



MEDIA RELEASE

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A STIRLING PERFORMANCE IN THE ADELAIDE HILLS

The Stirling Hotel in the Adelaide Hills has been awarded the honour of being named **South Australia's Best Overall Hotel in 2015** at this year's AHA|SA Hotel Industry Awards for Excellence.

Since its renovation in 2008, The Stirling Hotel has taken out a total of nine awards across all of its major departments, including its accommodation, bistro, retail outlet, functions and restaurant. This year is no exception, with The Stirling Hotel winning the category of Best Restaurant (joint winner with 2KW).

"The Stirling Hotel has proven yet again that they are well ahead of the game in terms of presentation, innovation, food, beverage and service excellence," said AHA|SA General Manager Ian Horne.

"The Stirling Hotel is constantly evolving to suit the needs of the consumer. An outstanding and very popular venue with a very high standard across all of its major facets, it is a clear standout and very worthy of this important recognition".

"Whether it is a casual meal of pizza from the pizza oven in the bistro, or an 8 course degustation in The Grill restaurant, you can be confident you will receive a great experience, every time."

This year saw the introduction of a new category for **Best Small Venue**, which acknowledges the quality and popularity of this growing venue type. **Clever Little Tailor** on Peel Street has won this award, being recognized for its stylish interiors and charming atmosphere, knowledgeable and friendly bar staff, and impressive range of wines, beer and spirits.

It was a successful night for the RD Jones Group with their recently redeveloped hotels, **The Moseley** and **The Gully Public House & Garden**, both winning multiple awards. Highlighting the value in being progressive and evolving to meet changing customer needs, these venues are stunning examples of contemporary venues which take advantage of their surrounding environments.

But it's not only just the newest most contemporary venues that were acknowledged at tonight's awards. The 150 year old Victoria Hotel in Strathalbyn has taken out the award for the **Best Bistro Casual Dining – Country**. The judges were impressed with the large menu choice and use of many local products, and also its outstanding customer service. Steeped in history and charm, the Victoria Hotel embodies all that is great about country pubs and hospitality.

The 2015 AHA|SA Hotel Industry Awards for Excellence was held on Tuesday, July 28, in The Arena, at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre. Over 800 people attended this premier industry event, with entertainment provided by Anthony Callea, and hosted by Hamish McLachlan.

All winners from the AHA|SA Awards will now go on to compete in the **National AHA Awards** to be held in Brisbane on September 14, 2015.

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WINNERS
2015 AHA | SA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

1. **Mid-Range Accommodation**
Sundowner Hotel Motel, Whyalla
2. **Apartment/Suite Accommodation**
Miller Apartments Adelaide
3. **Superior Hotel Accommodation**
Crowne Plaza Adelaide
4. **Deluxe Hotel Accommodation**
The Playford Adelaide
5. **Bistro /Casual Dining – Country**
Victoria Hotel, Strathalbyn
(Hotel Victor, received a Judges commendation)
6. **Bistro /Casual Dining – Metropolitan**
The Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg Joint Winner
The Highway Joint Winner
7. **Restaurant – Accommodation Division**
The Playford Adelaide
8. **Restaurant – General Division**
2KW Bar & Restaurant Joint winner
The Stirling Hotel Joint winner
9. **Bar Presentation & Experience – Country**
Port Lincoln Hotel
10. **Bar Presentation & Experience – Metropolitan**
Publishers Hotel
(Apothecary 1878 received a Judges commendation)
11. **Best Outdoor or non-enclosed facility**
The Gully Public House and Garden, Tea Tree Gully
12. **Live Music Venue**
Governor Hindmarsh Hotel HALL OF FAME for the 2nd time
13. **Entertainment Venue**
The Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg
14. **Sporting Entertainment Venue**
The Highway
15. **Community Service & Support**
Vine Inn Barossa, Nuriootpa

