

PAUL GRIECO
Co-owner & and Sommelier, Hearth & Insieme

Paul Grieco got a head start in the restaurant business. Born in Canada, his childhood was spent at La Scala, a grand Toronto restaurant offering formal service and classic Italian food in an elegant setting. As a young adult working there, he learned every aspect of a restaurant life.

When it was time to choose a career path, the hospitality industry seemed a natural choice. Unsure if this was the right decision, Paul traveled to Italy where he immersed himself in intensive wine study and the region's rich culture. Returning to North America and La Scala, he oversaw the restaurant's beverage program and front-of-the-house staff for six years.

In 1991, adventure beckoned and Paul traveled to New York City for what he thought would be a three-month discovery trip. Inspired by the Manhattan restaurant scene, he took a job at Remi Restaurant as a dining room manager. Positions followed at several prestigious and well-known Manhattan restaurants, including Bouley, Gotham Bar & Grill, and Gabriel's. In 1994 he opened JUDson Grill with his friend and mentor, Chris Cannon.

Paul then accepted a job as a waiter at the three-star Gramercy Tavern, where he learned the aspects of refined, unpretentious hospitality from partners Danny Meyer and Tom Colicchio. After working as a captain for two years, Paul was promoted to Assistant General Manager, responsible for both the annual \$3 million beverage program and the restaurant's three-star service. During his tenure, Gramercy Tavern won the James Beard Award for "Outstanding Service" and "Outstanding Wine Service."

In 2003, Paul and fellow Gramercy Tavern alum, Marco Canora, went out on their own to open Hearth Restaurant in the East Village. The restaurant earned a glowing two-star review from *The New York Times* and still receives praise for Paul's expansive and thoughtful wine list. Hearth's Monday wine dinners, created by Paul, are instant sell-outs that explore new and established regions, vintners and varietals.

In April 2007, Paul and Marco opened Insieme, an Italian restaurant at The Michelangelo hotel. The Italian word for "together," Insieme features two menus, traditional and contemporary, side-by-side. To accompany the dual menu, Paul created a wine list matching the food's soulful spirit, offering selections from emerging winemakers and classic vintners alike.

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