



The truth is that I didn't always love beer. I do now, but I didn't always. I know a slew of people who would agree with my claim as it relates to one's experience with beer, and even more people who would say that beer just isn't for them. In fact, you might be one of those people. I take pleasure in saying that you are misguided. I take even more pleasure in introducing you to the woman who just might make you agree with me. She holds the title as Canada's only Master Cicerone and her name is Mirella Amato. She is a self-described "Beer Geek" and has been hard at work providing beer education and consultancy through her company Beerology™. Mirella's passion for all things beer has allowed her to find comfort in the many intricate flavours of beer; and she is eager to share her knowledge with you.

"I just love beer!" Mirella says with enthusiasm as we occupy two stools at Bellwoods Brewery. Mirella basically made up her job. She spent six months talking to local breweries and found that many of them do not devote much time for outreach. She quickly got to work on getting to know the ins and outs of the industry by building upon her knowledge of everything from brewing to tastings and food pairings.

Several courses later, Mirella holds one of only six Master Cicerones titles in all of North America and is also the only female who holds this title. "I always had an interest in beer even though many of my friends drink wine...I spoke to [local breweries] and became as educated as possible...I got them to trust my level of expertise and built a personal connection."



With such amazing credentials on top of her already apparent fascination with beer, Mirella provides guided public and private tastings around the city, as well as staff training and food pairings for chefs and restaurants. “So many people think they don’t like beer.” There is more to the taste of beer than blonde, amber, and dark. Mirella acts as a facilitator in the understanding of the complexities of this social beverage. Through education, she helps people find their favourites based on their own personal tastes. When tasting a beer for the first time, Amato acknowledges the characteristics of beer like its chewiness, aroma, alcohol content, dimension, spice, and acidity – aspects that we don’t often consider. “There is a beer for everyone, and it’s important to explore and to be curious,” says Mirella with certainty.

As a pioneer of this profession, Mirella is constantly asking questions, thus creating a dialogue about the “art of beer appreciation.” Her own curiosity and engagement has even propelled her to write a book about beer which is scheduled to come out in 2014. Amato describes it as an “extension of her interest,” and it sounds like a promising read.

Let us raise our pints to Mirella on her quest to properly acknowledge and advance the beer industry in Toronto.

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