- 16. Marketing & Promotion – Accommodation Division**
Lakes Resort Hotel
- 17. Marketing & Promotion – General Division**
The Gully Public House & Garden, Tea Tree Gully
- 18. Tourism & Regional Promotion**
National Wine Centre
- 19. Environmental Practice & Energy Efficiency**
Crowne Plaza Adelaide
- 20. Gaming Venue – Country**
Eyre Hotel, Whyalla
- 21. Gaming Venue – Metropolitan**
Royal Oak Hotel, North Adelaide
- 22. Function Operation/Facility – Specialist & Accommodation Division**
Adelaide Oval
- 23. Function Operation/Facility – General Division**
Lion Hotel, North Adelaide
- 24. Retail Outlet**
East End Cellars
(The Stirling Hotel received a Judges Commendation)
- 25. Small Venue**
Clever Little Tailor
- 26. Redeveloped Hotel – Accommodation Division**
Miller Apartments
- 27. Redeveloped Hotel – Country**
Pretoria Hotel, Mannum
- 28. Redeveloped Hotel – Metropolitan**
The Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg
- 29. Staff Development & Training – under 100**
Strathmore Hotel
- 30. Staff Development & Training – over 100**
Stamford Plaza Adelaide
- 31. Apprentice Development & Training**
Warradale Hotel
- 32. Hotel Industry Rising Star Award**
James Alexander, Port Lincoln Hotel
- 33. Best Overall Hotel**
Stirling Hotel

2015 AHA | SA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE WINNERS

Best Mid-Range Accommodation is the Sundowner Hotel Motel, Whyalla

Judges were very impressed with the Sundowner from the moment they drove in. Neat, tidy and well maintained grounds provide a lovely welcome to this venue. The Sundowner boasts 37 well-appointed rooms that are set aside from the hustle and bustle of the main venue. The facilities are exceptional and above standard. The dining facilities are fantastic and they also offer room service. It's a one stop shop for travelers to the Whyalla region. The customer service is highly rated making it a very well deserved winner in this category.

Best Apartment/Suite Accommodation is the Miller Apartments Adelaide

This is the third consecutive win in this category for Miller Apartments, who are a wholly SA owned and operated business. The lovely blend of a heritage building with a modern refurbishment results in a hotel that offers a delightful experience for guests. It offers Hotel Style with the convenience of a serviced apartment. Located in the very heart of Adelaide, rooms are pleasantly quiet whilst being close to the action. The service is exceptional and the frontline staff display excellence in customer service.

Best Superior Hotel Accommodation is the Crowne Plaza Adelaide

A first time nominee and winner, the Crowne Plaza Adelaide offers 308 contemporary rooms and suites, many with balconies overlooking leafy Hindmarsh Square. The rooms are well appointed and the customer service, a standout. The hotels food and beverage are exceptional and the hotel also boasts many function and leisure facilities.

Best Deluxe Hotel Accommodation is The Playford Adelaide

The Playford Adelaide is a member of the MGallery collection. Its unique personality and story are experienced by guests through its architecture, interior design and services. Constant improvements have kept this hotel at an outstanding level. With 182 rooms in total, including 72 larger suites, each is superbly appointed, including balconies. The food and beverage offering is also exceptional.

Best Bistro /Casual Dining – Country is the Victoria Hotel, Strathalbyn

The Hotel Victor, Victor Harbor has been given a judges commendation.

The Victoria Hotel, Strathalbyn was a deserving winner in this competitive category. The bistro produces over 1000 meals per week to locals and visitors and boasts the #1 rating on TripAdvisor amongst its town peers. The menu offers a large choice and uses many local products. The atmosphere is warm and cozy and the customer service is amazing. Their dedication to training is evident from the moment you walk in the door. A brilliantly run operation.

Best Bistro /Casual Dining – Metropolitan is The Highway AND The Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg (Joint Winners)

The newly redeveloped **Moseley** provides premium food and beverage for all ages. It has a light and airy ambience and the diverse menu has something for everyone. From pizzas to steaks, the dietary conscious and the standard pub fare. The service goes with this and the extensive beverage menu compliments the package.

