



ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE 2012 JUDGES ARE THE CRÈME DE LA CRÈME IN SPIRITS EVALUATIONS

February 13, 2012 (New York, NY) - Fourteen of the world's foremost distilled spirits authorities are descending upon New York's Astor Center March 5-9 to rate the world's finest gins, whiskeys, tequilas, rums, vodkas, brandies and liqueurs at Ultimate Beverage Challenge's 2012 Ultimate Spirits Challenge. Led by Judging Chairmen F. Paul Pacult and Sean Ludford, this remarkable group of superstar authors, spirits buyers, journalists, educators, bar owners and consultants will render the most unassailable results in the industry.

Says UBC Judging Chairman and founding member Paul Pacult, "Allow me to take my gloves off. Many of the supposed top spirits competitions are rife with judges that are, to be kind, out of their depth. Wine judges shouldn't be evaluating reposado tequilas and single malt Scotch, period. This type of miscalculation on the part of competition organizers does a serious disservice to spirits producers who enter their products."

"Ultimate Spirits Challenge judges for 2012 have been chosen for their consistent judging excellence over the last two years at both Ultimate Spirits Challenge and Ultimate Cocktail Challenge. Many are buyers who, together, purchase many thousands of cases of spirits each year. Consequently, if I happened to be a spirits producer or marketer, this is the elite group of genuine and acknowledged experts that I'd demand to evaluate my product. Could I use a USC Chairman's Trophy or a healthy score to promote my spirit? Oh yeah."

Ultimate Spirits Challenge 2012 Judges:

- Chairman F. Paul Pacult - journalist, author, educator, author
- Co-Chairman Sean Ludford - journalist, consultant
- Jacques Bezuidenhout - consultant, bartender
- Tad Carducci - bar owner, buyer, consultant
- James Conley - buyer
- Dale DeGross - author, consultant, educator, journalist
- Doug Frost, MS, MW - author, educator, journalist
- Jim Meehan - bar owner, author, bartender, consultant, buyer
- Steve Olson - consultant, bar owner, buyer, educator
- Julie Reiner - bar owner, buyer
- Jack Robertiello - journalist
- Andy Seymour - consultant, bar owner, buyer, educator
- Marcos Tello - bartender, buyer
- David Wondrich - author, journalist, educator, consultant

Adds Sean Ludford, "USC's back of house staff is more qualified to judge than most judges in other competitions. Ultimate Spirits Challenge is all about authority and integrity."

The back of house staff is led by the incomparable Leo DeGroff along with Sean Kenyon, Dan Nicoleascu, Brent Lamberti and Steven Fette (all BAR 5-Day superstars) who in turn are supported by a group of the beverage industry's brightest rising stars.

Ultimate Spirits Challenge...like no other competition and doesn't want to be.

ABOUT ULTIMATE BEVERAGE CHALLENGE

Ultimate Beverage Challenge (UBC) provides expert evaluation of wines and spirits for producers, importers and marketers through its three innovative annual competitions – *Ultimate Spirits Challenge*, *Ultimate Wine Challenge* and *Ultimate Cocktail Challenge*. Based on exacting standards, expert judges and rigorous methodology, UBC raises the standards of spirits and wine evaluation and supplies ratings and accolades to help companies build their brands with buyers, both industry and consumer. UBC was founded by F. Paul Pacult, Sue Woodley and David Talbot. Challenge and event photos, videos and press coverage can be found at www.ultimate-beverage.com.

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