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EMBER RESTAURANT AT WE-KO-PA CASINO RESORT RECEIVES *WINE SPECTATOR* “BEST OF AWARD OF EXCELLENCE” FOR 2021

Highly coveted industry accolade recognizes the breadth and depth of the fine dining establishment’s extensive wine library

FORT McDOWELL, Ariz. – July 13, 2021 – Today, the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort is thrilled to announce that Ember, its fine dining restaurant, has received *Wine Spectator*’s esteemed “Best of Award of Excellence.” The honor recognizes recipients that offer extensive selections with excellent breadth across multiple regions and significant vertical depth, and Ember is now one of 19 restaurants (out of nearly 9,000) in Arizona – and one of approximately 1,000 around the world – to receive this award.

This is the second time that the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation has been lauded by this highly regarded industry publication. In 2006, the Ahnala Mesquite Room received the “Award of Excellence,” recognizing the restaurant’s wine list that featured a well-chosen assortment of quality producers along with a thematic match to the menu in both price and style. The fact that the tribal nation has now been granted two *Wine Spectator* awards for excellence – an achievement rare among tribal casinos – affirms their commitment to delivering an exceptional culinary experience.

“American restaurants are back in business, as patrons are eagerly returning to dining rooms across the nation,” said Marvin R. Shanken, Editor and Publisher, *Wine Spectator*. “In this year’s Restaurant Awards issue, we reflect on how restaurateurs navigated this incredibly difficult period, and look ahead, with every indication that the coming year will be one of the most promising in decades for an industry we all love. It’s been a long road back, and it feels wonderful to celebrate restaurants and all they bring to the world of wine.”

“The ‘Best of Award of Excellence’ really belongs to our advanced sommelier Dennis Payne, whose 31 years of experience and painstaking efforts over the past year have resulted in this impeccable award-winning wine list,” added Zac Gallo, Executive Director of Food and Beverage for the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort. “Not only has Dennis cultivated an extensive



wine and spirit program, but he ensures the proper care, storage and handling of our collection to maximize our guests' dining experiences."

Ember's wine program covers seventeen countries, focusing on each country's top wine-producing regions and most highly acclaimed vineyards. It includes 517 wines by the bottle and 26 wines by the glass – ranging from a strong California presence to Barbaresco, Rioja, New Zealand, Argentina and Germany – along with 30 Dessert Wines from across the globe as well as 15 Ports and Madeiras.

In addition, Ember has a special page in their 37-page wine list titled "The Century Club," dedicated to the world's top 100-point wines. Curated for fine wine collectors, this list contains 32 critically acclaimed wines spanning more than two decades that have scored a perfect 100 points.

Wine Spectator began its program to recognize the world's best wine lists in 1981. There are three levels: the Award of Excellence, the Best of Award of Excellence and the Grand Award—with 1,673; 1,141; and 103 winners this year in each respective category.

All award winners will be featured in *Wine Spectator's* special 40th Anniversary Restaurant Awards issue, available to readers today.

For more information on Ember, visit www.wekopacasinoresort.com/dining/ember.

About Ember

A destination dining experience at the new We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, Ember is run by critically acclaimed Chef de Cuisine Richard Pelz. In addition to an exhaustive wine and spirit library, the restaurant features the highest quality USDA Prime and Angus Wagyu beef, game and seafood from around the world, carefully prepared over a custom wood burning grill. Signature items include their Ujih Hot Stone appetizer, Seafood Tower, Snake River Farms Wagyu Striploin, Braised Buffalo Short Rib, and Ember Flaming Liquid Chocolate Truffle.

The energetic dining space overlooks the all-scratch kitchen with views of the culinary team, and seasonal outdoor dining by the fireplace is also available. A separate piano lounge with live entertainment five nights a week adds to the dynamic vibe.

About Wine Spectator

Wine Spectator is the world's leading authority on wine. Anchored by *Wine Spectator* magazine, a print publication that reaches around 3 million readers worldwide, the brand also encompasses the Web's most comprehensive wine site (WineSpectator.com), mobile platforms and a series of signature events. Wine Spectator examines the world of wine from the vineyard to the table, exploring wine's role in contemporary culture and delivering expert reviews of more than 15,000 wines each year. Parent company M. Shanken Communications, Inc., also publishes *Cigar Aficionado*, *Whisky Advocate*, *Market Watch*, *Shanken News Daily* and *Shanken's Impact Newsletter*.

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