The Highway Hotel is ahead of its class with its bistro providing a varied, seasonal menu and excellent service. A bustling, vibrant atmosphere greets you at the door and the bistro offers unique dining experiences to keep the customers engaged. The Highway is constantly striving to be better and the feedback they receive from their customers is positive.

Best Restaurant – Accommodation Division is The Playford

The Playford Adelaide takes out this award for the fifth year in a row and receives state Hall of Fame recognition. Its world class cuisine using South Australian ingredients provides a terrific showcase to travelers and locals. The commitment to food and wine partnering adds another dimension, with an extensive offering from the many SA regions. The service matches this excellence. Their motto is to 'exceed their customers expectations', and this was experienced by the judges.

Best Restaurant – General Division is 2KW Bar & Restaurant AND The Stirling Hotel (Joint winners)

The new 2KW Bar & Restaurant oozes the “wow” factor, not just for its location but its amazing commitment to stunning cuisine with a high standard. Nick Finn and the team excel on all levels and are recognised for their eternal commitment to fresh, local, different and tasty. The customer service compliments this and it has become a new gem in Adelaide’s dining landscape.

For the second year, The Stirling Hotel has confirmed its place as a destination South Australian Restaurant. Its fresh, varied, seasonal menu and extensive wine list along with brilliant service has created a reputation for this hills venue.

Best Bar Presentation & Experience – Country is the Port Lincoln Hotel

The Port Lincoln Hotel is an excellent venue with a great bar menu, helpful staff and a wonderful ambience. Not only is it top of its class in regional South Australia, it would stand up amongst its peers in the CBD. Sharkys Bar boasts great live entertainment and caters for a wide demographic. With a diverse menu, TAB and SA lotteries facilities and large plasma 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 & Experience – Metropolitan is the Publishers Hotel

(Judges commendation for the Apothecary 1878)

This was a very tough category for judges this year. The brand new Publishers Hotel excels in bar presentation and service. It was a worthy winner with its extensive beverage offering and superior delivery and service. The operator’s passion is evident and guests are indulged with superior quality. Guests are treated to a cosy, glamorous venue with a contemporary style. A little gem tucked away in the west end of Adelaide with a massive future. A standout and well deserved winner of this award.

Best Outdoor or non-enclosed facility is The Gully Public House and Garden, Tea Tree Gully

This exciting renovation to the old Tea Tree Gully Hotel is a breath of fresh air. The extensive addition has created a welcoming space to this 160 year old hotel. The outdoor area makes the most of a running creek and hill surrounds with all the modern conveniences patrons expect of modern hotels. It’s trendy, warm, inviting and contemporary and offers a diverse experience for all generations and demographics. Complimented with a great menu and excellent service the Gully is an outstanding winner in this class.

Best Live Music Venue is Governor Hindmarsh Hotel HALL OF FAME (2nd)

(Judges commendation for The Royal Oak)

The Gov has an amazing 7 State Hotel Awards and 2 National Hotel Awards in this category. Tonight they win their second Hall of Fame recognition also, the most awards won by any nominee in South Australia.

Between the regular local bands playing in the front bar and the world-class music featured in the venue, The Gov really is Adelaide’s home of live, original music. Since June 2007, more than 500 different artists have graced their stages and live music can be enjoyed most days of the week. The Gov also boasts a fresh and exciting menu and beverage selection along with friendly and professional staff.

Best Entertainment Venue is the Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg

This is the second award for the Moseley. Judges were very impressed with this hotel. A sensational venue - fresh, different and attention to detail. With its relaxed vibe and comfortable seating areas, upstairs at the Moseley also has the ability to transform into an entertainment mecca on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, often hosting some of Adelaide’s best DJ’s. The Moseley caters for a diverse audience and the crowds are flocking in.

