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AUSTRALIA'S
WINE LIST
OF THE YEAR
AWARDS

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MEDIA RELEASE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

MELBOURNE FAVOURITE WINS AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2024

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The 2024 results saw newly opened restaurants claim some of the night's top accolades.

1 October 2024:

The results of **Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards** are in, and Melbourne's premier dining destination **Gimlet at Cavendish House**, has been crowned **Australia's Wine List of the Year**. Now in its 31st year, the awards ceremony was held at the Ovolo Hotel in Woolloomooloo, NSW, on the evening of Monday the 30th of September.

In addition to the major trophy, Gimlet picked up some of the night's other highlight awards, including Best Wine List VIC, Australia's Best Restaurant Wine List - City, and Sommeliers' Choice Award. Gimlet's Anthony Pieri won the prestigious Judy Hirst Award, which is awarded to the sommelier responsible for curating the winning list.

Other front runners at this year's ceremony included Brisbane's **Agnes Restaurant**, which judges said had one of the country's most diverse and enticing by-the-glass selections. Perth's **Gibney** was just behind, an impressive feat for the venue, which only opened early this year. Judges highlighted the serious champagnes and international offerings that complement the local wines on Gibney's list.

This year's state and territory stand-outs included **Monopole** (Best Wine List NSW), **Gibney** (Best Wine List WA), **The Salopian Inn** (Best Wine List SA), **Molto Wine Bar and Cellars Hobart** (Best Wine List TAS), **Agnes** (Best Wine List QLD), and **Capitol Bar & Grill** (Best Wine List ACT).

Gimlet's winning wine list was praised by Judge Andrew Graham for being "outstanding in its breadth, depth, balance and originality."

"The Gimlet list artfully blends the great and the good with a dose of variety and complexity. The selection by the glass here is exceptional, with a nice blend of essential drinks versus indulgences. Very clever! There's a subtle playfulness here, too - just like the 'neither red nor white wine' section, just to remind us that not everything has to be serious. It's a list with high appeal for all wine lovers," said Graham.

The win marks the first time since 2021 that a Victorian venue has won the coveted title, with Sydney's Cirrus Bar & Dining taking home the crown in 2023 and Brisbane's Cru Bar + Cellar winning the title in 2022.

Of this year's results, Chairman of Judges Peter Forrestal commented, "Never has the scene been more vibrant with a wide range of choices facing consumers; better-educated sommeliers and waiting staff, more thoughtfully curated lists, or more carefully assembled cellars. Nor more delicious wines from a wider range of countries as well as fantastic offerings from Australia. While the density of population means that it is scarcely surprising that the capital cities dominate, wining and dining in country areas has never been better than it is now.

“While last year’s results showed the power and class of the Sydney establishments, the first three places this year went to Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. These results come following voting by the entire Australian and international judging Panel - a formidable group and the results are generally close - as they were this year.

“It is the dining public and the restaurants, themselves, who benefit from the close scrutiny given to wine lists within the confines of Australia’s Wine List of the Year,” commented Forrestal.

Four new categories were added to this year’s awards to reflect the ever-changing nature of the hospitality industry. New awards, like Australia’s Best Listing of Organic and Biodynamic Australian Wines, were awarded to O Bar & Dining. Australia’s Best Listing of Greek Wines was given to Hellenika at the Calile; Australia’s Best Listing of Museum and Rare Wines was taken home by Wickens at the Royal Mail Hotel; and Sydney icon Quay won Australia’s Best Listing of New Zealand Wines.

Australia’s Wine List of the Year Awards was established by Rob Hirst OAM and his late wife, Judy, with Tucker Seabrook in 1993. The awards honour the time, skill, and resources that go into developing the highest-quality wine lists and pay tribute to the talented teams behind them. In 2024, Rob was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to oenology and to industry associations.

2024 marked another record year for the Awards nationally, with a 10% increase in the number of entries. Hirst comments, “It is wonderful to see that with this growth in entries, the industry continues to excel in compiling and presenting top-quality wine lists. This year an outstanding 276 venues received a Three Glass ranking. This represents a 12% increase on last year, demonstrating that not only is the number of lists entered growing but the standard of these lists is growing at a faster rate!

