

805

LIVING

FOOD
& WINE





Hayden Felice

wine director
Acme Hospitality
Santa Barbara
acmehospitality.com



As the wine director for Acme Restaurant Properties—which include The Lark, Lucky Penny, Santa Barbara Wine Collective, Loquita, and Tyger Tyger—Hayden Felice offers a knowledgeable view into the depth and breadth of the 805 wine scene.

Who are some of your local wine heroes?

Richard Sanford is a local legend. Talk about ahead of his time: He planted pinot noir in Santa Rita Hills in 1971. The vineyard is still one of the top vineyard sources in the county. He's also one of the most patient, knowledgeable, humble, and kind people I've met in the wine industry and an incredible human.

Rajat Parr and Sashi Moorman, partners in the Sandhi and Domaine de la Côte wine labels, are part of the vanguard. Raj, a brilliant but humble force of nature, brings his epic tasting ability and entrée into the greatest domaines in the world to bear on Santa Barbara County and Oregon's Willamette Valley. He is always looking to help people in the wine community move the ball forward. He is generous with both his considerable knowledge and extremely limited time. Sashi is a passionate, reflective, sharp, and searching winemaker who executes their shared vision, focusing on biodynamic vineyard care and high-density planting.

What local winemakers are you most excited about right now?

Raj and Sashi again. Amy Christine and Peter Hunken of Joy Fantastic, Kyle Knapp at Stolpman, Justin Willett of Tyler, Wenzlau, and soon-to-be other projects, Matt Brady of Samsara, and Drake Whitcraft of Whitcraft.

What's the most surprisingly good wine and food combination you've tried recently?

Sushi Bar Montecito's 17-course *omakase* menu with a 1-liter bottle of Les Vins Pirouettes by Christian Binner, Le Sylvaner Glouglou d'Hubert et Christian.

What are people from Old World wine regions most surprised to learn about the wines from the Central Coast?

Wines here can be very low alcohol, crunchy, and mineral-driven. ♦

Hayden Felice recently tried a surprisingly good pairing (above): Sushi Bar Montecito's 17-course omakase menu and Les Vins Pirouettes by Christian Binner, Le Sylvaner Glouglou d'Hubert et Christian. Felice is particularly excited about wines made by Sashi Moorman and Rajat Parr (left, Parr is on the right) of Sandhi and Domaine de la Côte wines. For budget-friendly wine buys, Felice recommends 2017 Pinot Noir and 2017 Chardonnay made by Pence Ranch, Santa Rita Hills (top), among others; visit 805living.com for more of his selections.

