



**Windstar Welcomes Sommeliers on Four Ships,
Beverage Experts on *James Beard Culinary Cruises*, and
Offers Beverage Package Enticements on Longer *Star Collector Voyages***



Seattle, WA, May 2, 2018 — Small ship cruise line Windstar Cruises has hired a team of sommeliers to serve guests on sailings in 270 ports around the world. These new wine experts provide a major guest enhancement as the summer cruise season begins and builds on the trend for ongoing, fleet-wide enhancements to the line's wine, beverage and culinary programs in 2018. The addition of the sommeliers elevates the Windstar guest experience and draws on the influence and talent of the line's hotel operations team and the desire to best cater to the discerning palates of experienced travelers.

"Our new sommeliers will offer their all-encompassing knowledge of wine to guests, as well as to our dining room and bar servers by holding frequent tastings and educational classes," explains Windstar Cruises Director of Hotel Operations Peter Tobler. "Travel is an excellent way to expand your wine repertoire. Our sommeliers will share their wine expertise, tasting tips, and make recommendations for varietals from nearby the ports of call. Most importantly, they will help guests select the best wine to pair with our gourmet food selections. When on holiday, this is the best way to complete each day."

Sommelier Program Available to Guests on Four Windstar Ships in 2018

Four Windstar ships now offer sommeliers on board, the program just launched on the 310-guest *Wind Surf* which arrived in Lisbon on April 14 for the summer season in the Mediterranean. Windstar's three all-suite ships serving 212 guests each cruise also offer onboard sommeliers — *Star Breeze* and *Star Pride* sailing throughout Europe; and *Star Legend* that kicked-off the roll-out in Asia in January and will arrive in Alaska for her maiden season in May; offering travelers kayaking adventures by day followed by culinary and wine indulgences each evening, an attractive pairing.

All Windstar sommeliers were chosen for their training, knowledge and experience worldwide having worked in a broad spectrum of wineries, restaurants, travel and hospitality providers such as Celebrity, Disney and Seabourn cruise lines, Hermitage and Radisson hotels, and Le Cheval Blanc in Bordeaux, to name just a few. Justin McAuliffe was the first to offer sommelier services to guests sailing in Asia. Joining McAuliffe on the team are Antony Graz Pradeep, Vitor Da Encarnacao Custodio, and Slaven Cosic, who will all rotate among the four ships.

Windstar sommeliers lead wine tastings on board each cruise for a nominal fee, generally one to three are offered depending on the length of the voyage. In addition, the sommeliers may accompany guests on culinary-themed shore excursions to local wineries and restaurants.

Celebrated Sommeliers Featured on [James Beard Culinary Cruise Collection](#) Sailings for 2018

Windstar recently announced a multi-year partnership as the Official Cruise Line of the [James Beard Foundation](#). This year the culinary-themed cruises feature not only James Beard-recognized guest chefs but also **beverage experts hand-selected by the James Beard Foundation**, including top sommeliers from across the United States; find the full list [here](#).

Stars like Sommeliers Belinda Chang and Shelley Lindgren are on the roster in the coming months and will join forces with the onboard sommeliers to provide Windstar's most comprehensive and immersive wine programming. Chang joins Chef Maxime Bilet on June 20 to sail the [French Riviera](#); immediately following on the June 27 [Spanish Symphony](#) cruise Sommelier Ashley Santoro, wine director of The Standard East Village joins fellow New Yorker Chef Anthony Sasso, one of the youngest chefs to be recognized by the Michelin Guide for Casa Mono.

In August, Europe is the place for epicurean cruising as Sommelier Jon McDaniel of Gage Hospitality unites with Chef Sarah Gruenberg on discovering culinary [Gems of the Adriatic](#) on August 7. Also that month, Sommelier Katie Bell joins Chef Evan Hanczor on a Windstar [sailing in Norway](#) on August 17, Bell is no stranger to Nordic cuisine wine pairings thanks to her former role at New York City restaurant Agern, known for its time-honored techniques and flavors rooted in Norway.

For something completely different, sail to exotic [Tahiti](#) in November as Sommelier Lindgren cruises with Pastry Chef Emily Luchetti, pairing wine with desserts inspired by the island's vanilla farms.

Beverage Packages: Less Restrictive & More Affordable for Longer Sailings

Beyond the wine enhancements, improved offerings for beer and spirits has also been a priority as Windstar is now offering lower daily prices for any beverage package to guests sailing 14-day and longer, back-to-back [Star Collector Voyages](#). The boutique line launched a [new beverage package program](#) in fall 2017, allowing for a variety of tiered levels of premium products. The innovative package offerings are available for purchase on a per cruiser basis rather than requiring guests sharing a stateroom to purchase the same package, a welcome change for non-drinkers and companions with different tastes.

The Voyager's Adventure (\$32 per person, per day) and Topmast Discoveries (\$42 per person, per day) beer and wine packages include a healthy mix of New and Old World wines. Many of the selections come from regions visited on Windstar itineraries, including Bordeaux, France and Barcelona, Spain. The Captain's Exclusive (\$52 per person, per day) package includes a wide array of

wines, beers, and spirits, including Dalmore Single Malt Whisky, distilled just outside of Invergordon, Scotland, a port visited on Windstar's [Gaelic Explorers](#) and [Norwegian Fjords & Scottish Isles](#) cruises.

Windstar's "Get Closer" Event is on now through June 15, the promotion offers guests up to \$1,000 shipboard credit to spend while cruising, available on new bookings based on sailing, stateroom or suite, with hundreds of cruise departure dates available in 2018 and 2019. To learn more about authentic small ship cruising with Windstar, contact a travel professional or Windstar Cruises by phone at 800-258-7245, email info@windstarcruises.com or visit www.windstarcruises.com.

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Windstar Cruises operates a six-ship fleet of small sailing and all-suite ships visiting approximately 270 ports in 2018 sailing throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Panama Canal, Asia, Alaska, Canada and New England, and cruising year-round in Tahiti. Windstar's six-ship fleet is the market leader in small ship cruising with a total of 1,242 passenger berths calling on off-the-beaten-path and popular ports in over 60 countries. The boutique cruise line carries fewer than 310 passengers on each sailing and takes travelers on cruises that are 180 degrees from ordinary. They are known for their immersive and authentic experiences, unique, port-intensive itineraries, exceptional award-winning service, and innovative culinary program as the Official Cruise Line of the James Beard Foundation. Windstar Cruises is a part of Xanterra Travel Collection, an award-winning, globally diversified travel company offering once in a lifetime experiences in some of the most beautiful and iconic places on earth.

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