

Bryan Nowicki

Professional Biography



Introduction

My name is Bryan Nowicki, Professional Chef, Entrepreneur, Level 2 Sommelier, and Service professional with 35 years working experience and 15 years operational management oversight expertise. My journey began in the mid 80's as a teenager at the original C. Steele and Co., a traditional French Bakery, Café, Bistro and Grocery in downtown Scottsdale. I started in the dish pit and soon fell in love with the concept of food, food production and the workings of a French kitchen. I quickly moved up the ranks based on dependability, eagerness and ability to learn quickly. I excelled in this new environment and immersed myself in Culinary Arts not only in the workplace but in school as well, joining my High School Culinary Vo-tech program. These two things worked hand in hand for my last 2 years in high school. I won the Arizona State VICA skill Olympics in Culinary Arts in 1987, 1988 and competed nationally in Wichita Kansas and in Washington D.C. placing 2nd in 1988. At this time I also served in a leadership role as a Arizona State student representative serving as the State Reporter. This took me to the Nation's Capitol for leadership conferences in 87 and 88 learning life skills such as public speaking, fundamental business meeting practice and debate skills etc. All of this exposure led to multiple opportunities including assisting Jacque Pepin and Martin Yan at the Scottsdale Culinary Festival, several days in leadership training at John McCain and Dennis DeConcini offices in D.C., as well as a Scottsdale culinary scholarship via Rotary Scottsdale. All this before graduating High School. My life long journey has taken me through several States, working at several world-class restaurants, for Famous Chefs as well as bustling independent concepts in multiple locations. I have also designed, opened, ran and operated multiple concepts including my own.

I have gathered a wealth of experience in all aspects of the industry and here is a short synopsis and highlights of my working experience, education and management qualifications. Keep in mind I have worked on or at many other restaurants, concepts, clubs, bars, farms, delis, groceries but I feel like these are the highlights.

Portland, OR

It was here I moved to in 1990 after culinary school in my early 20's and matured as a line cook in Portland's hip culinary scene. Inspired by the creativity, I was able to thrive and worked towards several opportunities. I owned my first catering company here, learned to bartend and run bar venues. I also brewed beer here and worked in the beverage industry. This was a great place to grow up in the industry working with the freshest product the Northwest had to offer in many capacities from Michelin star restaurants to neighborhood breweries with killer food. I also began my management and production oversight roles here opening, designing and operating several different concepts over the 13 years I was there.

Tucson AZ

I left Portland and accepted a position at Great Chefs of the Southwest Donna Nordin's Terra Cotta in the North Tucson foothills. This had been a Tucson staple restaurant for years and Chef Donna had carved a name for herself in modern southwest cuisine. This was a short 16-month stint before moving on to TK restaurant Group in Las Vegas but was a solid reconnection with quality high-end southwest regional cooking. Also, a 3 star establishment

Las Vegas, NV

When I left Tucson I was given the opportunity to take a job at world-renowned chef Thomas Keller's Bouchon (Michelin 3 star), a bistro on one of the top floors of the Venetian Casino. I worked in the front of the house here closely with staff master sommelier and Chef's to become a premier food and wine pairing specialist. During this time, I studied and earned my level one and level two sommelier certifications. I then advanced to become one of the chefs responsible for food and wine pairings. I also worked events at Four Seasons Bali Hai resort (Michelin 3 star) and Food Network and Rachel Ray featured Table 34, with Chef Wes Kendrick. Las Vegas was a great way to refine guest service and satisfaction at its best, constantly working in systems created specifically for ultimate guest experience coupled with consistent high profit centers and margins.

Prescott, AZ 2005-2013

In 2005 I moved from Las Vegas back to Prescott AZ and was ready for some life changes. My mother was suffering from terminal cancer and I was in need of personal growth in terms of lifestyle and alcohol consumption. I began a road to recovery and wanted to be out of the restaurant spotlight for a bit. I pursued a service position with the Coalition of Compassion and Justice. (CCJ) is a non-profit serving Prescott's underprivileged in many capacities including daily meals and services. Then Director Gerry Garvey and I set out to develop a culinary program designed to train people on how to work in a professional kitchen setting. The primary focus was to work with Prescott's most vulnerable population; the homeless, people in recovery and any others who needed a second chance at life. I would first train them basic kitchen duties and have the participants work their way up to becoming responsible for helping run food banks and soup kitchens. For those who stuck with it, they were able to learn how to work in a team setting, obtained a food handlers card and honed basic culinary and various skills. Then I would support them when it came to finding jobs in the food and beverage industry. I won the Obama Presidential award for Excellence in Service Work in 2007 for success with this program. The program was sustainable, and I came up with inventive ideas of how to fund it. Everything from pie sales at Mortimer Farms during holidays to a monthly donation business mixer, Lunch with Chef Bryan, these steady revenue streams enabled us to serve quality soup kitchen products to the daily clients, with attention to diet and health while having reserves for the training program.

