



## **AUSTRALIA'S BEST WINE LIST - ARIA, BRISBANE QLD** **2018 Winner Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2018 6:30pm:** Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards 2018 has revealed the **Best Wine List in Australia** can be found at **Aria, Brisbane**. This is a major victory for Queensland, the first time in the awards 25 year history that a Queensland restaurant has won this prestigious national accolade. As the sommelier responsible for the winning list, **Ian Trinkle** receives the **Judy Hirst Award**, presented in memory of the inspirational woman who helped found and establish the awards 25 years ago.

**Co-chairman of Judges Peter Forrestal**, was delighted to see the major award go to the Sunshine State. *"This is further confirmation that Brisbane restaurants can mix it with the best in the country. Since it opened in 2009, the Aria list while similar in style and structure to its Sydney sibling, gives unique support to the fledging Queensland industry as well as highlighting the best Australia has to offer. Like few others, it balances the cutting edge and the established; embracing new trends while celebrating old favourites. Thoughtful curating has gradually refined an outstanding list which has morphed into Australia's finest in 2018,"* says Forrestal.

Much-admired Melbourne sommelier **David Lawler**, who created the 2010 Best Wine List of the Year at Rockpool, Melbourne and recently retired as President of Sommeliers Australia was awarded the rarely-given **Individual Award** with entry into the **Hall of Fame** for his passionate commitment to the hospitality industry - supporting the education, training and service skills of sommeliers.

First launched in 1993, by Rob Hirst and Tucker Seabrook, **Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards** were created to recognise and reward the hard work and talent of sommeliers as well as the enormous investment in time and resources by business owners to develop quality wine lists and cellars. The first winner in 1994 was Peter and Beverley Doyle's Sydney restaurant Cicada.

Setting the standard high from the beginning, the awards have always been independently judged. This year's 30-strong panel included highly respected local and international Master Sommeliers, Masters of Wine, wine communicators and previous award winners.

According to Rob Hirst, 2018 saw a record number of entries in the awards with a record also 325 dining establishments including restaurants, clubs, pubs, hotels and wine bars achieving the higher glass rankings of two glasses (excellent) or three glasses (outstanding). *"The most popular award category in 2018 remains **Best Wine By the Glass** – the perfect vehicle for introducing premium wines to the consumer, followed again by **Best Matching of Food and Wine** – reflecting again the ever closer liaison between sommeliers and chefs. These categories were closely followed in popularity by **Best Listing of a Regions Wines** and **Best Listing of Australian Wines** – showing the increased interest and desire by both sommeliers and consumers to explore the wines of different regions including the exciting things happening with Australian wines today,"* says Hirst.

Awards partner for the last decade, **Judy Sarris, Editor of Gourmet Traveller WINE** finds it hard to believe that the Wine List of the Year Awards are now in their 25th year. *“One of our annual highlights now is celebrating and showcasing the skills of our talented sommeliers across the nation. The venues that scooped up the gongs are most definitely THE places to head for an exciting glass or two and some vinous experimentation. Congratulations to them all,”* said **Judy Sarris**

*“The Drinks Association is thrilled to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the launch of Australia's Wine List of the Year,”* said **CEO Georgia Lennon**. *“We look forward to promoting the winners in our premier publication, Drinks Trade magazine, the Trade Communications Partner of the event. Keeping Australia's on and off-trade informed is key to Drinks Trade's success and these awards are a valuable acknowledgement of the achievements of Australia's sommeliers and their employers. Congratulations to all the winners.”*

Australia’s Wine List of the Year Awards once again would like to acknowledge the important support of **Riedel** glassware, **Vintec** and **Transtherm** wine cabinets and **Wine Australia** as well as all supporters who make the awards possible.

Winners will be listed at [winelistoftheyear.com.au](http://winelistoftheyear.com.au) and [gourmettravellerwine.com](http://gourmettravellerwine.com) on **July 23<sup>rd</sup>** and published in the Aug/Sept 2018 *Gourmet Traveller WINE* magazine-on sale July 25<sup>th</sup>.

