

# MEDIA RELEASE

25 July 2017

## The Lion Hotel - Still the Pride of the Industry

The **Lion Hotel in North Adelaide** has been awarded the honour of being named South Australia's **Best Overall Hotel in 2017** at this year's **AHA|SA Hotel Industry Awards for Excellence** held at the **Adelaide Entertainment Centre** tonight. This is the third time The Lion has been awarded this title, also winning it in 2009 and 2013.

Praised by the judges for its innovative and high-quality dining experience, atmospheric bar, sophisticated function spaces and accommodating outdoor area, The Lion continues to maintain an incredibly high standard across the entire venue.

Also winning the coveted titles of **Best Restaurant – General Division** and **Best Function Operation Facility – General Division**, the team at The Lion continue to deliver an exciting and diverse menu, from an intimate dinner for 2, to a banquet for 100.

The **Crafters Hotel** was another high achiever at the 2017 Awards, winning both the **Best Apartment/Suite Accommodation** category, and a joint winner in the **Best Bistro/Casual Dining – Metropolitan** category.

Following extensive and careful renovations of the hotel over the past three years, The Crafters now offers seven beautiful four-star rooms for overnight guests, designed with respect to the 1830's heritage of the building. The Bistro offers a delicious French inspired menu, where diners can choose not only from grand dishes, but all-day appetizers, traditional pub fare and delicious desserts. A wonderful wine selection is on offer, including a professional sommelier on hand to assist the patron.

SA's country hotels were also celebrated tonight, including the **Sevenhill Hotel** for **Best Bistro Casual Dining – Country**, with judges commending the menu's blend of innovative meals and traditional pub fare.

The newly redeveloped Hardy's Verandah Restaurant (HVR) at Mount Lofty House received the honour of **Best Restaurant – Accommodation Division**. HVR guests are treated to magnificent views as an accompaniment to their culinary experience. The focus of the restaurant is two superbly balanced degustation menus (The Full Story – 7 courses, the Short Story – 4 courses) created by Head Chef Wayne Brown. With a background in French and Japanese cuisine he has been able to create an exquisite culinary experience.

"The AHA|SA Awards for Excellence celebrates the diversity of this exciting industry, and recognizes the extremely high standards that are achieved across the State" said AHA|SA CEO Ian Horne.

"South Australian hotels provide patrons with a great range of food and beverage, entertainment, quality accommodation and excellent service. They are also the perfect place to socialize, be entertained, relax and enjoy living. There is no doubt that South Australian hoteliers and their staff should be proud of the services and facilities they offer."

"Congratulations to Tim Gregg and Andrew Svencis, and their team at The Lion for their very well-deserved win."

The **2017 AHA|SA Hotel Industry Awards for Excellence** was held on **Tuesday July 25 at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre**. Over 750 people attended this premier event, with entertainment provided by **The Black Sorrows featuring Vika and Linda Bull and hosted by Rebecca Morse**.

All winners from the AHA|SA Awards will now go on to compete in the National AHA Awards to be held on the Gold Coast on September 18, 2017.

For further information, please read the following pages or contact:

