

I'm not a robot



things that you can get on the job. References: U.S. Bureau of Labor StatisticsO*NET OnLine We have provided useful resources to make you a better waiter/waitress and advance in your career: Professional Organization The National Restaurant Association The National Restaurant Association is over 100 years old and is the world's largest foodservice trade association, proving representation and advocacy on behalf of the restaurant industry. American Hotel & Lodging Association The American Hotel & Lodging Association is a leading voice and supporter of the American hospitality industry. Food and Beverage Association of America The Food and Beverage Association of America encourages and promotes continuing education, career growth, and friendly relation among its members. It also provides scholarships in industry fields. Useful Blogs The Waiter's Academy The Waiter's Academy provides free training to industry professionals to improve on their knowledge, skills, and income. OpenTable OpenTable's restaurant blog provides lots of valuable content for restaurant professionals. Modern Restaurant Management This blog provides restaurant management news, expert advice, and industry trends. Valuable Books See all tests Sommeliers or wine waiters manage the wine service in restaurants, wine bars, cafés and hotels. Using their knowledge of wine, they help customers with their selection and, depending on their level of responsibility, may choose the wines stocked by the restaurant or bar. They may also be experts in other alcoholic drinks, such as cocktails, aperitifs, beers, liqueurs and brandies, or in bottled waters, soft drinks and even cigars. Their responsibilities can include: Designing a wine list or cocktail menu. Selecting wines and beverages and pairing them to the food menu. Making sure other waiting staff understand the wine list. Advising customers on the best choice of wine for their meal. Serving drinks at the correct temperature and in the correct manner. Ordering, controlling and rotating stock. Liaising with sales people and dealing with deliveries. Managing the bar area. Preparing customers' bills. Assisting with other front-of-house tasks such as operating tills and tidying up. A commis, or trainee, could also be expected to: Lay tables and prepare equipment for use. Clean glassware and other equipment such as trolleys, decanters, ice buckets, coasters and bottle holders. Do manual work in the cellar. Sommeliers or wine waiters work closely with restaurant staff, cellar staff, managers and chefs, as well as suppliers of wine and other drinks. Sommeliers normally work a shift system, including evenings, weekends and bank holidays. They may have to stay on after the establishment has closed and may work until the early hours of the morning. Part-time opportunities are rare. They spend most of their time front of house, working between customers' tables and the bar area. It may be hot, crowded and noisy. The work can be physically tiring, as staff spend most of the time on their feet. High standards of health and hygiene are important. The job might involve some travel in the UK and overseas to attend tastings. When serving customers it is normal to wear a sommelier's uniform, which is usually provided by the employer. A trainee wine waiter or commis sommelier may earn around £13,000 a year. An experienced sommelier may earn between around £20,000 and £30,000. A head or chief sommelier may earn £40,000 a year, or more. Tips and bonus payments are common. Some positions include accommodation and free meals may be available. Getting Started with this Career Choice Employers vary from large restaurant chains to small, independent wine bars and from country hotels to private members' clubs. There are opportunities throughout the UK, though particularly in cities and in tourist areas. Some sommeliers work overseas in holiday resorts, in hotels or on cruise ships. Jobs are advertised in trade magazines such as Caterer and Hotelkeeper and on recruitment websites such as www.sommelierjobs.com, www.caterersearch.com or www.caterer.com. Jobs may also be advertised in the local or national press and there are many recruitment agencies that handle catering jobs. Education and Training No academic qualifications are required to become a wine waiter, but most have previous experience in a bar or restaurant and have spent time developing their knowledge of wine. Anyone serving alcohol needs to be over 18 years old. Some employers ask for certificates in wine knowledge, most commonly those offered by the Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET). There are a number of privately run schools offering wine-appreciation courses, mainly in the London area. It may also be an advantage to speak a foreign language, particularly French. Qualifications that may be useful include: The Diploma in hospitality. Level 2 Diploma in professional food and beverage service. Level 2 Award in the principles of customer service in hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism. Level 3 Advanced Certificate in wines and spirits. Level 4 Diploma in wines and spirits. An Apprenticeship in food and drink service is also available. Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships provide structured training with an employer. As an apprentice you must be paid at least £95 per week; you may well be paid more. A recent survey found that the average wage for apprentices was £170 a week. Your pay will depend on the sector in which you work, your age, the area where you live and the stage at which you have arrived in the Apprenticeship. Entry to Employment (e2e) can help to prepare those who are not yet ready for an Apprenticeship. In addition, Young Apprenticeships may be available for 14- to 16-year-olds. More information is available from a Connexions personal adviser or at www.apprenticeships.org.uk. There are different arrangements for Apprenticeships in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For further information visit My World of Work www.myworldofwork.co.uk/modernapprenticeships, Careers Wales www.careerswales.com; and for Northern Ireland contact www.careersserviceni.com. A Few More Exams You Might Need Training is mainly carried out on the job, with junior sommeliers learning the trade from more experienced staff. Many sommeliers or wine waiters work towards the following WSET qualifications: - Level 1 Foundation Certificate in Wines - Level 2 Intermediate Certificate in Spirits - Level 2 Professional Certificate in Wines and Spirits - Level 3 International Higher Certificate in Wines and Spirits - Level 3 Advanced Certificate in Wines and Spirits - Level 4 Diploma in Wines and Spirits - Level 5 Honours Diploma The Court of Master Sommeliers offers a programme of courses: The Introductory Sommelier Certificate, a three-day course and exam, designed for new entrants to the industry, and those who are already in the industry but do not have a formal sommelier qualification. The Certified Sommelier Certificate, a one-day exam course. The Advanced Sommelier Certificate, a five-day course and exam. The Master Sommelier Diploma, a two-day exam course. The Institute of Masters of Wine has a three-year, guided self-study programme leading to the title Master of Wine. BIAB offers a range of courses aimed at people in the licensed trade. Sommeliers or wine waiters may also work towards NVQs in food and drink service. Oil Drilling Roustabouts and Roughnecks work as part of a small team on offshore oil or gas drilling rigs or production platforms. Roustabouts do unskilled manual labouring jobs on rigs and platforms, and Roughneck is a promotion from roustabout. Roustabouts do basic tasks to help keep the rig and platform working efficiently and Roughnecks do practical tasks involved in the drilling operation, under the supervision of the driller. A sommelier or wine waiter should have: A thorough knowledge of world wines and other drinks. A good palate for wine. An ability to relate to people from all over the world. An understanding of how the wine and spirits industry works. Good communication and selling skills. Numerical skills. Stamina and the ability to stay on their feet for long periods. A willingness to work as part of a team. A strong commitment to customer service. Your Long Term Prospects A sommelier or wine waiter may progress to supervisory or management roles in hotels, bars and restaurants, become a wine taster or a manager for a wine importer or manufacturer or start their own business in the wine trade. There are increasing opportunities to specialise. Promotion prospects are improved with advanced qualifications, such as those offered by the Court of Master Sommeliers or The Institute of Masters of Wine. Get Further Information BIAB, Wessex House, 80 Park Street, Camberley GU15 3PT Tel: 01276 684449 Website: www.biab.org Court of Master Sommeliers, 1 Seaway Close, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6PY Website: www.courtofmastersommeliers.org The Institute of Masters of Wine, 2-3 Philpot Lane, London EC3M 8AN Tel: 020 7621 2830 Website: www.mastersofwine.org People 1st, 2nd Floor, Armstrong House, 38 Market Square, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1LH Tel: 01895 857000 Website: www.people1st.co.uk Springboard UK Limited, 3 Denmark Street, London WC2H 8LP Tel: 020 7497 8654 Website: www.springboarduk.net Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET), International Wine & Spirit Centre, 39-45 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF Tel: 020 7089 3800 Website: www.wset.co.uk Other Related Jobs Additional resources