“Since day one, we set the bar high for a wine list to achieve a Three Glass ranking, and such excellent progress only serves to further enhance Australia’s reputation as a world-class provider of exceptional wine and dining experiences.

“Every Award and Glass winning venue should be very proud of all they have put into their lists, and we are very happy to bring the industry together to celebrate these outstanding venues and their talented sommeliers,” Hirst said.

The judging panel, led by Chairman Peter Forrestal, Deputy Chairs Toni Paterson MW, Jeni Port, and International Chair Brian Julyan MS, is made up of over 30 esteemed industry professionals from Australia and around the world. These professionals include Master Sommeliers, Masters of Wine and other respected industry experts spanning wine writers and commentators, wine show judges, and past winners.

Each list is judged by a pair of judges who assess it independently and confidentially. The lists are evaluated based on content, balance, suitability to the venue, presentation, and pricing. If the list meets the required standard, it is awarded a glass rating. One Glass indicates the list is recommended, Two Glasses signal that the list is excellent, and Three Glasses are awarded only to lists that are deemed outstanding.

Once all lists have been reviewed and scored, the country’s top lists are reviewed in depth and ranked by the full Australian and International Panel to decide the competition winner.

“Each year, I am more blown away by the passion and dedication on display from Australia’s best sommeliers and restaurateurs and the wonderfully close relationships they draw on to develop outstanding wine and beverage lists. The effort involved in bringing next-level experiences to their customers is inspiring, and these awards are a fitting recognition of that hard work and vision.” Geneva Leek, Editor-in-Chief of Major Awards Partner Qantas Magazine | Travel Insider, said.

The awards also highlighted outstanding service with Australia’s Wine List Service Award. The award recognises venues that demonstrate that they understand the critical importance of carefully and

professionally storing all their wines, preserving the By the Glass wines on their wine list, and serving all their wines in high-quality, wine-specific glassware.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS

NSW

New South Wales was the standout state this year, claiming 15 awards for its impressive wine lists. **Monopole** took home Best Wine List NSW, and Australia's Best Wine Bar List, while **Quay** was celebrated with Australia's Best Sparkling Wine List and Australia's Best Listing of New Zealand Wines. **The Dry Dock** earned the title of Australia's Choice, an accolade that is voted for by the public. **Woodcut** won Australia's Best Hotel Restaurant Wine List (for the second consecutive year). **Berowra Waters Inn** secured Australia's Best Listing of Australian Wines, and **Jonah's** was awarded Australia's Best List of Wines by the Glass. **Bentley Restaurant & Bar** wowed with two wins: Australia's Best Aperitif List (for the second consecutive year) and Australia's Best Digestif List. Other notable state winners included **Junction Moama** (Australia's Best Club Restaurant Wine List), **Bar Lucia** (Australia's Best Wine List (50 Wines)), **Rockpool Bar & Grill Sydney** (Australia's Best Listing of USA Wines), **O Bar & Dining** (Australia's Best Listing of Organic & Biodynamic Australian Wines), and **The Newcastle Club** (Australia's Best Listing of NSW Wines).

VIC

It was a successful night for Victoria, with numerous awards going to venues across the state, including the top honour. The shining star of the night was **Gimlet at Cavendish House** which was awarded Australia's Wine List of the Year, Best Wine List VIC, Australia's Best Restaurant Wine List - City, and Sommeliers' Choice Award. Gimlet's Sommelier Anthony Pieri also received the Judy Hirst Award, which is given to the person responsible for Australia's Wine List of the Year. **Wickens at Royal Mail Hotel** was also celebrated during the ceremony, receiving Australia's Best Listing of Museum & Rare Wines and Australia's Best Listing of VIC Wines. **Leonie Upstairs** took home the award for Australia's Best Sake List and **Society** for Australia's Best Listing of French Wines - both venues scooped these awards for the second year in a row. Highlights from the state also included **Poodle Bar & Bistro** (Australia's Best Wine List (200 Wines)), **Circl Wine House** (Australia's Best Champagne List), and **Grossi Florentino** (Australia's Best Listing of Italian Wines).

WA

Western Australia's highlight was **Gibney**, Perth's new beachside brasserie, which won Best Wine List Western Australia and Australia's Best New Wine List - two of the evening's major accolades. **Mojo's Kitchen, Bar and Bottleshop** stood out with the Best Beer List, and **The Shorehouse** took home Australia's Best Listing of West Australian Wines, an award it also won in 2020.