**Media Comment**  
**Ian Horne, General Manager AHA|SA**  
0437 298 258

**General Enquiries**  
**Lucy Randall, AHA|SA Events Manager**  
0421 702 227

## **WINNERS**

### **2017 AHA | SA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

#### **Best Draught Beer Quality Award - Metropolitan (sponsored by CUB, Coopers and Lion)**

The Barker - Joint Winner

Cathedral Hotel - Joint Winner

#### **Best Draught Beer Quality Award - Country (sponsored by CUB, Coopers and Lion)**

Mount Gambier Hotel

#### **Mid-Range Accommodation**

Tonsley Hotel

#### **Apartment/Suite Accommodation**

Crafers Hotel

#### **Superior Hotel Accommodation**

Crowne Plaza Adelaide

*Clare Country Club – Judges Commendation*

#### **Deluxe Hotel Accommodation**

The Playford Mgallery by Sofitel

#### **Bistro /Casual Dining – Country**

Sevenhill Hotel

#### **Bistro /Casual Dining – Metropolitan**

Crafers Hotel - Joint Winner

Warradale Hotel - Joint Winner

*Oxford Hotel, North Adelaide – Judges Commendation*

#### **Restaurant – Accommodation Division**

Mount Lofty House - Hardy's Verandah Restaurant

#### **Restaurant – General Division**

Lion Hotel, North Adelaide

#### **South Australian Premier's Commendation for 'Healthy Meal Choices for Children'**

Beach Hotel, Seaford

#### **Bar Presentation & Experience – Country**

Port Lincoln Hotel

#### **Bar Presentation & Experience – Metropolitan**

Cathedral Hotel - Joint Winner

Uraidla Hotel - Joint Winner

*Exchange Hotel, Gawler - Judges Commendation*

#### **Outdoor or Non-Enclosed Facility**

Feathers Hotel

#### **Live Music Venue**

Governor Hindmarsh Hotel

*Arkaba Hotel – Judges Commendation*

**Entertainment Venue**

Alma Tavern, Norwood

**Sporting Entertainment Venue**

Warradale Hotel

**Community Service & Support**

Renmark Hotel

**Marketing & Promotion – General Division**

Moseley Bar & Kitchen

**Tourism & Regional Promotion**

National Wine Centre

*Innamincka Hotel - Judges Commendation*

**Environmental Practice & Energy Efficiency**

Ibis Adelaide

**Gaming Venue – Country**

Vine Inn Barossa Community Hotel

**Gaming Venue – Metropolitan**

Maylands Hotel

**Function Operation/Facility – Specialist & Accommodation Division**

Adelaide Oval SMA

**Function Operation/Facility – General Division**

Lion Hotel, North Adelaide

**Retail Outlet - Stand Alone**

East End Cellars

**Retail Outlet - Attached**

The Pickled Duck

*Pretoria Hotel, Mannum – Judges Commendation*

**Small Venue**

Pink Moon Saloon

**Redeveloped Hotel – Metropolitan**

Coopers Alehouse, Gepps Cross

**Staff Development & Training**

National Wine Centre

**Apprentice Development & Training**

Hilton Adelaide

## **Hotel Industry Rising Star Award**

Josh Gorman - Hilton Adelaide

### **Best Overall Hotel**

Lion Hotel, North Adelaide

## **2017 AHA | SA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE WINNERS**

### **Best Mid-Range Accommodation is the Tonsley Hotel**

The Tonsley Hotel is a prime venue for corporate, leisure and visiting guests. The recently renovated rooms provide a relaxed atmosphere in the Standard, Executive and Deluxe suites. All rooms have state of the art audio visual facilities, free Wi-Fi, air conditioning and free parking. The hotel offers a very welcoming and helpful reception service along with excellent food and beverage facilities. Judges commented on the excellent service and attention to detail.

### **Best Apartment/Suite Accommodation is The Crafers Hotel**

Following extensive and careful renovations of the hotel over the past three years, The Crafers Hotel now offers seven beautiful four-star rooms for overnight guests. Each second-level room has been elegantly designed with respect to the 1830s heritage of the building, complimented by modern technology. Accommodation is in short supply and strong demand in the Adelaide Hills, and the rooms at The Crafers Hotel have been a welcome addition to the high-end accommodation sector. Judges commented on the excellent service and good overall facilities of the hotel.

### **Best Superior Hotel Accommodation is the Crowne Plaza Adelaide**

The Crowne Plaza offers 308 contemporary rooms and suites, with 112 featuring balconies with views of greater Adelaide. There are also 63 spacious twin rooms perfect for families and groups. Rooms come complete with up-to-date technology and power saving measures. The décor is fresh and the facilities are extremely comfortable. Customer service rates highly at the Crown Plaza with a score of 9.1/10 on Booking.com, and this was reinforced by the judges' comments. The hotel offers excellent food and beverage facilities along with a neat gym and leisure centre.

