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# EL GAUCHO HOSPITALITY

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## El Gaucho Hospitality Announces Leadership Updates in Seattle, Tacoma and Portland

**Seattle, WA –September 1, 2015** – El Gaucho Hospitality is proud to announce several promotions and changes among our team in Seattle, Tacoma and Portland. Cooper Mills, James Capangpangan, Joe Vego, and Corey Hightower are all taking on new management responsibilities and long-time Executive Chef Steve Cain brings his bold flavors and big personality to the kitchen in Portland.

“We feel so fortunate to have each of these incredible people on our team,” said Chad Mackay, President and COO of El Gaucho Hospitality. “Their dedication to their families, co-workers, community, and our guests is inspiring and we are proud to announce their well-deserved promotions.”

**El Gaucho Hospitality Corporate:** [Cooper Mills](#), former General Manager of El Gaucho Seattle and the Inn at El Gaucho has been promoted to the newly created Director of Operations position in order to provide support to all five restaurants and the Inn at El Gaucho. Mills is a Missouri native and University of Washington graduate and has been a fixture in Seattle’s restaurant industry for over 20 years at some of the city’s most famous restaurants. Cooper was recruited in 2007 by owner Paul Mackay to manage El Gaucho Seattle because of his natural sense of hospitality, and was personally mentored by Paul to learn El Gaucho’s history and philosophy regarding high standards of guest service. Cooper and his partner Rebecca have an eight year old daughter, Sophia Grace.

**El Gaucho Seattle:** [James Capangpangan](#), former General Manager of El Gaucho Tacoma will move to El Gaucho Seattle as the new GM of the flagship restaurant. James joined the El

Gaicho family in 2010, after working for six years for Restaurants Unlimited. As the dining room and beverage manager at Stanley & Seafort's, he was able to increase their count trend by 30%, as well as accomplish the largest margin over budget in a declining economy. He helped launch Palomino Bellevue, and was recruited for the grand re-opening team of Palomino Seattle. He has been recognized for sales and service execution numerous times. James is best known for his contagious laugh and welcoming attitude. James and his wife Ashley have two daughters, eleven year old Kirsten and seven year old Emily.

**El Gaucho Tacoma:** [Joe Vego](#) will take the helm as the new General Manager of El Gaucho Tacoma. Vego knew hospitality was his calling as soon as he accepted a job with Restaurants Unlimited (RUI) as a part time job in college in 1999. While studying Theater and Communications at Pacific Lutheran University, he worked his way through various positions in the restaurant industry, and joined the El Gaucho Tacoma team in 2011. Joe likes to find humor in everything and is known to be the life of the party. He applies that philosophy to his service and management style as well, making others feel part of the family. Joe has a closely knit family, which includes his mom, two sisters, three nieces, a recently born nephew, and his own "fur baby," a black lab named Skittles.

**El Gaucho Portland:** In addition to updates to the cigar lounge and restrooms, El Gaucho Portland has several new faces running the show in the front and back of the house.

New General Manager [Corey Hightower](#) joined the El Gaucho team as a Captain in February 2010 before moving into the Wine Captain position in 2012. Born in Anchorage, AK, but raised in Michigan, Corey attended Michigan State University. He ultimately received his Hospitality Management degree in Portland at the Western Culinary Institute, and started his career at Aquariva in Portland. He and his wife, Sarah, recently had their second child, Dylan, who joins three-year-old big brother Owen.

Executive [Chef Steve Cain](#) has been a member of the El Gaucho family since 2002 and his larger-than-life personality shows a man in love with life and the food he creates. In his 13 years with the company he has served as Executive Chef of AQUA by El Gaucho, El Gaucho Bellevue Chef de Cuisine, and El Gaucho Events Executive Chef. Moving to Portland as the new Executive Chef is the latest adventure for "Big Poppa."

*El Gaucho® is the Northwest's steakhouse legacy focused on elegant, old-school, tableside service for people celebrating their lives. The menu highlights 28-Day Dry-Aged Certified Angus Beef® brand Prime steaks and cutting-edge fresh seafood selections, all prepared in the wide open exhibition kitchen over flaming charcoal grills. Visit the legendary steakhouse in Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, or Portland. Enjoy fresh seafood and panoramic views of Seattle's*

*waterfront at the steakhouse's sister restaurant, AQUA by El Gaucho.*

*For overnight accommodations, visit the Inn at El Gaucho, located directly above El Gaucho Seattle in bustling Belltown.*

*For more information, please visit [www.elgaucho.com](http://www.elgaucho.com)*

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