

The Soul in the Bottle: Exploring Our Wine Program with Shawn Crowley

Here at Common, we believe a meal is a story. The cuisine tells the story of Executive Chef Sean Freemans love for the lowcountry. But there's another narrative woven through every service, a story told in glasses swirled and savored, a story curated by our Wine Director, Shawn Crowley.

When we set out to build Common's wine program, we knew it couldn't be an afterthought; it needed to have as much heart and soul as our culinary, hospitality, & bar programs. We needed a list that was more than just a collection of famous names. We wanted a list that sparked curiosity, celebrated small producers, and, above all, paired beautifully with the food coming from our kitchen.

In 2023 we embarked on a national search that ended in finding the leader of our wine program right up the road in Asheville, North Carolina. Mr. Crowley brought with him not only an encyclopedia of wine knowledge, but a genuine philosophy about its place at the table. For Shawn, wine is about **people and place**. It's about the farmer who walks the vineyards every day, the unique soil that gives a grape its voice, and the generations of tradition that turn juice into poetry.

That philosophy is the bedrock of our wine list. You'll find bottles you recognize, of course, but you'll also find treasures you've likely never encountered. Shawn seeks out producers who are deeply committed to **terroir**—that untranslatable French concept meaning the wine tastes distinctly of the place it was grown.



One of the true joys of an evening at Common is putting yourself in Shawn's hands. Tell him what you like—not just a grape, but a flavor, a feeling. "I like bright, coastal whites," or "I'm looking for a red that feels like autumn." He'll light up, his passion immediately evident as he walks you through the list to connect you with the perfect bottle for your palate and your meal.

Our wine program isn't about stocking the most expensive bottles; it's about stocking the most **interesting** ones. It's a living, breathing collection that evolves with our menu and the seasons. It's an invitation to be adventurous, to learn something new, and to experience how the right wine can elevate a great meal into an unforgettable one.

So next time you join us, take a moment with the wine list. Better yet, ask for Shawn and let him tell you a story, it's one worth hearing.