



Sean WILSON

WORKING and LIVING the Mountain Lifestyle

WORDS KRISTEN POPE | IMAGES LINDLEY RUST



Working 70-80 hours a week with a headset and a cubicle, Sean Wilson quickly discovered that working for a New York City investment bank was not the life he wanted.

"What am I doing to myself?" he thought.

An avid lover of the outdoors, he began mountain biking in Central Park.

"I was biking pretty much every day," Wilson said. "It was pretty much the only way to get back to nature. A lot of Central Park is illegal to ride but you would never see the same cop twice. I would tell them I just moved there that week and they would say 'don't do it again'."

One night when he was out with friends, Wilson was crossing the street in a group with

nearly 200 people when he was clipped out of the crowd by a taxi.

"I went over the cab instead of under and that resulted in me living," he said.

The cab never stopped and out of the over 100 witnesses, no one was able to get the license or the cab number. With multiple injuries, it took him six months to fully recover from the accident.

"As soon as I got better it became a mission to move," Wilson said.

He moved to Colorado and worked for the Aspen Skiing Company at the four diamond Sage Restaurant in Snowmass Village. He worked there for eight years until his girlfriend at the time wanted to finish college at CU Boulder. In Boulder, he worked at the

Cheesecake Factory for three years until he and his girlfriend parted ways and he once again sought to move to a ski town.

Sean's brother Rick has lived in Jackson for 18 years and Sean visited him every year when he lived in Colorado.

"Rick didn't talk me into it," Wilson said. "I had to be like 'I'm going to move to Jackson. Do you mind?'"

For 6½ years, Wilson worked at Nikai, holding every front of the house position up to General Manager. In June 2012, he moved over to the Rustic Lounge at the Rustic Inn where he is the Bar and Restaurant Manager. During his time at the Rustic, he worked to redesign the menu and hire more staff. His favorite menu items at the Rustic are the Idaho trout and the cowboy ribeye.

"Our food is spectacular," Wilson said. "The bar atmosphere is really nice, there's a private corner fireplace, a wine room with additional seating. In the summer there are gas fireplaces on Flat Creek. It's like a private dining experience."

Working in a restaurant also provides him with the perfect schedule to pursue his outdoor passions. Growing up, he watched Warren Miller and Greg Stumps movies and aspired to ski every day.

"The people I admired were people with nighttime jobs who skied every day," Wilson said. "In 18 years, I haven't worked a day job at all. I come in at 1 or 2 p.m. to begin my day. It gives me lots of time to get out and enjoy the mountains. Even if I'm only out for an hour or two, it clears my head. The fresh air, sunshine and exercise are always pretty sweet."

In the summer, Wilson spends his time hiking and mountain biking.

"Jackson is superlative in so many ways," Wilson said. "I moved here and I've been at it ever since. I decided that if I can't be rich, I'll at least pretend I am. I live and play where the rich folks do." ■

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