the expansion of Pennsylvania's wine industry.

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Robin Shreeves | Robin Shreeves LLC

Robin Shreeves is a certified wine professional through the Wine School of Philadelphia and a freelance wine journalist. She's written about wine for publications such as Wine Enthusiast, VinePair, Full Pour, Philadelphia Magazine's Foobooz, Courier Post, Wine Industry Advisor, Edible Philly, and Edible Jersey. She loves good wine no matter where it's made, but she often champions the wines and winemakers of East Coast regions in her writing.

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Thomas Stevens | Fearless Restaurants

Thomas has worked in the wine industry for 15 years, with a focus on cool-climate European wines from regions like Germany, Austria, and northern France. He began his career at Tria in Philadelphia and went on to complete his WSET Level 3 and become a Certified Sommelier through the Court of Master Sommeliers. In New York, he honed his craft at acclaimed restaurants including Terroir, Blanca, and Manhatta. Returning to Philadelphia in 2021, Thomas served as Beverage Director at Walnut Street Café before taking on his current role as Beverage Director for Fearless Restaurants, where he oversees the beverage programs for 14 locations across Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

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Phillip Thomas | Shot and Bottle

Philip is a Level 4 sommelier, published contributor to PennLive, and the founder and coordinator of the Lancaster Wine Club. What began as a passion project has grown into a thriving community that connects members with outstanding wines from around the world, fosters meaningful connections, and provides a platform for local producers to showcase their craft. Through the Lancaster Wine Club, Philip champions wine education, supports regional talent, and continues to cultivate a dynamic wine culture in Lancaster and beyond.

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Bob Trimble | Importer/Distributor/ Educator

Bob Trimble is the founder and owner of La Lumière Sélections, an importer and distributor of fine wines to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. He is a WSET-certified educator with Fine Vintage Ltd., and also conducts wine classes for The Union League of Philadelphia, the Wharton Wine Club, and speaks regularly at Chaîne des Rôtisseurs events. Bob has traveled extensively to the world's major wine regions and imports wines from countries including France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Chile, New Zealand, Australia, and most recently, Bhutan!

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Justen Sloyer | Thistle Finch Distillery - Shot and Bottle & Burley Bar

Justin has worked in the beverage industry for over a decade, with experience spanning both management and bartending roles. He is currently the Beverage Director for Thistle Finch Distillery in Lancaster, overseeing programs at Shot & Bottle and the Burley Bar—both of which exclusively feature Pennsylvania-made wine, spirits, and beer. Previously, Justin served as head bartender for TFB Hospitality, curating celebrated wine lists at Conway Social Club and C'est La Vie, a European-inspired bistro known for its focus on Old World varietals.

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Carrie Lyn Strong | Strong Wine Consulting

Carrie Lyn is a 15-year NYC sommelier veteran who transitioned into wine consulting in Pennsylvania, where she works to educate both consumers and restaurant staff in wine, spirits, and hospitality. She is a published contributor to Susquehanna Style and Food & Wine, and extends her educational outreach through online media, blending real-world expertise with accessible content.

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Scott Zoccolillo | La Fête

Scott brings over 20 years of hospitality experience with a strong focus on wine education. An Advanced Sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers, he is known for his depth of knowledge, leadership, and commitment to mentoring the next generation of wine professionals.

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