

Whether *The Tasting Panel* goes to the brand execs or the brands call us, there is an abundance of news to report, from the latest releases to behind-the-scenes experiences with some of the world's most influential importers, winemakers, distillers . . . well, you name it.

Brief Encounters

We may not have enough pages in each issue to devote as much attention as we would like to each person whose path we cross, but please note that if it's in the publication, we deem it noteworthy.

—Meridith May, Publisher & Editorial Director

Moving Up

PHOTO COURTESY OF GRGICH HILLS ESTATE



Sean Barrett, National Sales Ambassador for Grgich Hills Estate.

I first met **Sean Barrett** in Las Vegas early last year, but even before the official handshake in Sin City, I already suspected his good character. Struck by the kindness in our email exchanges, it was no surprise to find out how lovely a person he really was. At the time, he was the Midwest Regional Sales Manager for **Grgich Hills Estate**, so again, it wasn't a surprise to recently learn he's been promoted to National Sales Ambassador.

Before joining Grgich in 2012, Sean had experienced more than three decades of wine and hospitality. He attended the Hotel and Restaurant Management program at the University of Wisconsin, Stout, before working in the Napa Valley as Maitre d' of the award-winning Étoile restaurant at Domaine Chandon and Food and Beverage Director of the famed Meadowood Resort, home of Auction Napa Valley.

Sean returned home to Wisconsin and was General Manager of the English Room in the historic Pfister Hotel. Sean then moved into wine sales with local distributors United Wine and Spirits and Edison Liquor and was Midwest Regional Manager for AV Imports, Inc., an importer of fine wines and spirits.

Today, as National Sales Ambassador for the iconic Grgich Hills Estate in Napa Valley, Barret often visits the winery to stay current with its farming practices and wines. He is a member of the Society of Wine Educators and the Associazione Italiana Sommelier and has explored the wine regions of Croatia, Italy, Spain, France, Germany and the U.S. —*Jessie Birschbach*