Eventually I started my own catering business, Chef Bryan's Catering and had my many accounts including Prescott Yavapai College new events center before they had their kitchen installed. I then was offered a turn key opportunity to launch my own restaurant that was named Chef Bryan's Bistro with a featured secondary space called Le Jardin that focused on fine dining for reservations only. The menu was classic French inspired with modern twists. The restaurant was very successful instantly and was well received by some of Arizona's most critical "foodies". It won local awards for best new restaurant

and most romantic restaurant. However, I had a business partner and our relationship unfortunately deteriorated and I sold her my share of the business.

I grew up in Prescott as my Mother and stepfather moved there in the early 80's, I thought it worth mentioning some of the other places I have worked and studied at over the years there.

Park Plaza Liquor Deli

I helped the Phillip's family set up and worked at the pizza/deli there this is a wood fired concept, catering, and sandwiches.

Hassayampa Hotel

I worked at the hotel several times over a 30-year period.

1986- I worked over a summer banquet server, bellhop, and busboy

1989- I was hired out of culinary school to set up a picnic shop on Gurley St selling to-go picnic baskets to guests. I set up the project and managed it for several months.

2005-2006 When I moved back from Las Vegas I was hired by the hotel to manage their events department.

Yavapai College

I have had a lifetime relationship with Yavapai College. My mother set up the glass blowing and ceramic programs there in the mid 80's and I have many childhood memories there. I attended 2006-2009 achieving a fine arts degree this reconnected me to the institution and led to business opportunities. As I mentioned before I have catered at the college many times and have personally catered for Penny Wills (College President) several times in her home.

Verde Valley AZ. 2014-Present

After selling my part of a partnership at Chef Bryan's Bistro in Prescott my wife and I moved to the Verde in 2014. I had spent quite a bit of time here as a kid and wanted in on the booming wine scene. I was gun shy about working in a kitchen and presented my resume as a wine server to Page springs Cellars. I was quickly hired and began working in their tasting room. When I was waiting on Guests from the Prescott area, they were inquiring about what happened to their Chef Bryan's Bistro in Prescott and word quickly spread to Eric Glomski my history in the culinary field. We discussed a future for a more extensive food service program at PSC and started our journey. At that point PSC was doing \$170,000 in yearly food sales out of a 10x10 small kitchen space selling a few items out of a tiny Wal-Mart oven. Over a 4-year period we built the culinary program to \$527,000 gross sales 2018 with a healthy 30 percent margin. I designed and built two kitchens, changed the Tasting Room to a premier food destination with an extensive handcrafted Chef driven menu. Including the largest cheese selection in Northern Arizona, house made pizza, charcuterie, breads, salads, etc. I also headed up a catering division in my department, which handled parties up to 500 plus people including all member events, cellar events, and Tilted Earth food services 4 years straight. I also appeared in wine pairing competitions in Scottsdale and on local news television representing PSC multiple times. Upon my departure the culinary program was the #2 grossing department in the company behind wine sales. I came to the job with a wealth of management and working experience, but nothing compared to the learning curve and financial competency expected at PSC. Eric and his accounting team worked with me in developing the skills

necessary to manage and run what would become a half a million dollar a year dept with over 7 employees and a constant upward 20% sales curve. I wrote projections and adhered to strict yearly budgeting including yearly capital spending, sales, expense, labor, taxes, fees etc. These are transferred in monthly and weekly budgets. These were revisited in weekly and monthly meetings to ensure we were on the right track and adjustments were made as needed. I left PSC in the summer of 2018 to pursue my personal business venture. I still have a strong relationship and we support each other's businesses, this is crucial to success being in the same market, on the same road.

Other notables

I have had a kitchen consulting business on the side during this time and worked on several projects including 3 Kings Kasbar, Backstage Gastropub, and Whole Foods. I was hired on a consultant basis for pre-opening and opening back of house operations, planning, permitting, equipment purchasing, menu and concept design etc.

I have catered for Caduceus Cellars/ Maynard Keenan, Pillsbury Wine Company, and Arizona Stronghold.