

Luxury specialist Crystal Cruises is expanding its 2009 Wine & Food Experiences of Discovery to include cocktail and mixology curriculum in addition to its wine and food focus. More than two dozen of the world's most intriguing and topical names on the culinary, wine and cocktail scenes will offer insights and instruction. The co-proprietor of the renowned Grgich Hills Estate, famed Hawaiian restaurateur Sam Choy, Master Sommelier Robert Bath and Tim Hollingsworth of The French Laundry are among the impressive lineup scheduled on board to share their tasty talents, plus added expertise from Crystal's own creative chefs, sommeliers and bartenders. The 2009 sailings mark the 13th annual series of the line's popular Wine & Food cruises.

"One of the hallmarks of a Crystal vacation is the extraordinary onboard culinary experience," said Toni Neumeister, Crystal's vice president, food and beverage operations. "We're excited to pair our chefs -- the cruise industry's best -- with the highest caliber of experts, to offer guests an unparalleled wine and food vacation."

Highlights of the Wine & Food cruises include:

- Brand-new mixology/cocktail demonstrations, including "Making Great Cocktails at Home" and an "Iron Bar Competition;"
- Brand-new pastry classes;
- Wine tastings, cooking demonstrations and Iron Chef-style cooking competitions with guest wine lecturers, wine and cookbook authors;
- Specially designed dinner menus featuring guest chefs' signature dishes, and
- Crystal Adventures ashore focusing on destinations' wine and culinary specialties.

The line's newly introduced cheese sommeliers will also offer insight to more than 50 varieties from around the world and give pairing suggestions.

In 2008, all Crystal wine sommeliers were certified through the Court of Master Sommeliers. Intimate Vintage Room experiences are available on all cruises for approximately \$210 per person. In 2009, two ultra-exclusive Ultimate Vintage Room experiences are planned; whereby some of the world's rarest wine selections are paired with a multi-course meal for upwards of \$1,000 per person.

The wine and food focus Experiences of Discovery voyages will be available on itineraries through the Panama Canal, Asia, Northern and Western Europe and the Caribbean aboard Crystal Symphony and Crystal Serenity.

For more information and Crystal reservations, contact a travel agent or call 888-799-4625. Visit the line's website, crystalcruises.com.