Best Sporting Entertainment Venue is The Highway

The Highway is a venue synonymous with sporting events. They offer a variety of contemporary comfortable spaces for guests, whatever their passion. The lounge deck and bar is a substantial space that caters for major sporting events and telecasts including AFL, NRL, UFC, Racing and many others. The Highway support many local and grass root sporting clubs and are also dedicated to regular sporting fundraisers. The food, beverage and service all contribute to producing an amazing sporting entertainment venue.

Best Community Service & Support is The Vine Inn Barossa

The Vine Inn Barossa continues to show over and above commitment to its local community. From local sporting institutions, to the support of social issues, assistance to disadvantaged families, through to educational support for kids and employment of local staff and contractors. The past 12 months has seen the Vine Inn contribute over \$50,000 in major sponsorships. Their particular passion this year was to assist the Social Justice Fund and a charity golf day raised in excess of \$4000. The Vine Inn Barossa is a venue which offers continued Community Service & Support, not just via the parameters of its constitution, but by its actions. Well done to this amazing hotel.

Best Marketing & Promotion – Accommodation Division – Lakes Resort Hotel

The Lakes Resort Hotel continues to be on the ball with its marketing and promotion. They understood the need to boost their marketing budget in 2014 and the results have paid off for them. The campaigns to break into younger markets and present the hotel as a premier and dynamic entertainment venue were a success. A well organised marketing plan within each hotel department and a sound back end with informative analytics provided a great basis for the hotels success.

Best Marketing & Promotion – General Division is The Gully Public House & Garden, Tea Tree Gully

First time winners in this category, the Gully Public House & Garden are commended for their efforts in marketing alongside its rebranding of this historic hotel. The marketing approach is sensational, focussed and extensive, with clear objectives and targets that have been achieved. A great future outlook for this up and coming hotel. The results are obvious and the commitment to marketing clear.

Best Tourism & Regional Promotion is the National Wine Centre

Situated on the edge of Adelaide's stunning Botanical Gardens, the National Wine Centre showcases the Australian Wine Industry brilliantly. Visitors are able to experience the winemaking process from the vine to the bottle through an interactive Wine Discovery Journey. Visitors can dine in the café or take a guided tour. In April 2014 they rebranded the café as the 'Wined Bar'. Here the general public are welcome to taste 120 of Australia's finest wines and experience comprehensive tastings with qualified professionals. They work closely with the SA Tourism Commission and host a wide range of organised tour groups. The National Wine Centre has become a 'must see' destination for those visiting from interstate and overseas.

Best Environmental Practice & Energy Efficiency is the Crowne Plaza Adelaide

The Crowne Plaza Adelaide is committed to sustainability, and achieving over and above compliance with environmental practice and energy efficiency in the hotel. From their broacher green/waste/recycling/energy plans they also have established operational mechanisms to make them environmentally responsible and all measures have been put in place to ensure the hotel complies and operates to deliver a responsible and efficient outcome. They are diligent and dedicated to their approach and a well-deserved winner in this category.

Gaming Venue – Country is the Eyre Hotel, Whyalla

The Eyre Hotel gaming room is constantly being updated. The staff are trained in all aspects of responsible gaming and work closely with Gaming Care to ensure a pleasurable gaming experience. The renovated room incorporates the opulent looks of the 50s/60s, offers the latest gaming machines and a comfortable atmosphere.

Best Gaming Venue – Metropolitan is the Royal Oak Hotel, North Adelaide

Recent renovations to the Royal Oak Hotel have created a superior gaming room, that has been a refreshing change to the venue. Modern styling meets old world charm at the venue, which also provides a good mix of machines. The Royal Oak engages well with its customers and is a responsible venue utilising the services of Gaming Care. The staff are warm and friendly and the overall hotel facilities make this an award winning venue.

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

Adelaide Oval has earned its reputation as the pinnacle events and functions venue in Adelaide. It boasts an extensive range of facilities coinciding with brilliant food and beverage offerings. Whether for an AFL luncheon, a charity fundraiser or a private event, the Oval provides amazing facilities and service to match. The food is exceptional and compliments the wonderful surroundings. The venue is very well managed and dedicated to excellence.

