



AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2020

Celebrating Success in a Year of Lockdowns

WINNERS ANNOUNCED!!!

ATTICA WINS BEST LIST

Media Release: *Embargoed* until 5pm AEDT Monday, November 30, 2020

In a year in which the Australian hospitality industry was tested to the limit, the 2020 **Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards**, announced online on Monday 30 November, have highlighted the depth of talent and dedication of many sommeliers around the country.

No restaurant has done more to maintain the highest standards in wine and wine list creativity than the winner of this year's Australia's Wine List of the Year, Melbourne's acclaimed **Attica** restaurant.

A regular on the rollcall of the World's Best 50 Restaurants, Attica celebrates boundary-pushing cuisine. Likewise, its wine list is daring and challenging while keeping the closest eye on quality. Attica sommeliers **Dom Robinson** and **Jane Lopes** are joint winners of the Judy Hirst Award as the sommeliers responsible for the winning List. Ms Lopes returned to the US due to the COVID-19 lockdown but is recognised for her exceptional work in curating the wine list over the past three years and working with current head sommelier Dom Robinson on the winning list.

According to **Chair of Judges Peter Forrestal**, Attica has been on the judges' radar for several years as one of Australia's top wine programs. A Finalist in Wine List of the Year in 2019 - in 2020 their list - submitted before the pandemic, was chosen by the International Jury as the leading wine list in Australia. *"Attica owner and chef, Ben Shewry, has worked tirelessly finding innovative ways to keep his staff working productively in the darkest days of 2020. At present they offer an experience called 'Attica In Between'. As their website says, 'it isn't necessarily the future, but it is Attica now.'* While the wine list won't be operating as it did when it was judged, we understand Attica's customers will again be able to enjoy an outstanding wine offer true to the Attica philosophy," Forrestal said.

Attica also takes out **Best City Restaurant List**, **Best Victorian List** and **Best Non-Alcoholic List**.

Ironically given the long lockdowns in Melbourne, three of six finalists considered for the major award - **Attica**, **Cutler & Co.** and **Masani** - are all Melbourne based.

Awards Founder Rob Hirst said it was cruel that in a year when Australia's wine lists achieved the **highest ever average level in the 27-year history of the Awards** (2.2 Glasses) that COVID-19 should hit the industry. *"157 outlets achieved the prestigious 3 Glass level (Outstanding) compared with 9 in 1994."*

"Obviously, a number of lists will be different today to what was submitted for judging earlier in the year. I'm sure the public will understand and join us in celebrating the extraordinary passion and commitment of sommeliers and business owners who have achieved glass rating and award success in these 2020 Awards. This is recognition that is theirs forever" Hirst added.

Forrestal believes that ongoing education and training is at the heart of this ever-growing professionalism. *“Across the board, 2020 lists were better organised and presented. The best lists reflect the personalities of those involved while illustrating just how seriously sommeliers view the accessibility of the lists to their customers”.*

*“Also, in a year when Victoria has suffered so much at the hand of the pandemic, it is delightful to report the regional success for the **Mornington Peninsula** that glitters with more great and imaginative lists than ever before. Other regional stars include **Harbourside Bar & Kitchen, Cairns** in Far North Queensland, while **Charred Kitchen in Orange**, as a finalist in five of our awards, showed that its country location has little influence on quality.”*

***Bennelong** pays tribute to its iconic location with an All-Australian list of incomparable quality, while the elegant space occupied by **Reign in the Queen Victoria Building**, is matched by the veuve and panache of its bubbles. Taken all in all, this is a celebration of the hospitality industry and those who work in it,” Forrestal said.*

The judging panel of 34 respected Australian and international judges includes Master Sommeliers, Masters of Wine, wine judges, educators, wine media and previous award winners. *“It is the nature and calibre of these independent judges as well as their global recognition and the respect in which they are held that sets these awards apart,”* acknowledged Hirst.

The most popular award category this year remained **Best Wine by the Glass**, with preservation technology such as Coravin making this a perfect vehicle for offering premium wines to consumers. This was followed again by **Best Matching of Food and Wine** – reflecting the ever-closer liaison between sommeliers and chefs. Showing both consumer interest and sommelier desire to showcase the beauty of Australian wines, **Best Listing of Australian Wines** and **Best Listing of a Region's Wines** were also areas with a lot of strength in 2020 wine lists.

ALL WINNERS - AUSTRALIA'S WINE LIST OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2020

NATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

2020 Wine List of the Year - Attica, Melbourne

Judy Hirst Award – Joint Winners - Dom Robinson / Jane Lopes , Sommeliers – Attica

