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THE LITTLE NELL ANNOUNCES NEW MASTER SOMMELIER CARLTON MCCOY

McCoy joins group of elite wine professionals



Aspen, Colorado (May 23, 2013) – Aspen’s finest hotel, [The Little Nell](#), is proud to announce the addition of a new Master Sommelier to its team. [Carlton McCoy](#), assistant wine director for the hotel, has just received his Master Sommelier Diploma, joining an elite group of **133** top wine professionals in North America.

The Little Nell has had more masters come through its wine program than any other establishment in the country, now with 10 masters working or having worked on property. In the past five years, The Little Nell has generated five new Master Sommeliers and three Master Sommeliers are currently employed at The Little Nell, which is a first for the property. The hotel was proud to host the Master Sommelier Exam in Aspen, May 19-22, 2013. The exam, dubbed “the hardest test in the world,” has a pass rate of approximately 10 percent and was being held for the second time in Colorado.

As a Master Sommelier, McCoy has now achieved the highest distinction afforded in the wine industry by successfully completing an intense examination that requires extreme focus and determination. The overall examination consists of a verbal theory test where other masters ask 150 questions on anything and everything relating to wine, spirits and sake, while a service test expects candidates to correctly address mock service scenarios including wine decanting, Champagne service and pairing different wines with food. Finally the candidate must also blind taste six wines in less than 25 minutes, successfully determining the wine’s origin, grape and vintage.

Sixty three candidates sat for the exam at The Little Nell this week, with just **four** passing.

The Little Nell’s Wine Director Jonathan Pullis received his Master Sommelier diploma in 2009, and Food and Beverage Director Sabato Sagaria received his in 2012.

The test is the subject of an upcoming documentary, *SOMM*, which will be released on iTunes and in select cities June 21. Sagaria, as well as former Little Nell sommeliers Dustin Wilson and Brian McClintic, are stars of the documentary. View the trailer at <http://trailers.apple.com/trailers/independent/somm/>.

About Carlton

Carlton McCoy began his career in food and beverage in high school, in a culinary arts course. A scholarship to The Culinary Institute of America called McCoy to his true passion: wine and service.

Carlton has a sense of adventure, travelling the world in search of great wine and spirits. He has graced several celebrated environments including Thomas Keller's Per Se, Marcus Samuelsson's Aquavit, Tom Colicchio's Craft Steak in New York, and Eric Zeibold's CityZen at The Mandarin Oriental in Washington, DC.

Carlton arrived at The Little Nell in November 2011, inspired by the hotel's Wine Spectator Grand Award-winning program and the property's exciting reputation. When he's not serving, studying or tasting wine, you can find Carlton fishing, camping, hiking or skiing.

Images of Carlton: <https://aspensnowmass.imagerelay.com/sb/6301aece-99eb-4c16-b207-9f8e04ff57d1>

About The Little Nell

The Little Nell is a year-round destination hotel at the foot of Aspen Mountain. For more information and reservations, please call 970-920-4600 or 888-843-6355. Or visit www.thelittlenell.com.

About the Court of Master Sommeliers

The Court of Master Sommeliers was established in 1977 to encourage improved standards of beverage knowledge and service in hotels and restaurants. There are four examination stages to attain the top qualifications of Master Sommelier. For more information, visit <http://www.mastersommeliers.org>.