The Clare Country Club has received a Judges Commendation in this category.

### **Best Deluxe Hotel Accommodation is The Playford Mgallery by Sofitel Adelaide**

The Playford is one of only two official AAA 5 star rated hotels in Adelaide and has a unique personality and story, experienced by guests through its architecture, interior design and services.

Constant improvements over its operation have kept this hotel ahead of its peers. With 182 rooms in total including 72 larger suites, each is superbly appointed. The Playford combines old world charm with combined modern-day comforts. Its central location makes it the ideal position to compliment the growing Riverbank precinct, Adelaide Oval and other Adelaide attractions.

**Best Bistro /Casual Dining – Country is the Sevenhill Hotel**

The Sevenhill Hotel offers a wonderful menu with a blend of local specialties, from the finest Aged Fillet to the more casual bar snack. Children are very well catered for too. The local fare and Clare Valley wines deliver an impressive offering to the local and tourist trade. Its extensive cellar would make any wine lover happy and is a great point of interest.

**Best Bistro /Casual Dining – Metropolitan is The Crafers Hotel AND The Warradale (Joint Winners)**

The Bistro at The Crafers offers a delicious French inspired menu, where diners can choose from all day Appetizers, Traditional fare, grand dishes and desserts. A wonderful wine selection is on offer, including a professional sommelier on hand to assist the patron. The staff are obliging and well-presented and the refurbishment of the Crafers makes for a wow factor.

The Warradale Hotel has an extensive menu that is always aimed at seasonal offerings to bring customers quality meals at reasonable prices. With year-round changes to various parts of the menu, The Warradale Hotel is focused on ensuring that the freshest ingredients are on the plate.

**Best Restaurant – Accommodation Division is Mount Lofty House – Hardy’s Verandah Restaurant**

The recent refurbishment of the restaurant at Mount Lofty House has created a whole new experience for patrons. HVR guests are treated to magnificent views as an accompaniment to their culinary experience. Two superbly balanced degustation menus (The Full Story, 7 courses – The Short Story, 4 courses) by head chef Wayne Brown are the focus of the restaurant.

With more development planned, this venue will be a remarkable showcase in the Adelaide Hills.

**Best Restaurant – General Division is The Lion Hotel**

The Lion Hotel is a winner in this category again, with its local produce, constant innovation and exceptional service. The Lion’s food philosophy remains consistent with sourcing the freshest, seasonal produce from South Australia’s finest suppliers enabling them to showcase the very best of what Adelaide has to offer. The a la carte menu offers a well-balanced selection of beautifully presented, modern Australian dishes. A beautiful dining room with a contemporary setting and excellent service from the floor and kitchen staff provides a wonderful experience for customers.

**Best Healthy Kids Menu Options is the Beach Hotel, Seaford**

The Beach Hotel Seaford’s Kids Menu impressed the judges with its range of interesting and healthy kids dining options. The menu has a wide range of options covering the 5 food groups with the use of low fat dairy, no added salt and whole grains. The kid’s meals are served with water and healthy inspired dessert options. They look great and taste great too!

**Best Bar Presentation & Service – Country is the Port Lincoln Hotel**

Featuring a great bar menu, helpful staff and great ambience, The Port Lincoln Hotel continues to be an excellent venue. Sharkys Bar boasts great live entertainment and caters for a wide demographic. With a diverse menu, wagering facilities and large screens it is a popular spot for both locals and tourists. The beverage offering has something for everyone and the customer service is highly professional. The venue keeps itself current and ahead of its peers.

**Best Bar Presentation & Service – Metropolitan JOINT WINNERS – The Cathedral Hotel, North Adelaide and The Uraidla Hotel**

The Cathedral Hotel in North Adelaide delivers on charm and elegance, with its ground floor marble bar providing an elegant setting and the New York style Balcony bar offering wonderful views across Adelaide. It has a constantly evolving beverage list including excellent SA wines, craft beers and sophisticated cocktails. Food options hit the target with the hotel celebrating many SA local producers. The staff are friendly and courteous and add to the warm and comfortable atmosphere.

