



Ercolino Crugnale Named Director of Food and Wine

NEWBERG, Ore.-(May 15, 2009) -Managing Director Pierre Zreik has named Ercolino Crugnale Director of Food and Wine for The Allison Inn & Spa, set to open September, 2009 in Oregon's Willamette Valley wine country.

"While it is traditional to designate a Director of F&B (food and beverage), it is quite clear that guests of The Allison Inn & Spa will arrive in Oregon seeking an unmatched viticultural experience and we have put special emphasis on wine throughout our operations," notes Zreik. Crugnale's background and education is ideally suited to this specialized role. "The Allison will offer one of the largest selections of Pinot Noir and other prized Oregon and international varietals to overnight guests, meeting attendees and diners at Jory, our signature restaurant featuring Oregon Wine Country cuisine," explains Crugnale. "We are grateful for the partnerships that have been extended from our winery neighbors during the development of the Inn and we will be creating classes and experiences connecting guests to our rich winery heritage. The Willamette Valley operates very much like a family and we are proud to provide a place where guests can settle in and savor Oregon's very best - some of the finest wines being made in the world today."

In addition to a wine program that ultimately will feature more than 10,000 bottles, Crugnale also is responsible for management of all food operations at The Allison including a full range of beverages, from microbrews and designer cocktails to hand-crafted distilled spirits - a role in which he is most comfortable. Educated at the Culinary Institute of America (Hyde Park), Crugnale's background encompasses the full gamut of culinary experiences at many of the nation's top hotels and restaurants, ranging from Executive Chef to Food and Beverage Director and Restaurant Owner.

Crugnale started in the kitchen at Oregon's Salishan Lodge where he enjoyed numerous roles over a three year span, including Sous Chef. He then became Chef of the Beach Club at The Cloister Hotel in Sea Island, Georgia before being named Executive Chef of the Wachesaw Plantation, a private club on Pawley's Island, South Carolina.

He served as Executive Chef for the Monterey Plaza Hotel before accepting the position of Executive Sous Chef at the Hotel Bel Air in Los Angeles. Crugnale served five years as Executive Chef of the Stanford Court Hotel in San Francisco where he also held the title of Wine Director, during which time the property was named Grand Award Winner by The Wine Spectator. Crugnale also served as Executive Chef for the Renaissance Lodge at Sonoma and the Director of Food & Beverage for Hotel Jerome in Aspen, Colorado.

Crugnale spent eight years as restaurant owner in Scottsdale Arizona, first with Oceana, which was named 'best seafood restaurant' in the Phoenix area by both the Arizona Republic and Phoenix Magazine for five consecutive years. He went on to open Mezcal, featuring the cuisine of Oaxaca, Mexico, based on his extensive travels in the region.

Ercolino has made numerous national television appearances ranging from the Food Network with Robin Leach to Laura McIntosh's popular "Bring It Home" series, still in syndication. He has been a featured chef at the James Beard House in New York and his work has been noted in publications ranging from the Wall Street Journal and Food Arts to Prentice Hall and Williams-Sonoma publications.