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# FIRE & VINE

## HOSPITALITY

### **Culinary Director Maggie Trujillo Awarded Highest Honor by the International Fresh Produce Association**

*Trujillo recognized as the top chef in the fine dining category of the 2023 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards*

**SEATTLE, WA – May 3, 2023** – In recognition of her outstanding use of fresh produce, the [International Fresh Produce Association](#) (IFPA) honored Maggie Trujillo, culinary director for [AQUA by El Gaucho](#) and [Aerlume](#) with the top honor in the fine dining category of the national [2023 Produce Excellence in Foodservice Awards](#). The program honors chefs and foodservice operations for their produce innovation, creativity, and all-around excellence in the use of fresh produce in the culinary arts across the United States.

“I am honored to receive this prestigious award and grateful to the IFPA and our partners at Charlie’s Produce for this recognition,” said Maggie Trujillo, culinary director, AQUA by El Gaucho and Aerlume. “This award is especially meaningful to me because I am always inspired by the variety and abundance of locally grown produce in the Pacific Northwest and love centering my dishes around seasonal fruit and vegetables.”

One chef or foodservice professional in nine categories was selected from nominations submitted by produce companies and foodservice operations. IFPA coordinated a review of each nominee’s incorporation and creativity of fresh produce into menu development, use of food safety protocols for proper produce storage and handling, produce-related outreach or special events, and recognition among peers and/or by their company and community. The awards will be formally presented at the Foodservice Conference on July 27-28, 2023 in Monterey, CA.

Chef Maggie Trujillo was nominated by the team at [Charlie’s Produce](#), the West Coast’s largest, most efficient network of distribution centers and modern, refrigerated fleet for moving high quality, fresh produce and floral products from fields to markets, kitchens and tables.

“These awards are a significant deal in our industry and recognize the history and experience of the chef, the restaurant, and the impact the chef has on their team and community. I nominated Maggie because I have always enjoyed her food, as well as her professionalism in working together as a partner,” said Shawn Garner, account executive, Charlie’s Produce.

“If you hold yourself to high standards, control what you can influence and drown out the rest, execute each dish as if it was for a loved one; you give yourself a shot at being great. Chef Maggie’s dedication, persistence, perseverance, and an unshakeable drive for greatness, along with a few tears, has led to her to achieving just that”

### **About Maggie Trujillo, Culinary Director, AQUA by El Gaucho and Aperlume**

[Images courtesy of Fire & Vine Hospitality](#)

Maggie Trujillo grew up and spent most of her life far from the ocean, yet she says it is where she feels most at peace. As a competitive swimmer, she thrives near water, so the sweeping views of Elliott Bay make AQUA by El Gaucho the perfect spot for this rising star chef. Maggie earned her Culinary Arts degree from Le Cordon Bleu at the Western Culinary Institute in Portland, OR in 2004 and is a creative, committed leader. She worked for the Portland Hilton Hotel before moving to Ashland, OR and Lela’s, Chateaulin and Caldera Brewing Company. In 2014, she joined Larks Restaurant at the Inn at the Commons in Medford, OR. In 2018, Maggie became the opening executive chef for Aperlume and eventually became managing executive chef in 2020. She also contributed to the new direction for the menu at AQUA by El Gaucho and became executive chef for the waterfront gem in May of 2021 and continues to support the Aperlume culinary team in an advisory role.

### **About Revelers Club and Fire & Vine Hospitality**

Each Revelers Club location is unique to the community it serves, and all share the following attributes.

- Service – We provide every guest with a unique, unparalleled experience. We revel in celebrating lives.
- Quality - Our mission is to source the best in the world for our guests to enjoy.
- Community – Building a strong community through financial giving and sharing time and resources are core company values.

Revelers Club is the industry’s most generous rewards program designed to reward and honor our guest’s loyalty and provide benefits at each location in the collection, including Fire & Vine Hospitality restaurants El Gaucho Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, Portland and Vancouver, AQUA by El Gaucho, Aperlume, and Witness Tree lounge as well as Denim Hospitality locations including Yellowhawk Resort, Walla Walla Steak Co., and Crossbuck Brewing in Walla Walla and Woodinville, WA. Free to join, the Revelers Club shares birthday and anniversary gifts at each level of the program and members receive points for every dollar spent.

Revelers Club is managed by the Fire & Vine Hospitality team which provides operational leadership, product sourcing, marketing and technology support for some of the Pacific Northwest’s most iconic lodging and restaurants.

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