SA

South Australia's top performer was **The Salopian Inn**, McLaren Vale's eclectic restaurant, which scooped up Best Wine List South Australia, Australia's Best Restaurant Wine List - Country, and Australia's Best Listing of a Region's Wines. **Restaurant Botanic** took home two awards- Australia's Best Food & Wine Matching List and Australia's Best Non-Alcoholic List. Adelaide's **The Crafers Hotel** claimed Australia's Pub Best Restaurant Wine List, while **Uraidla Hotel** won Australia's Best Listing of South Australian Wines for the second year in a row.

TAS

Hobart's **Molto Wine Bar and Cellars Hobart**, first opened in 2022, was Tasmania's standout, earning Best Wine List Tasmania and Australia's Best Listing of Tasmanian Wines. The cool-climate venue **Institut Polaire** also impressed, winning Australia's Best Wine List (Max 100 Wines).

QLD

Queensland celebrated wins in four key categories. **Agnes**, known for its open-fire cooking, took home Best Wine List Queensland for the second year in a row. **Noosa Waterfront** won Australia's Best Cocktail List,

while **Hellenika at The Calile** was recognised for Australia's Best Listing of Greek Wines, a new award. **SK Steak & Oyster** repeated its success in 2023 with Australia's Best Listing of Queensland Wines.

ACT

Canberra's **Capitol Bar & Grill**, a modern Italian dining spot at the QT Hotel, was a double award winner, taking home Australia's Best Listing of ACT Wines and Best Wine List ACT.

ALL WINNERS OF AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2024

NATIONAL WINNER

Australia's Wine List of the Year
Judy Hirst Award

Gimlet at Cavendish House
Anthony

Pieri

STATE/TERRITORY WINNERS

Best Wine List ACT

Capitol Bar & Grill

Best Wine List NSW

Monopole

Best Wine List QLD

Agnes

Best Wine List SA

The Salopian Inn

Best Wine List TAS

Molto Wine Bar and Cellars Hobart

Best Wine List VIC

Gimlet at Cavendish House

Best Wine List WA

Gibney

TYPE OF TRADE AWARD WINNERS

Australia's Best Restaurant Wine List - City

Gimlet at Cavendish House

Australia's Best Restaurant Wine List - Country

The Salopian Inn

Australia's Best Club Restaurant Wine List

Junction Moama

Australia's Best Hotel Restaurant Wine List

Woodcut

Australia's Best Pub Restaurant Wine List

The Crafers Hotel

Australia's Best Wine Bar List -

Monopole

The Fiona MacDonald Award

CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS

Australia's Best New Wine List –

Gibney

The Tony Hitchin Award

Australia's Best Wine List (50 Wines)

Bar Lucia

Australia's Best Wine List (100 Wines)

Institut Polaire

Australia's Best Wine List (200 Wines)

