

**Greg Engert**  
**Beer Director**  
**Neighborhood Restaurant Group**

Greg Engert is the beer director for Neighborhood Restaurant Group, a position that allows him to draw on his extensive beer knowledge and source beers for the company's eight restaurants and Planet Wine, a specialty gourmet shop. Engert scours the globe to find the best beers available for his loyal customers, specializing in domestic microbrews as well as international craft rarities that are not readily available in the United States. Since joining the NRG team, Engert has been featured in *USA Today*, *Food Arts*, *The Washington Post*, *Washingtonian*, *Beer Advocate*, *All About Beer*, *Imbibe*, *Draft* and *Mid-Atlantic Brewing News*.

Engert's appreciation for craft brewed beer began at a young age with his father extolling the virtues of then little-known microbreweries, such as Samuel Adams and Saranac. These early memories made a distinct impression on Engert who was honing his palate with local New England craft beers, from such breweries as Otter Creek and Long Trail, while his college peers were drinking Milwaukee's Best.

While pursuing his undergraduate degree in English literature, Engert would make frequent trips to nearby Burlington in order to drink at the Vermont Pub and Brewery, one of the first and most recognized brewpubs in the country. His study abroad experiences at both the Goethe Institute in Munich, Germany and Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, helped cement his passion for international beer styles as well as the history of craft beer, breweries and the brewing processes.

Upon graduation, Engert enrolled at Georgetown University to pursue a graduate degree in English Literature, but the beer industry came calling. He secured a job waiting tables at the venerable Brickskeller in Washington, DC, in order to glean all aspects of beer education that he could from their 1200+ bottle list. He quickly rose the ranks, from server to manager, and in the process, developed a love of the malty English and spicy Belgian ales they featured, finding himself particularly enamored with Gueuze, a lambic beer made from blended vintages and bottled for further fermentation.

In 2006, Engert signed on as beer director for Neighborhood Restaurant Group's beer-centric restaurant, Rustico. In this position, Engert worked closely with his chef to develop food and beer pairings and help promote beer's societal acceptance in a wine-obsessed world. During his tenure at Rustico, Engert was tapped to lead food and beer pairing events for distinguished groups such as Smithsonian Associates and Freshfarm Markets, and was recognized for his trailblazing efforts in this arena by *USAToday*, *Food Arts* and *The Associated Press*.

In October 2009, Engert helped open ChurchKey, a 3,200 square foot beer bar based in Washington, DC featuring 555 beers, and Birch & Barley, the sister restaurant where he and Executive Chef Kyle Bailey are elevating the notion of craft beer and food. These labors of love, which were two years in the making, offers guests 500 bottles, 50 taps and

five cask-conditioned ales from which to choose, not to mention rare domestic and international finds not yet explored in the nation's capital. As Beer Director and Partner, Engert has brought countless innovations to the service and appreciation of beer with these ventures, including serving all brews—be they cask, draft, or bottle—at the temperature most suited for accentuating flavor.

Since opening, ChurchKey has quickly become recognized as a premier beer destination in Washington, DC and Engert has been named one of the “Ten to Watch in 2010” by *Restaurant Hospitality* magazine. He has also been featured prominently for his efforts in *The Washington Post*, *Imbibe*, *DC Modern Luxury*, *Food Arts* and on NPR's *The Kojo Nnaamdie Show*. In March 2010, *Food & Wine* named Engert as one of its “Sommeliers of the Year,” the first time the publication has ever selected a beer professional for this prize.

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