

For Hotel, Resort, and Casino Food & Beverage Operations

Hotel F&B™

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(L-R) Joie de Vivre Hospitality's Morgan Plant, regional director for F&B operations; Dave Hoemann, VP of F&B; and Jennifer Cox, director of culinary/executive chef, at the new Hotel Maya, Long Beach, California. [Photo by David Guettler, www.guettlerphoto.com]

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The World of Wine, Beer & Spirits

BY FRED TIBBITTS

KNORR FOR THE MONEY

John Knorr, senior VP of Phillips Foods and Phillips Seafood Restaurants, profitably partners with hotels.



What was your first collaboration with a hotel, how was it structured, and what important lessons have you learned as a result of this first marriage?

Our first hotel location was our company-owned location in the Pier project at Caesars Palace in Atlantic City. We developed three restaurants on the Pier: a Phillips Seafood Restaurant, a Phillips Seafood Express, and a new concept restaurant we created with Chef Robbin Haas called Souzai. When we locate in hotels we understand the importance of knowing the guest profile, and we do our homework. Thus our restaurants perform well per square foot.

Tell us about Phillips Seafood Restaurants. What is your beverage program like and why?

Our wine program now offers 46 choices, 25 of which are by the glass. We have expanded our very successful wine flights program, so we now offer all our wines by the glass in flights as well, which has tremendously improved our guest satisfaction surveys. With so many great varietals, produced by so many excellent wineries, available in so many ways, our customers are quickly becoming educated and returning for more with their friends. And our spirits sales have grown consistently via innovative quarterly promotions as well as bartender and server contests, motivating our entire bar staff to demonstrate their creative mixology skills and sales enthusiasm.

How are you looking to partner with hotels?

We seek partners that can meet our standards and those of our current hotel franchise partners. We started with two of the best food and beverage operators in the United States—Roger Taylor at Columbia Sussex and Don Stanczak with Interstate Hotels. We will continue to proactively grow our hotel business, but cautiously and with the right partners.

What are your favorite wines and why?

I have a varied palate and enjoy many varietals and styles of wine, but I most enjoy wines that evoke tasting memories, such as a trip with Phil Shaw to his winery at Orange, Australia, where I became an instant fan of his Philip Shaw Shiraz Viognier. Another wine odyssey that comes to mind was to the heart-shaped Purple Angel Vineyard at Montes in Chile with Douglas Murray as personal tour guide and spiritual advisor, with one of the last remaining bottles of a 99-point vintage of Purple Angel in his private collection.

I've recently turned my attention to craft beer, founding a boutique brewery in Delaware, Evolution Craft Brewing Company, with my brother Tom. I am fascinated with the artistry that goes into craft brewing. 🍷

Fred Tibbitts & Associates Inc. is a leading wine-by-the-glass consultant, working with and promoting chains around the world. Contact Fred at fredbev@fredtibbitts.com.



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