Joel Anthony Caruso
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Professional Certifications

- Certified Sommelier, Court of Master Sommeliers
- WSET Advanced, Wine and Spirits Education and Trust (passed with merit)

Current Course of Studies

- WSET Diploma, AIWS, Wine and Spirits Education and Trust
- Advanced Sommelier, Court of Master Sommeliers

Professional Experience

Wine/Spirit Writer, U.S. Brand Ambassador, Vivino, United States, 2016 - Current

- Develop content around general wine info, food pairings, recipes, trends, news, laws, etc.
- Represent Vivino throughout the country at major wine events when appropriate
- Actively engage Vivino community through social media and planned marketing events
- Plan and execute consumer education seminars and team building workshops in viable markets
- Promote the use of the app and assist new users by engaging consumers in every day settings

Consulting Bartender, Open Container, Venice, 2015 - Current

- Curate high end, rare liquor for private collector
- Develop cocktails and menu's surrounding specific themes
- Manage inventory reports

Wine Judge, Pacific Rim Competition, 2015

- One of only 30 wine professionals selected in North America to judge more than 2,000 entries during the Pacific Rim's 30th anniversary competition

Beverage Director, Sommelier, Lead Bartender, Pizzeria Ortica, Costa Mesa, CA 2013 - Current

- Promoted and introduced high end, eclectically approachable wines, spirits and craft beers tailored to the diverse demographic of Southern California's "South Coast Metro"
- Developed strong relationships with over a dozen distributors and their representatives
- Trained staff in service etiquette, product expertise and pairings, with a high degree of focus on personalized guest service
- Raised guest average from $25 per person to average of $40+ per person without raising prices
- Reinvigorated beverage program by implementing several exciting changes, including an amaro/liqueur library as well as a complete overhaul of the wine program with a clever balance of the contemporary cutting edge and classic, terroir driven wines
- Managed and trained a staff of over 50 people in the past 25 months
- Developed different events designed to draw a broader spectrum of clientele by bringing in personal contacts to assist with various collaborations, including whisky dinners and pairings, winemaker dinners, portfolio tastings, cocktail seminars, educational events and beer dinners
- Earned the company's first Wine Spectator Award of Excellence for wine program
- Ranked as the 5th best place to get a drink in Orange County out of 39 different bars and restaurants by OC Weekly

Customer Service, Event Coordinator and Marketing Consultant,

Various Restaurants and Personal Businesses, 2006 – 2012

- Achieved increased levels of responsibility from server/bartender to assisting manager/sommelier responsible for cellar management, inventory ordering, vendor relationships, product mix, food/alcohol pairings and achievement of the highest standards of customer service
- Developed reputation for informed mixology, with an emphasis on increasing consumer awareness
- Provided guests with a holistic sense of knowledge on the wines and foods of the world
- Led public speaking seminars training doctors how to sell their practice without a "hard-sell"
- Saw my clients "new patient" rate double and retention increase by 20% in under a year
- Restaurants I have worked for include: Pizzeria Mozza (Batali & Bastianich Hospitality Group), mar'sel at Terranea Resort (DH&R), True Food Kitchen and Olive & Ivy (both Fox Restaurant Concepts), Andrea at The Resort at Pelican Hill (Irvine Company)

Mentorship

- Currently mentored by Master Sommelier Fred Dame and Peter Neptune

Social Media Following

- Cultivated an audience of 25,000+ followers through various social media outlets
- Active engagement of users resulting in a stronger influence and trust of loyal followers

Recent Media Exposure, Videos and Published Articles

- The Perfect 90 Minutes of Wine – Orange Coast Magazine, March 2017 (Ortica)
- Best Craft Cocktails of the Year – OC Weekly, November 2016 (Ortica)
- Best Bartender of 2016 - Orange County and Long Beach- OC Weekly, 2015
- The Perfect Grapefruit Cocktail? - Orange Coast Magazine, July 2016
- Ortica's Cocktail Game Still Awesome" - OC Weekly April 2016
- How to make a "Red Nose" holiday cocktail video - Food Beast, December 2015
- "Pure Imagination". - Tasting Panel Magazine - December 2015
- "Speed Panel," - SOMM Journal, August 2015
- Wine Spectator "Award of Excellence", August 2015 (Ortica)
- "Vintages of the Century,". - SOMM Journal, April 2015
- Ranked 5th best place to get a drink in Orange County - OC Weekly, January 2015 (Ortica)
- Featured in SOMM Journal, "Paso Robles Cab Camp,". - August 2014
- Paste Magazine "How to make a Caber Flip" cocktail video - August 2014
- "Bites and Brews" - Great Taste Magazine, September 2014
- "Devine Revelation," - SOMM Journal, September 2014
- 2x Guest Speaker on What's Cooking With Wine with Master Sommelier Michael Jordan