Best Function Operation/Facility – General Division is the Lion Hotel, North Adelaide

The Lion Hotel continues to excel in functions and events. A polished venue offering 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. A classy venue that ensures those 'special needs' are met, makes The Lion a well-deserved winner in this class.

Best Retail Outlet is the East End Cellars

(Stirling Hotel received a Judges Commendation)

This impressive refurbishment in the East End has redefined liquor retail outlets. Its commitment to quality and service is paramount. The wine offering is extensive and the passion evident. Boasting exceptional customer service, a terrific layout and commitment to selling good products that suit each customer, the Tasting Room delivers what customers are looking for.

Best Small Venue is the Clever Little Tailor

The Clever Little Tailor was one of the first to start it all on Peel Street. A superb venue with a great offering, it has a small footprint that entices a good crowd. It offers a great range of wines, beers and spirits and the bar staff are extremely knowledgeable on all their products, and are eager to please and make you feel welcome. A lovely small bar that is quaint and charming all around.

Redeveloped Hotel – Metropolitan is The Moseley Bar & Kitchen, Glenelg

The RD Jones Group in conjunction with ABEO Design and Studio Nine Architects have taken this venue to a new level. In 2014, the venue known as The Dublin was transformed with renovations commencing to transform the Irish themed pub into a beachside destination of choice. The redesigned free flowing space is light and airy, creating a relaxing atmosphere with wonderful views. The renovation has invigorated the venue and combined with the excellent service and terrific food and beverage offering, this hotel is a winner. A destination venue that caters for many.

The Miller Apartments Adelaide have been awarded Best Redeveloped Hotel – Accommodation Division and The Pretoria Hotel, Mannum have been awarded for Best Redeveloped hotel – Country.

Best Staff Development & Training – under 100 goes to the Strathmore Hotel

The Strathmore Hotel continues a long standing commitment to staff training and development. The hotel places a large emphasis on in-house training on a regular basis including order of service, wine and gaming training. The hotel also goes beyond standard training and development practises with initiatives such as their mentoring programs.

Best Staff Development & Training – over 100 goes to the Stamford Plaza Adelaide

The Stamford Plaza Hotel partners with many organisations such as le Cordon Bleu, Adelaide Hospitality and Tourism School and TAFE SA in training of staff. They have revised their hiring policies to give preference to hospitality students for roles that offer career progression throughout the hotel. They also regularly hire students on work placements and internships in all areas across the hotel. A revised performance management and development system creates clear key performance indicators, enabling staff to understand what is required to obtain their next promotion. These programs have led to an 8.5% decrease in the staff turnover rate.

Best Apprentice Development & Training goes to Warradale Hotel

The Warradale has shown an enormous commitment to training apprentices, especially through their kitchen. Staff performance and development is monitored on a daily basis and the Head Chef meets one-on-one with each regularly. The cookery apprentices will receive training across all kitchen sections and careful planning across the group sees a good balance of first and final year apprentices. They also encourage apprentices to compete in competitions and industry based skill events.

Hotel Industry Rising Star Award goes to James Alexander, Port Lincoln Hotel

Well done to James on winning this prestigious award. The judges commended his personal dedication to the success of The Port Lincoln Hotel and his leadership and commitment.

Entrants in this award must be aged 26 or younger and be 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. James will now go forward to the AHA National Awards to be held in Queensland in September.

Best Overall Hotel is the Stirling Hotel

Since its renovation in 2008, the Stirling Hotel has taken out a total of nine awards across its major departments including Accommodation, Bistro, Retail and Restaurant. The Stirling has proven yet again that they are well ahead of the game in terms of its presentation, innovation, food, beverage and service excellence. The Stirling hotel is constantly evolving to suit the needs of the consumer. An outstanding and very popular venue with a very high standard across all of its major facets, it is a clear standout and very worthy of this important recognition.