

The Boston Globe
Job Explainer

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Sommelier

Name: Dawn Lamendola, 32

Employer: Mistral, a restaurant in Boston.

What is a sommelier?

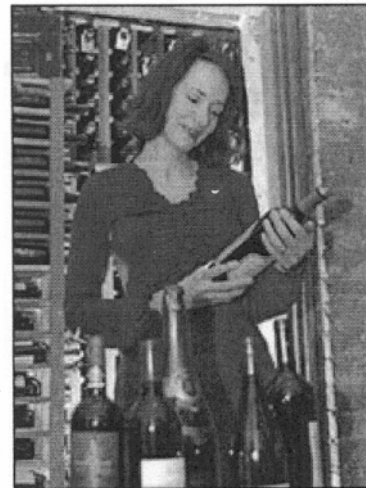
A person who collects the wine that they would like to present to the guest and, while working with the staff, helps the guest to choose a great wine to complement their dinner.

What is your favorite wine and how would you describe it?

Red burgundy, in general, is very good. It's elegant, it matches really well with all kinds of food, and it has a beautiful history.

When did you realize your passion for wine?

When I was waiting tables in 1989, the restaurant I was working for would hire professionals to come in and teach us basic recommendation knowledge. We would also do some taste testing. That's where I got it.



Globe Photo/David L. Ryan

Where were you trained?

I went to The Windows on the World Wine School in Manhattan, where I trained for three years. I became a certified sommelier at the Certification Sommelier Society of America, also in New York. I'm currently working through the Court of Masters of Sommeliers, which takes a few years to complete. I've finished the first level of three.

What kind of individual preparation is involved?

There is a lot of self-motivation and self-training. I'm constantly online and I read all the time because it's important to be knowledgeable in all areas in my position. There's a combination of history, science, geography, and wine wrapped into one.

Describe your schedule:

Every Sunday morning I take inventory of all the alcohol and place my orders to complete our lists. It takes about six hours. I print a wine list every day so it's always complete. Throughout the week I meet with sales representatives who are offering new products. We also host private parties. We're asked to purchase special wines and other liquors, so we've got to mix and match the drink with the dinner, which takes some planning. During restaurant hours I'm on the floor three or four nights a week as sommelier.

What's important to know on the job?

The wines of the year. People are always asking for those.

What are the rewards?

Making wine recommendations, that's what I really like. I'm the first sommelier here at Mistral, and I think people come partly for the experience of dealing with the sommelier.

Where did you go to school?

I attended the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, where I majored in human ecology and transferred to the University of Iowa.

What's the salary like in this field?

In Boston, you could make anywhere from \$45,000-\$60,000 a year.

-KENNETH DELLOVO