**FOR INTERVIEWS AND FURTHER INFORMATION, PLUS PICTURES PLEASE CONTACT –**

Rob Hirst, Australia’s Wine List of the Year Awards

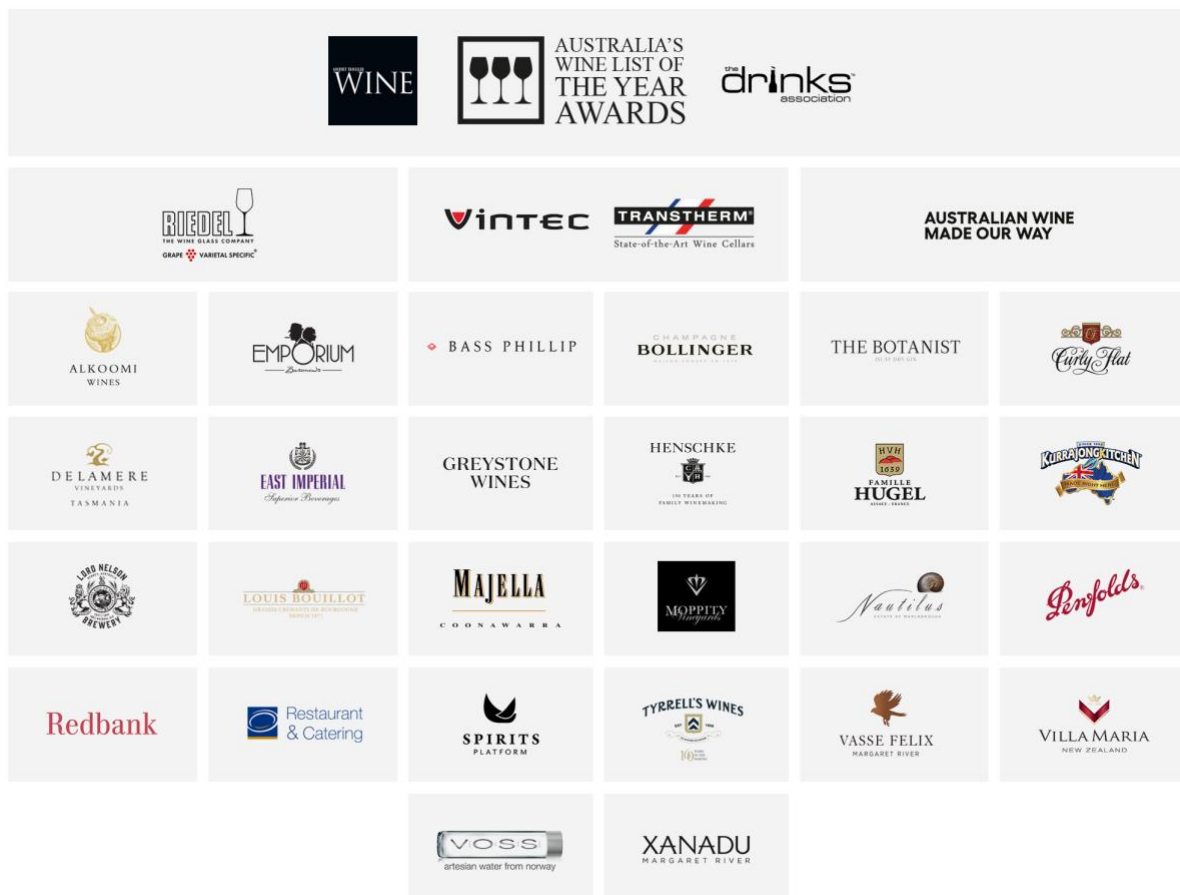
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**FULL LIST OF WINNERS BELOW –**

**AUSTRALIA’S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2018 ARE PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY**



# AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS – 2018

In partnership with Gourmet Traveller WINE and the drinks Association

## NATIONAL AWARD WINNER

**2018 Wine List Of The Year** Aria, Brisbane  
**Judy Hirst Award** Ian Trinkle

## STATE/TERRITORY WINNERS

Best Wine List ACT **Italian & Sons**  
Best Wine List NSW **Est**  
Best Wine List NT **The Stone House**  
Best Wine List QLD **Blackbird**  
Best Wine List SA **Crafers Hotel**  
Best Wine List TAS **Stillwater**  
Best Wine List VIC **Bar Liberty**  
Best Wine List WA **Mayfair Lane**