Renovated and reopened in 2016, the Uraidla Hotel has become a destination for bar lovers beyond the locals. It is bursting with character, in keeping with its locality and its community history. The service is warm and welcoming, and the food is outstanding creating an overall wonderful experience for patrons. It features a fantastic beverage list celebrating South Australia.

The Exchange Hotel, Gawler has received a Judges Commendation in this category.

**Best Outdoor or Non-enclosed Facility is The Feathers Hotel**

The recently refurbished Feathers Hotel terrace has created a whole new dimension to this historical landmark. It's open modern design and welcoming feel has ensured it appeals to a wide demographic. It's a popular all-weather area which is comfortable and inviting. It interacts with the surrounding hotel and creates a flow between the spaces. With a generous beverage selection, friendly food options and excellent service, the Feathers is a clear winner in this category.

**Best Live Music Venue is The Gov**

The Gov has an amazing 8 State Awards and 2 National Hotel Awards.

The Gov really is Adelaide's home of live, original music. More than 50,000 people per year attend shows at the Gov. In 2016 the Gov played host to 183 shows from hip hop to thrash metal, blues to electro pop. This included 60 International touring artists. They also participate in Adelaide Fringe, Umbrella Winter City Sounds and Guitars in Bars. They also support countless local artists who play in the front bar.

The Arkaba Hotel has received a Judges Commendation in this category.

### **Best Entertainment Venue is The Alma Tavern**

Situated just 5 minutes from the CBD the Alma Tavern is a hub of entertainment in the eastern suburbs. The recently refurbished beer garden has opened up the entertainment space with a large indoor/outdoor stage along with one of the best AV installations in SA. From the Friday night Bingo with Tex and Rory, then the weekend with DJ's, live music and quiz nights there is something for everyone. The Alma shares its news well through social media and they have an astonishing 33,000 followers on Facebook. With over 1500 through its doors on weekends, it's a very popular venue. There is a great food and drinks menu and the service is excellent.

### **Best Sporting Entertainment Venue is The Warradale Hotel**

The Sporting coverage at the Warradale Hotel extends from its impressive dedicated Tavern Bar to its Beer Garden offering a seamless link with hospitality and sports entertainment. From the large 3.75m LED screen in the beer garden, to sports telecasts in the Verandah Bar, it allows the Warradale to maximise the sports experience for customers. The Tavern Bar offers 23 LED screens, wagering facilities, lotteries and 4 Foxtel boxes providing coverage of anywhere in the world. The hotel also supports local sports groups including Footy, Cricket, Rugby, Lacrosse, Basketball, Bowls, Surf Lifesaving, Diving and water polo to name a few. Regular sporting promos also keep patrons entertained from 'Mutt Racing', Punters Paradise Saturday to the racing syndicate which has over 80 members.

### **Best Community Service & Support is The Renmark Hotel**

The Renmark Hotel has been the cornerstone of its community since 1897 and a major driver of prosperity in the region, especially in times of hardship and uncertainty. The Renmark has been integral in providing financial support for the town, from the support of local sports, to funding capital expenditure, driving local events and working with local councils to drive tourism to the region. The hotel has also become a staging point for emergency procedures such as the recent fires and storms. The staff also get heavily involved in fundraising initiatives such as UGLY Bartender and Relay for Life.

### **Best Marketing & Promotion – General Division is The Moseley Bar & Kitchen**

The Moseley Bar & Kitchen markets itself as a premium seaside destination and this is evident through all forms of marketing and collateral. Their use of social media platforms paired with beautiful imagery creates a strong brand. The staff are also part of this brand with their training, presentation and enthusiasm towards the venue's success. The venue sets a strong 12 month plan with strict guidelines and engages with local PR agents, media and personalities, events and sporting clubs to promote the venue and its offerings. From the Peroni Deck to the Winter Chalet, there is always something to keep people interested at the Moseley, with wonderful food, drinks and service to match.

