



## Australian Hotels Association 2017 National Awards for Excellence

### Media Release

**(Embargoed until 11pm EST Monday 18 September, 2017)**

The stars of Australia's booming hospitality and accommodation industry were honoured in a glittering national function on the Gold Coast last night.

Nearly 500 VIPs and industry guests gathered for the Australian Hotels Association National Awards for Excellence dinner, held at the RACV Royal Pines Resort.

AHA National President Scott Leach said the winners, chosen from more than 5,000 members nationwide, were the reason Australian hotels continue to lead the world.

He said the night was about rewarding new ideas, excellence and old-fashioned hard work in venues ranging from mum and dad run country pubs to huge, five star accommodation hotels.

"The hotel industry is one of the most dynamic in the nation and a week rarely goes by without the launch of new ideas, renovations or complete re-developments at venues right across the country," said Mr Leach.

"Our industry sets the standard internationally and awards nights are about recognising our greatest asset, our people," said Mr Leach.

Among the highlights was the induction of Melbourne-based liquor industry icon, Mark Robertson OAM, into the AHA National Hall of Fame.

Mr Robertson joined Victoria's pub industry in the tough times of the 1990's recession, and quickly made his mark in a range of roles. He has been a key player in major decisions made by the Victorian AHA, particularly in regard to property acquisition and in the establishment of AHA charitable activities, including the Hotelcare Golf Day, which has now raised over \$2m for needy causes. Mr Robertson has also served as the AHA metropolitan vice president since 2008.

The Overall Hotel of the Year at a metropolitan level went to State Buildings in Perth Western Australia while at a regional level, the winner was The Prince Alfred Hotel in Ipswich, Queensland.

Wildflower at COMO The Treasury in Perth was crowned the Best Restaurant Metropolitan, while the Best Regional Restaurant went to Riversdale Estate, Hobart, Tasmania.

Jamala Wildlife Lodge in Weston Creek, ACT, was named Best Deluxe Accommodation, while the Overall Hotel of the Year Accommodation Division went to The Henry Jones Art Hotel in Hobart, Tasmania.

The National Wine Centre in Adelaide, SA, was recognised for its effort in the Best Tourism Initiative section, while the Best Hotel Accommodation General Division went to the Royal Mail Hotel in Yea, Victoria.

The prestigious Chef of the Year was awarded to Damian Brabender from the OTIS Dining Hall in Canberra.

Hotel Industry Rising Star winner was Matt Clifton from MNT Investments/Donny's Bar, Sydney.

David Wells from The Hilton in Darwin, Northern Territory, was the winner of the Employee Excellence in Service Accommodation Division, while in the General Division, the award went to Anneliese Grazioli of Hot Tamale, also in Darwin.

Winner of the Front of House Employee of the Year Accommodation Division was Nikolas Adams of Stamford Plaza Melbourne, Victoria, while the winner of this section in the General Division was Kurtis Bosley of Woollahra Hotel, in Woollahra, New South Wales.

A full list of 2017 winners is featured below.

For further information, contact Stephen Ferguson on 0412 654 000.

**Best Bar Presentation & Service – Metropolitan**

Cloudland, Fortitude Valley - QLD

**Best Bar Presentation & Service – Regional**

The Western Hotel, Ballarat - VIC

**Best Bistro – Metropolitan**

The Pumphouse Hotel, Melbourne - VIC

**Best Bistro – Regional**

Casey Jones Gastropub, Canberra - ACT

**Best Deluxe Accommodation**

Jamala Wildlife Lodge, Weston Creek - ACT

**Best Entertainment Venue**

The Governor Hindmarsh Hotel, Adelaide - SA

**Best Environmental & Energy Efficiency Practice**

The Star, Sydney - NSW

**Best Gaming Venue – Metropolitan**

Old England Hotel, Heidelberg - Vic

**Best Gaming Venue – Regional**

Shamrock Hotel, Mackay - QLD

**Best Hotel Accommodation - General Division**

Royal Mail Hotel, Yea - Vic

**Best Hotel Bar - Accommodation Division**

InterContinental Sydney Double Bay Stillery, Double Bay - NSW

**Best Hotel Group Operator**

Colonial Leisure Group, Perth - WA

**Best Keno Venue**

Zagame's Boronia, Boronia - Vic

**Best Marketed Hotel - Accommodation Division**

Grand Hyatt, Melbourne - Vic

**Best Marketed Hotel - General Division**

Watsons Bay Boutique Hotel, Watsons Bay - NSW

**Best Meeting & Events Venue**

Hyatt Regency, Sydney - NSW

**Best Mid-Range Accommodation**

Holiday Inn Express Sydney Macquarie Park - NSW

**Best Outdoor/Non-Enclosed Area**

The Feathers Hotel, Burnside - SA

**Best Redeveloped Hotel - Accommodation Division**

Rydges Southbank Hotel, South Brisbane - QLD

**Best Redeveloped Hotel - General Division**

Crows Nest Hotel, Sydney - NSW

**Best Restaurant - Accommodation Division**

Jonah's Restaurant & Boutique Hotel, Whale Beach - NSW

**Best Restaurant – Metropolitan**

COMO The Treasury - Wildflower, Perth - WA

**Best Restaurant – Regional**

Riversdale Estate, Hobart, TAS

**Best Retail Liquor Outlet**

9/11 Launceston City, Launceston - TAS

**Best Sporting Entertainment Venue**

Hotel Darwin, Darwin - NT

**Best Suite/Apartment Hotel**

Fraser Suites, Perth - WA

**Best Superior Accommodation**

PARKROYAL Darling Harbour, Sydney - NSW

**Best TAB Licensed Venue**

The Newmarket Tavern, Newmarket - VIC

**Best Tourism Initiative**

National Wine Centre, Adelaide - SA

**Chef of the Year**

Damian Brabender, OTIS Dining Hall Canberra - ACT

**Employee Excellence in Service - Accommodation Division**

David Wells, Hilton Darwin - NT

**Employee Excellence in Service - General Division**

Anneliese Grazioli, Hot Tamale, Darwin - NT

**Front of House Employee of the Year - Accommodation Division**

Nikolas Adams, Stamford Plaza Melbourne - VIC

**Front of House Employee of the Year - General Division**

Kurtis Bosley, Woollahra Hotel, Woollahra - NSW

**Hotel Industry Rising Star**

Matt Clifton, MNT Investments/Donny's Bar, Sydney - NSW

**Johnnie Walker Hall of Fame**

Mark Robertson OAM, VIC

**Outstanding Achievement in Training**

Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley, Lovedale - NSW

**Outstanding Community Service & Achievement**

The George Tavern, Greenhills - NSW

**Overall Hotel of the Year - Accommodation Division**

The Henry Jones Art Hotel, Hobart - TAS

**Overall Hotel of the Year – Metropolitan**

State Buildings, Perth - WA

**Overall Hotel of the Year – Regional**

Prince Alfred Hotel, Ipswich - QLD