

# 2009 **SANTÉ**awards™

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Press Contact:

Penny Willette  
Events Manager  
(802) 442-2214  
[pwillette@santemagazine.com](mailto:pwillette@santemagazine.com)

## **Santé Recognizes Restaurant Award Winners**

**Bennington, Vermont**—The annual Santé Restaurant Symposium and Awards took place at the impeccable [Sagamore Resort](#) on Lake George in New York's Adirondack region from October 18 - 21. This year marked the twelfth year of the Awards program, although it was the first year that the event was held in conjunction with the Symposium. Receiving recognition for excellence in food, wine, spirits, and hospitality were some of the country's most distinguished hospitality-industry professionals, including famed restaurateur **Piero Selvaggio**, wine educator **Kevin Zraly**, and cocktail maestro **Ray Srp**.

The glamour of the Santé Restaurant Awards Gala Dinner and Presentation Ceremony began with a lakeside cocktail reception featuring wines by [Ribera del Duero](#). Apart from the winners themselves, wines from Ribera del Duero were the stars of the evening. Brand Ambassador for Drink Ribera. Drink Spain **April Cullom** opened the program with an introduction to the region. Diners sipped Real Sitio de Ventosilla Recorba, Hijos De Antonio Barceló Viña Mayor Crianza, Bodega Matarromera Crianza, Bodegas Peñalba López Finca Torremilanos Los Cantos de Torremilanos, and Bodegas Peñafiel Miros Crianza with a menu of elegant, low country-inspired dishes by Chef **Bob Waggoner**, formerly executive chef of The Charleston Grill and now star of the new PBS series *U Cook with Chef Bob*. Editor and Publisher **Mark Vaughn** served as the Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Keynote Speaker and Santé's Restaurateur of the Year **Piero Selvaggio**, founder of Valentino Restaurant Group, delighted the audience with

personal anecdotes from his decades-long hospitality career.

Finally, 17 regional Santé Restaurant Award winners were recognized for excellence in regional categories of food, wine, and spirits hospitality. Those who earned high scores in each category were honored with the Culinary, Wine, and Spirits Hospitality Restaurants of the Year Awards. Restaurateur of the year **Piero Selvaggio** and Spirits Professional of the Year **Ray Srp** delivered heartfelt acceptance speeches, which truly demonstrated their passion and genuine love of their professions. (Culinary Professional of the Year **Nora Pouillon** accepted via audio clip, as she was not able to attend in person. Wine Professional of the Year **Kevin Zraly** accepted his award on the following evening.) The dinner ended on a sweet note, courtesy of Wines of Argentina and Chef **Natalia Machado** of [Industria Argentina](#) in New York City, with an intriguing dessert, Zapallos en almíbar, and Luigi Bosca 2007 Late Harvest Gewürztraminer.

The [Santé Awards](#) program is the only peer-judged restaurant and hospitality competition in North America. The 2009 judges included **Glenn Bardgett**, wine director at Annie Gunn's and Smoke House Market in Chesterfield, Missouri; **Rebecca Chapa**, founder of Wine by the Class and Tannin Management in San Francisco; **Megan Garrelts**, coowner and pastry chef at bluestem restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri; **Scott Hunnel**, chef de cuisine of Victoria & Albert's at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa at Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Florida; **Beverly Morton Billand**, owner/CEO of The Restaurant at Patowmack Farm, Lovettsville, Virginia; **Jonathan Pogash**, cocktail consultant and bartender; **Dean A. Thomas**, executive chef at the South Coast Winery Resort & Spa in Temecula, California; **Michael Waterhouse**, founder of Drink Tank Ltd. in New York; and spirits writer **Naren Young**. This year's 60 winners represent a broad spectrum of restaurant- and hospitality-industry professionals with a common passion for their work and a commitment to excellence.

The Santé Restaurant Awards are produced by On-Premise Communications, Inc. (OPC). OPC was founded in 1996 by Mark Vaughan and Chris Costello and is located in Bennington, Vermont, with offices in Florida and California. In addition to the awards, OPC also produces Santé magazine, the Santé Food & Beverage Bulletin e-newsletter, the Santé Restaurant Symposium, and [isantemagazine.com](#). Now in its thirteenth year of publication, Santé has a qualified circulation of more than 40,000 and a pass-along readership of nearly 200,000 in full-service restaurant and hospitality establishments across the nation.

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