### **Best Tourism & Regional Promotion – the National Wine Centre**

The National Wine Centre is a purpose-built tourism destination showcasing the South Australian wine industry. This includes guided tours, the interactive multi lingual educational spaces and the largest wine tasting experience in Australia. They are constantly working with new initiatives to drive visitation and in turn promote the regions of SA. The Wined Bar offers a self-serving enomatic tasting experience and encourages the customer to purchase on site. This investment has been a major development and enables delegates to receive the unique SA experience at an affordable price.

The Innamincka hotel has received a judge's commendation in this category.

### **Best Environmental Practice & Energy Efficiency is the ibis Adelaide**

As a newly built hotel, the Hines Property Group ensured the ibis held the latest environmental standards. The ibis Adelaide is not just about controlling energy and water usage but also contributing back to the environment and the community. Their commitment to the Accor Hotel Planet 21 project has set a framework for policy such as best practise in waste management, products used, staff training and culture, energy efficiency programs and environmental initiatives. From 2017 and beyond this remains a key focus of the hotel and its management.

### **Gaming Venue – Country is the Vine Inn Barossa**

This is the second year in a row the Vine Inn Barossa has won this Award.

Its recent renovation has created a comfortable gaming room which is light and bright with relaxing colours. The room has a great layout and a good mix of machines. Staff are courteous and interactive with the patrons. The venue has the highest level of compliance with effective use of appropriate signage, reminder cards and other collateral in full view and available to all patrons. The Vine Inn works closely with their Gaming Care officer and is in constant review of their patron interventions.

### **Best Gaming Venue – Metropolitan is the Maylands Hotel**

The Maylands was purchased by the Matthews Group in 2016 and they have recently renovated the gaming room in keeping with the old-world charm and sophistication the hotel exudes. Of the 32 machines, there is a good mix of games with comfortable furniture and surroundings.

The Maylands has a strong commitment to staff training and establishing good relationships with their patrons. The venue has excellent compliance with appropriate signage, reminder cards and other collateral in full view and available to all patrons. The Maylands works closely with their Gaming Care officer and is in constant review of their patron interventions.

### **Best Function Operation/Facility – Specialist & Accommodation Division is the Adelaide Oval**

The new Adelaide Oval opened in 2014 and in 2017 it has already seen impressive popularity and increased investments in its facilities. The function facilities are second to none with a range of adaptable spaces for different needs. From larger sporting events, major concerts, gala dinners to an

intimate cocktail event, the Adelaide Oval can cater for any group. With the spectacular backdrop of the oval and the River Torrens, its location is ideal and the showcasing of local produce and beverages adds to its success. It is a great showcase for South Australia.

**Best Function Operation/Facility – General Division is the Lion Hotel**

The Lion Hotel continues to excel in functions and events. This polished venue offers a diverse range of event spaces, from an intimate dinner for 6 to a banquet for 100. Food and beverage options are amazing and customer service is discreet and efficient. It is a superior venue with a wide range of facilities making it a well-deserved winner in this class.

**Best Retail Outlet – Attached - is The Pickled Duck at the Modbury Plaza Hotel**

The Pickled Duck at the Modbury Plaza Hotel is a well-presented outlet we would all like to be our local. With the retail outlet situated in an impressive modern extension to an old store building, it has a seamless link from the bistro/dining area next door. You can even shop and take your wine in to have with a meal. It offers a great range of products and purpose built tasting and display areas. Trade is up since the redevelopment which offers an inviting variation to the standard Thirsty Camel bottle shop. The staff are well experienced and overall it provides a very satisfying shopping experience. The Pretoria Hotel, Mannum received a judges' commendation in this category.

