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The Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association Announce Winners of the 2024 Ordinary Awards

The annual hospitality and travel awards dinner celebrates the best and brightest in Virginia

PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Richmond, Va. – The [Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association \(VRLTA\)](#) celebrated the best of the hospitality and tourism industry during the 2024 Ordinary Awards dinner on Thursday, September 12, at the Richmond Downtown Marriott. An audience of nearly 300 industry peers and leaders from across the state gathered to celebrate 26 winners across categories that recognize excellence in Virginia’s restaurants, hotels, lodging establishments, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), attractions and more.

Each year, nominations are open to both members of the Association and non-members, and nominees are judged by a group of VRLTA members and industry professionals. The Lifetime Achievement and Legislator Awards are determined by the VRLTA staff and Board. Here are the 2024 award winners:

Attraction of the Year

Henrico Sports & Events Center

Bartender of the Year

Chandler Lacerte, Vintage Tavern

Brewery of the Year

Coastal Fermentory

Campground of the Year

Anvil Campground

**Charlie Buser Award for
Attraction Employee of the Year**

Forrest Lodge, Sportable

Chef of the Year

Antonio Caruana, Luce & Luce Secondo

Distillery of the Year

Waterman Spirits

Golden Pineapple

Hotelier of the Year

Nancy Longstreth, Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner Center

**Jim Ricketts Award for
DMO Employee of the Year**

Lisa Meriwether, Visit SoSi

**Jim Wordsworth Award for
Restaurateur of the Year**

Mike Kavros, Callie Opie’s Orchard Restaurant

Legislator of the Year

Delegate Lee Ware

Presidents Award
L’Auberge Chez Francois

Restaurant Employee of the Year
Enrique Linares, Second Street Bistro

Restaurant Manager of the Year
Nitesh Arora, Amiraj: Modern Indian Kitchen

Lifetime Achievement Award
Marcel Desaulniers

Hospitality Hero – Business
Visit Virginia’s Blue Ridge

Hospitality Hero – Individual
Margaret Wilson, Aberdeen Gardens Historic Museum

Hotel Employee of the Year
Ana Palma, Hilton Garden Inn Alexandria Old Town

Hotel Manager of the Year
Martin Winters, Boar’s Head Resort

Hotel of the Year
The Watermark Hotel

Restaurant of the Year
Mama J’s

**Rising Pineapple Award for
Hospitality Student of the Year**
Dylan Kraemer, Virginia Tech

Supplier of the Year
TSC Associates, LLC

Supplier Employee of the Year
Frank Lanigan, US Foods

Winery of the Year
Chrysalis Vineyards

“This was an exceptional year for the Ordinary Awards, which is one of our favorite nights of the year” said Eric Terry, President of VRLTA. “Our judges certainly had their work cut out for them this year with nearly 200 nominations! On behalf of the Association, staff, and board, we applaud the efforts of our 2024 nominees, finalists, and winners for the incredible work they have done and continue to do. Virginia’s hospitality and tourism industries truly have some extraordinary individuals.”

The event was sponsored by Honeywell - Dominion Energy Conservation Program, Visit Fairfax, Heartland, Keany Produce & Gourmet, EJ Gallo, Performance Foodservice, Springfield Distillery, Sysco, US Foods, and the Virginia Spirits Board. Additional support provided by AmericanPest, Gold Key PHR, Visit Hampton, Luce, Richmond Region Tourism, SMI Hotel Group, Sysco, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Visit SoSi, the Watermark Hotel, and White Lodging.

For more information on the Ordinary Awards, visit www.ordinaryawards.com.

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The [Virginia Restaurant Lodging and Travel Association](http://www.vrlta.org) is the unified voice of the restaurant, lodging, travel and hospitality suppliers associations. VRLTA creates value for members by promoting the legislative interests of the industry, networking, educational opportunities, and protecting free enterprise. For more information, visit www.vrlta.org or call 800-552-2225.

Why would the awards be called...Ordinary? Chinn’s Ordinary, considered “the oldest original inn in America” (Baltimore Sun), was built around 1728 in Chinn’s Crossroads, now Middleburg, Virginia. The building was uniquely situated to serve as an inn and tavern catering to travelers. Since 1937, it has operated as the Red Fox Inn & Tavern. This history of Chinn’s Ordinary speaks to all facets of VRLTA’s membership—restaurants, lodging, and travel, while the term “ordinary” is just the opposite of the hospitality and travel industry. The true goal of these awards is to honor those in an extraordinary industry, individuals and companies, that are truly Extraordinary.