## NATIONAL CLASS OF TRADE OR CATEGORY

Best City Restaurant Wine List **Aria, Brisbane, QLD**  
Best Country Restaurant Wine List **The Barn Steakhouse, SA**  
Best Hotel Restaurant Wine List **Bert's, NSW**  
Best Pub Restaurant Wine List **Crafers Hotel, SA**  
Best Club Restaurant Wine List **Newcastle Club, NSW**  
Best Wine Bar List **Bar Liberty, VIC**  
Best New List – The Tony Hitchin Award **Dear Sainte Eloise, NSW**  
Best Small List (Max 50 Wines) **Harvest, NSW**  
Best Small List (Max 100 Wines) **Chiswick, Woollahra, NSW**  
Best Food & Wine Matching List **Brae, VIC**  
Best List Of Wine By The Glass **Bentley, NSW**  
Best Beer List **Avoca Hotel, VIC**  
Best Non-Alcoholic Drinks List **Attica, VIC**  
Best Sparkling Wine List **Aria, Sydney, NSW**  
Best Champagne List **Cru Bar + Cellar, QLD**  
Best Aperitif List **Devine Food & Wine, NSW**  
Best Digestif List **Black Bar & Grill, NSW**  
Best Listing Of A Region's Wine **Settlers Tavern, WA**  
Best Listing Of Australian Wines **Jonah's, NSW**  
Best Listing Of ACT Wines **Rubicon, ACT**  
Best Listing Of NSW Wines **Jonah's, NSW**  
Best Listing Of QLD Wines **Blackbird, QLD**  
Best Listing Of SA Wines **fermentAsian, SA**  
Best Listing Of TAS Wines **Stillwater, TAS**  
Best Listing Of VIC Wines **Lake House, VIC**  
Best Listing Of WA Wines **Settlers Tavern, WA**  
Gourmet Traveller Wine Readers' Choice **Charred Kitchen, NSW**  
Sommeliers Choice Award **Bentley, Nick Hildebrandt, NSW**

## HALL OF FAME

National Individual Award Winner **David Lawler**

### **2018 HALL OF FAME - National Winners**

**Jonah's**, Sydney, NSW (2017)  
**fermentAsian**, Tanunda, SA (2016)  
**Bentley Restaurant + Bar**, Sydney, NSW (2015)  
**Lake House**, Daylesford, VIC (2014)  
**Rockpool Bar & Grill, Perth**, WA (2014)  
**Royal Mail Hotel**, Dunkeld, VIC (2012)  
**Pilu at Freshwater**, NSW (2011)  
**Rockpool Bar & Grill**, Melbourne, VIC (2010)  
**Rockpool Bar & Grill**, Sydney, NSW (2009)  
**Aria, Sydney**, NSW (2003)  
**Syracuse**, Melbourne, VIC (1999)

### **2018 HALL OF FAME - National Individual Award Winner**

**Franck Moreau MS** (2014)

### **2018 HALL OF FAME - Three Time Winners – States/Territories**

**Apothecary 1878** (Best SA) 2004, 2011, 2012  
**Appellation** (Best SA) 2008, 2009, 2010  
**Aria, Brisbane** (Best QLD) 2011, 2013, 2014  
**Aubergine** (Best ACT) 2013, 2014, 2015  
**Char** (Best NT) 2012, 2013, 2014  
**Cru Bar & Cellar** (Best Qld) 2004, 2009, 2015  
**fermentAsian** (Best SA) 2014, 2015, 2016  
**Friends** (Best WA) 1999, 2002, 2003  
**Me Wah** (Best TAS) 2010, 2011, 2012  
**Rockpool Bar & Grill** (Best WA) 2011, 2012, 2014  
**Rubicon** (Best ACT) 2011, 2012, 2016  
**The Source at MONA** (Best TAS) 2013, 2014, 2015

### **2018 HALL OF FAME - Three Time Winners – National Class Of Trade Or Category**

**Aria, Sydney** (Gourmet Traveller WINE – Readers' Choice Award) 2011, 2012, 2013  
**The Botanical** (Best Pub Restaurant List) 2012, 2013, 2014  
**The European** (Best Café List) 2010, 2011, 2012  
**fermentAsian** (Best Country Restaurant List) 2014, 2015, 2016  
**Glass Brasserie** (Best International Hotel List) 2008, 2009, 2010  
**Healesville Hotel** (Best Pub Restaurant List) 2003, 2004, 2008  
**Healesville Hotel** (Best Beer List) 2011, 2012, 2013  
**Healesville Hotel** (Best Listing of a Region's Wines) 2014, 2016, 2017  
**Jonah's** (Best Hotel Restaurant Wine List) 2015, 2016, 2017  
**Lake House** (Best Country Restaurant List) 2008, 2010, 2013  
**Love, Tilly Devine** (Best Wine Bar) 2013, 2016, 2017  
**Melbourne Supper Club** (Best Wine Bar List) 2004, 2011, 2012  
**RACV City Club** (Best Club Restaurant List) 2013, 2014, 2015  
**Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (Best Aperitif List)** 2011, 2012, 2017  
**Royal Mail Hotel** (Best Country Restaurant List) 2009, 2011, 2012  
**Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron** (Best Club Restaurant List) 2003, 2004, 2008  
**Settlers Tavern** (Best Pub Restaurant List) 2009, 2010, 2011  
**Spice Temple, Melbourne** (Best Small List: 100) 2013, 2015, 2016