Poodle Bar & Bistro

Australia's Best List of Wines by the Glass

Jonah's

Australia's Best Food & Wine Matching List

Restaurant Botanic

Australia's Best Champagne List

Circl Wine House

Australia's Best Sparkling Wine List

Quay

Australia's Best Non-Alcoholic List

Restaurant Botanic

Australia's Best Aperitif List

Bentley Restaurant & Bar

Australia's Best Digestif List

Bentley Restaurant & Bar

Australia's Best Listing of Japanese Sake

Leonie Upstairs

Australia's Best Beer List

Mojo's Kitchen, Bar & Bottleshop

Australia's Best Cocktail List

Noosa Waterfront

Australia's Best Listing of French Wines

Society

Australia's Best Listing of Organic &

Biodynamic Australian Wines

O Bar & Dining

Australia's Best Listing of Museum &

Rare Wines

Wickens at Royal Mail Hotel

Australia's Best Listing of Australian Wines

Berowra Waters Inn

Australia's Best Listing of ACT Wines	Capitol Bar & Grill
Australia's Best Listing of NSW Wines	The Newcastle Club
Australia's Best Listing of QLD Wines	SK Steak & Oyster
Australia's Best Listing of SA Wines	Uraidla Hotel
Australia's Best Listing of TAS Wines	Molto Wine Bar and Cellars Hobart
Australia's Best Listing of VIC Wines	Wickens at Royal Mail Hotel
Australia's Best Listing of WA Wines	The Shorehouse
Australia's Best Listing of Greek Wines	Hellenika
Australia's Best Listing of Italian Wines	Grossi Florentino
Australia's Best Listing of New Zealand Wines	Quay
Australia's Best Listing of USA Wines	Rockpool Bar & Grill Sydney
Australia's Best Listing of a Region's Wines	The Salopian Inn
Best Wine List - Sommeliers' Choice	Gimlet at Cavendish House
Best Wine List - Australia's Choice	The Dry Dock

AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS - HALL OF FAME 2024

NATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

Circus Dining (2023)
 Cru Bar + Cellar (2022)
 Ten Minutes by Tractor (2021)
 Attica (2020)
 Jonah's (2017)
 Bentley Restaurant + Bar (2015)
 Lake House (2014)
 Rockpool Bar & Grill, Perth (2014)
 Wickens at Royal Mail Hotel [as Royal Mail] (2012)
 Pilu at Freshwater (2011)
 Rockpool Bar & Grill, Melbourne (2010)
 Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (2009)
 Aria (2003)

INDIVIDUAL WINNERS - HALL OF FAME 2024

David Lawler (2018)
 Franck Moreau MS (2014)

REGIONAL AWARD WINNERS – HALL OF FAME – 2024

Attica (Best Wine List VIC) 2013, 2015, 2020
 Blackbird (Best Wine List QLD) 2017, 2018, 2020
 New Inductee - **Italian & Sons (Best Wine List ACT) 2018, 2020, 2023**
 New Inductee - **Lake House (Best Listing of VIC Wines) 2017, 2018, 2023**
 Point Leo (Best Listing of VIC Wines) 2020, 2021, 2022
 Rockpool Bar & Grill, Perth (Best Wine List WA) 2011, 2012, 2014
 Settlers Tavern (Best Listing of WA Wines) 2017, 2018, 2019

TYPE OF TRADE AWARD WINNERS – HALL OF FAME – 2024

Bert's (Best Restaurant Wine List - Hotel) 2018, 2019, 2020
 The Botanical Hotel (Best Restaurant Wine List - Pub) 2012, 2013, 2014
 Glass Brasserie (Best International Hotel List) 2008, 2009, 2010
 Jonah's (Best Restaurant Wine List - Hotel) 2015, 2016, 2017
 Lake House (Best Restaurant Wine List - Country) 2008, 2010, 2013
 Love, Tilly Devine (Best Wine Bar List) 2013, 2016, 2017

***New Inductee* - Mayfair Lane Pub (Best Restaurant List - Pub) 2019, 2020, 2023**

Members Dining Room [as RACV City Club] (Best Restaurant Wine List- Club) 2013, 2014, 2015

Newcastle Club (Best Club Restaurant Wine List) 2018, 2019, 2021

Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (Best Restaurant Wine List - Club) 2003, 2004, 2008

Settlers Tavern (Best Restaurant Wine List - Pub) 2009, 2010, 2011

University House Club [as University Club] (Best Restaurant Wine List - Club) 1995, 1996, 1997

Wickens at Royal Mail Hotel [as Royal Mail] (Best Restaurant Wine List - Country) 2009, 2011, 2012

OTHER CATEGORY AWARD WINNERS – HALL OF FAME – 2024

Aria (Best Sparkling Wine List) 2017, 2018, 2021

Attica (Best Non-Alcoholic List) 2018, 2019, 2020

Bennelong (Best Listing of Australian Wines) 2020, 2021, 2022

***New Inductee* - Café Sydney (Best Listing of Australian Wines) 2017, 2019, 2023**

Chiswick, Woollahra (Best Wine List - 100 Wines) 2015, 2017, 2018

Ishizuka (Best Wine List - 50 Wines) 2020, 2021, 2022

***New Inductee* - Rockpool Bar & Grill, Perth (Best List of Wines by the Glass) 2013, 2015, 2023**

Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (Best Aperitif List) 2011, 2012, 2017

Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (Best Digestif List) 2012, 2015, 2020

Aria (Readers' Choice Award) 2011, 2012, 2013

Ends.

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