STATE/TERRITORY WINNERS

Best Wine List ACT - Italian and Sons, Canberra

Best Wine List NSW - Sixpenny, Sydney

Best Wine List QLD - Blackbird, Brisbane

Best Wine List SA - Hardy's Verandah, Adelaide Hills

Best Wine List TAS - Black Cow Bistro, Launceston

Best Wine List VIC - Attica, Melbourne

Best Wine List WA - Il Lido, Perth

NATIONAL CLASS OF TRADE OR CATEGORY

Best City Restaurant Wine List – Attica, Melbourne

Best Country Restaurant Wine List – Laura at Pt. Leo Estate, Merricks, Vic

Best Hotel Restaurant Wine List – Bert's Bar & Brasserie, Newport, NSW

Best Pub Restaurant Wine List - Mayfair Lane Pub & Dining Room, Perth

Best Club Restaurant Wine List – Terrace Kitchen, Launceston, Tas

Best Wine Bar List - Saga Bar, Sydney

Tony Hitchin Award (Best New List) - mimi's, Sydney

Best Small List (50 Wines) – Joint Winners - Cott & Co Fish Bar, Perth and Ishizuka, Melbourne

Best Small List (100 Wines) - Spice Temple, Sydney

Best Food & Wine Matching List - Aria, Sydney
Best List of Wine by The Glass - Cru Bar + Cellar, Brisbane
Best Champagne List - Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney
Best Sparkling Wine List - Reign at the QVB, Sydney
Best Non-Alcoholic List - Attica, Melbourne
Best Aperitif List – Banksii Vermouth Bar & Bistro, Sydney
Best Digestif List - Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney
Best Beer List - The Avoca Hotel, Avoca, Vic
Best Sake List – Harbourside Bar & Kitchen, Cairns
Best Listing of a Region’s Wines - The Boat House, Canberra
Best Listing of Australian Wines - Bennelong, Sydney
Best Listing of ACT Wines – The Boat House, Canberra
Best Listing of NSW Wines – The Newcastle Club, Newcastle
Best Listing of QLD Wines – Cru Bar + Cellar, Brisbane
Best Listing of SA Wines – 2KW Bar & Restaurant, Adelaide
Best Listing of TAS Wines – Terrace Kitchen, Launceston
Best Listing of VIC Wines – Pt. Leo Estate, Merricks, Vic
Best Listing of WA Wines – Shorehouse, Perth
Gourmet Traveller Wine Readers’ Choice - Mitchell Harris Wines, Ballarat
Sommeliers’ Choice Award – bibo Wine Bar, Sydney

HALL OF FAME 2020: The Hall of Fame is a prestigious list of establishments who have achieved the ultimate status – either by winning the **Main Award once** or the same **State/Territory, Class of Trade or Category award three times**.

NATIONAL WINNERS

Jonah’s, Whale Beach (2017)
Bentley Restaurant & Bar, Sydney (2015)
Lake House, Daylesford (2014)
Rockpool Bar & Grill, Perth (2014)
Pilu at Freshwater (2011)
Rockpool Bar & Grill, Melbourne (2010)
Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (2009)
Aria, Sydney (2003)

INDIVIDUAL AWARD

David Lawler (2018)
Frank Moreau (2014)

STATE AND CATEGORY AWARDS

Apothecary 1878 - now Apoteca (Best SA) 2004, 2011, 2012
Barn Steakhouse (Best SA) 2013, 2017, 2019
Cru Bar + Cellar (Best QLD) 2004, 2009, 2015
Rockpool Bar & Grill Perth (Best WA) 2011, 2012, 2014
Stillwater (Best TAS) 2016, 2017, 2018
Stone House (Best NT) 2017, 2018, 2019
Terrace Kitchen (Best TAS) 2008, 2009, 2019

Aria (Gourmet Traveller Wine Readers' Choice) 2011, 2012, 2013
Botanical (Best Pub Restaurant List) 2012, 2013, 2014
Chiswick (Best Small List) 2015, 2017, 2018
Glass Brasserie (Best International Hotel List) 2008, 2009, 2010
Jonah’s (Best Hotel Restaurant List) 2015, 2016, 2017
Lake House (Best Country Restaurant List) 2008, 2010, 2013
Love, Tilly Devine (Best Wine Bar List) 2013, 2016, 2017

RACV City Club - now Members' Dining Room (Best Club Restaurant List) 2013, 2014, 2015
Rockpool Bar & Grill, Sydney (Best Aperitif List) 2011, 2012, 2017
Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (Best Club Restaurant List) 2003, 2004, 2008
Settlers Tavern (Best Listing of WA Wines) 2017, 2018, 2019
Settlers Tavern (Best Pub Restaurant List) 2009, 2010, 2011

****Winners will be listed at winelistoftheyear.com.au and gourmettravellerwine.com after 5:00pm AEDST on November 30 and published in the December issues of Drinks Trade and Gourmet Traveller WINE magazine.**

Ends.

FOR INTERVIEWS, FURTHER INFORMATION AND IMAGES:

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EDITOR NOTES

The Australian hospitality industry has suffered during COVID-19 and subsequent restrictions on movement and trade. All lists for the awards were submitted before the full realisation of the impact and consequences of COVID-19 were felt by the industry. Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards 2020 recognises that a number of the lists may look different today as a consequence of COVID-19.

In a tough year, the toughest in memory, Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards stands strong in its commitment to highlighting the craft and achievements of Australia's sommeliers. In many ways, that support is needed now more than ever before.

Australia's Wine List of the Year Awards was founded in 1994 by Rob and the late Judy Hirst and Tucker Seabrook to recognise and reward the commitment, craft and talent of Australia's sommeliers, as well as the investment by business owners, in building and maintaining great wine lists and cellars.