## **EDITORIAL NOTES**

### **FULL COMMENTS – Co-Chairman, Peter Forrestal**

#### **THE 2018 WINNER – ARIA, BRISBANE**

The first win by a Queensland-based list in these awards is further confirmation that Brisbane restaurants can mix it with the best in the country. Since it opened in 2009, the **Aria** list has had the immaculate presentation of its Sydney sibling and a similar structure. It has been proud of its origins, giving unique support to the fledging Queensland industry as well as highlighting the best Australia has to offer. Like few others, it balances the cutting edge and the established; embracing new trends while celebrating old favourites. Not that much has changed over the years from a list of 740 bottles (29 by the glass) in 2011 to 1040

(39 by the glass) in 2018. It's the quality of the choices that the sommeliers have made over the years that has made the difference. These have, for example, given greater breadth to the selection of varieties from all corners of the globe. As well as this, careful investment and the use of Coravin has stretched the cellar back over the past two decades or more, giving it greater depth and gravitas. There's an embracing of the new darlings - white and red Jura, Beaujolais and Sicily - amazing depth in the classic regions of Burgundy, Bordeaux, Barolo, and the Rhone - as well as a redefining of Australia's classic reds. Thoughtful curating has gradually refined an outstanding list which has morphed into Australia's finest in 2018

## **THE OVERALL 2018 AWARDS**

Overall, the increased professionalism of the Australian hospitality industry, invigorated by the courses and the accreditation of the Court of Master Sommeliers and the Wine and Spirits Education Trust (WSET), and the hard work of sommeliers throughout the country has seen a significant lift in the numbers entered in Australia's Wine List of the Year and an unparalleled improvement in glass ratings. This has been particularly evident in the number of restaurants earning a move from one to two glasses in this year's Awards. Australia has been a world leader in offering wines by the glass and continues to push the boundaries aided by the widespread use of Coravin. Sommeliers, too, have been in the vanguard of promoting those winemakers operating on the cutting-edge by offering wines made using minimal intervention. These now play a part on most lists. All in all, we live in exciting times for Australian wine lovers.

## **2018 WINE LIST TRENDS – Deputy Chair of Judges, Jeni Port**

- A growing focus on regionality with city restaurants more supportive of wines produced in their home state.
- Producer spotlights add interest and variety, giving an extra dimension to the best lists.
- Small producers are incredibly well-supported on Australian wine lists.
- Regional restaurants offer an excellent insight into the wines of a region and are an essential part of visiting a vineyard region because of this.
- Wine-by-the-glass lists have improved with a wide range of varietals available – with wine preserver Coravin used in many restaurants.
- There is also a noticeable increase over the emergence that started last year of Gamay, Beaujolais, Chenin Blanc, Rose, Prosecco

## **JUDGING PANEL**

Headed today by **Co-Chairmen**, leading wine writer and commentator **Peter Forrestal** and the Founder of the **Court of Master Sommeliers, Brian Julyan MS**, and **Deputy Chairs – Jeni Port** and **Toni Paterson MW**, the long-term panel of over thirty (30) includes internationally respected Master Sommeliers and Masters of Wine such as past World's Best Sommelier - **Gerard Basset OBE, MS, MW, MBA (UK)**, **Michael Englemann MS** and **Evan Goldstein MS (USA)**, **Bob Campbell MW** and **Cameron Douglas MS (NZ)**, **Yohann Jousselin MS (HK)**, **Felicity Carter (Germany)**, **James Lawther MW**, **Andrew Jefford**, **Andrew Caillard MW**, plus leading wine writers and commentators such as **Mike Bennie**, **Peter Bourne**, **Jane Faulkner**, **Ray Jordan**, **Tony Love**, **Louise Radman** and **Nick Stock** to name but a few. The depth of local and industry knowledge is complemented by the inclusion each year as judges of the **Co-President of Sommeliers Australia – Sarah Andrew**, and the **previous year's winner of the Wine List of the Year and the Judy Hirst Award – Niels Sluiman**.