



Master Sommelier: Richard Dean

Richard Dean is the consummate sommelier.

He's not only one of 211 people in the world to have passed the rigorous certification process to earn the title of Master Sommelier, he was the second one in the United States to do so, becoming the youngest person at the time to achieve that feat globally.

Now at the Michelin-starred Campton Place, he oversees a world-class collection of more than 10,000 bottles. He spends about \$400,000 annually to stock its temperature-controlled cellar with premier vintages and varietals. And each evening, he can be seen meticulously polishing his collection of strikingly curvaceous glass decanters used to spotlight particular wines at their best.

Dean has created a veritable showcase of wines from the United States, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Spain, France and Australia not only to dazzle but also to illuminate. To that end, he pioneered the restaurant's popular "*Wine Scene with Richard Dean*," the nearly monthly, intimate winemaker's dinners that he began at Taj Campton Place in 2007.

Unlike most other wine dinners that merely pair spotlighted wines with a multi-course meal, he goes to the next step. They start with a short reception, and then segue into a formal tasting with the winemaker before proceeding to a sit-down dinner. In that way, guests enjoy the singular experience of tasting wines unencumbered alongside the person who crafted them. Among the exceptional wineries featured over the years have been Domaine Carneros, Frank Family, Spring Mountain Vineyard, and Bonny Doon Vineyard.

It is a concept Dean established while at The Mark hotel in New York City. Previously, he was the sommelier of the now-shuttered Manhattan landmark, Tavern on the Green.

A graduate of the University of Hawaii, Dean also was a wine columnist for the Honolulu Star Bulletin. Additionally, he has served as an instructor and judge for the Master Sommelier exams.