**Best Retail Outlet – Stand Alone is the Tasting Room**

This stunning refurbishment of an established venue has redefined the retail experience. Its commitment to quality and customer service is paramount and it offers the interactive experience the customers are looking for. Exceptional customer service, a terrific layout and commitment to selling good products that suit the customer, make this venue the winner in this category.

**Best Small Venue is Pink Moon Saloon**

The Pink Moon Saloon is yet another little gem in Leigh Street. The building has an interesting quirky design which is unlike anything in the city. The Pink Moon Saloon is another venue from the brains behind the other successful small venues, the Clever Little Tailor and the Whistle and Flute. It prides itself on making wonderful cocktails whilst serving the latest in craft and guests beers and also has a terrific wine list. It may be small, but its full of heart. You can have Club Sandwich, a shared platter or even a more substantial Beef brisket. Wonderful customer service and attention to detail adds to this venue's appeal.

**Redeveloped Hotel – Metropolitan is the Coopers Ale House, Gepps Cross**

The ALH Groups multimillion dollar redevelopment of the Gepps Cross Hotel makes it the oldest new venue in town. The heritage listed hotel has been transformed into a destination venue alongside the support of Coopers Brewery, offering the comforts of an old school brewery with a contemporary laid back style. Gone is the old front bar making way for an open space to relax, enjoy an ale and a meal with friends. It's a modern venue with state of the art technology, including the largest outdoor screen

in Adelaide. A wonderful bistro adjoins the all-weather outdoor space, and there is an ample selection of pristine function rooms to choose from. The bistro now exceeds 3000 meals per week, and they host 8-9 events per week. It is a total transformation of this run-down pub to a grand destination in the Northern suburbs.

#### **Best Staff Development & Training is the National Wine Centre**

The National Wine Centre ('NWC') continues to be a leader in hospitality training in South Australia with their commitment to upskilling their employees through development coaching, regular and ongoing performance management and open communication. The NWC understands that assisting their staff to acquire new skills results in better customer service, improved productivity, increased loyalty and staff retention. The NWC also offers an internal 'Professional Development Program' that covers a broad range of topics, facilitated by external providers for all permanent staff. They also have a focus of staff health, wellbeing and nutrition. They have also supported Oz Harvest in the Nourish program which is a pathway to employment aimed at disadvantaged and vulnerable youth.

#### **Best Apprentice Development & Training goes to Hilton Adelaide**

With a 34-year history of employing and developing apprentices, the Hilton Adelaide can measure achievements by the career successes of the past and present. Over the years, 89% of apprenticeship completions have continued their employment with Hilton. The Hilton has always maintained a belief that what you put into your team is what you will get out of them. They run a secondary school work experience program providing work experience for 10 out of 12 months per year, exposing them to opportunities they may not have had elsewhere. They have also formed a 20+ year partnership with TAFE SA Regency Campus. With 28% of their current kitchen team as apprentices coupled with 34 years of supporting apprentices, the Hilton Adelaide takes the training of the team very seriously.

#### **Hotel Industry Rising Star Award goes to Josh Gorman**

Well done to Josh on winning this prestigious award. The judges commended his personal dedication to the success of Hilton Adelaide and his leadership and commitment.

Entrants in this award must be aged 26 or younger and in a management position in a hotel. The judges decided on the winner by taking into account the entrants' knowledge, expertise, interest, involvement and ambitions in the hotel industry. Josh will now go forward to the AHA National Awards to be held in Queensland in September.

#### **Best Overall Hotel is The Lion Hotel**

This is the third time The Lion has been declared the best in SA. From its amazing and innovative dining experience, a busy bar, appealing functions and fantastic outdoor spaces – The Lion covers what a good pub should be. Owners Tim Gregg and Andrew Svencis and their competent team continue to push the boundaries and are not complacent when it comes to innovation and the overall customer experience. A hotel still striving to be ahead of its peers and will continue to be in the future. It is an icon of the South Australian Hotel Industry.