

Media Release
1 August, 2011



For immediate release

Top Ratings for Geelong Wine Halliday cements Geelong's status as iconic region

Geelong Wine continues to extend its status as an iconic and dominant force in the Australian wine industry with local wineries receiving unprecedented, outstanding ratings in the newly released Halliday Australian Wine Companion 2012 edition. More than 81% of Geelong wineries reviewed gained a four plus star rating. In addition, 45% of reviewed wineries achieved the highest possible 5 star rating for "outstanding winery" – an increase of 10% from 2011.

Commonly referred to as Australia's wine 'Bible', the annual Halliday Wine Companion is recognised as the definitive guide to Australian wine. It is compiled by James Halliday, Australia's foremost wine judge and industry commentator.

Geelong Winegrowers Association (GWA) marketing executive, Lyndsay Sharp said the results firmly cemented Geelong's status as a dynamic powerhouse in Australian wine.

"Geelong Wine stands tall against the best - connoisseurs from around the world now seek Geelong's offerings out - it has evolved into a multi-award winning wine region of renowned diversity and innovation which commands attention on the national and international stage," Mrs Sharp said.

"The exceptional representation at the top end of Halliday Wine Companion ratings categorically showcases and reinforces the calibre of the grapes, winemakers and wines of the Geelong region," she said.

Specific highlights in the 2012 Halliday Wine Companion include:

- 13 Geelong wines showcased in Halliday's 'Best of the Best' list, featuring the highest rated wines in Australia of each varietal.
- 45% of reviewed Geelong wineries were listed as maximum five star rating – 'Outstanding Winery'.
- 15% of reviewed Geelong wineries were listed as 4.5 star rating.
- 21 % of reviewed Geelong wineries were listed as 4 star rating.

"To have that many local wineries classified as being in the upper echelon of Australian wine endorses what most of us in Geelong have known for a long time – some of the best wines in this country are literally in our own back yard,"

Mrs Sharp said a unique feature of the Geelong Wine region was that it comprised three dynamic sub regions – The Bellarine, Moorabool Valley and Surf Coast - each boasting its own unique 'terroir'.

"The sub regional influences are reflected in the tremendous diversity of wines emanating from the Geelong Wine region. Whilst the backbone of Geelong Wine 'heroes' has always comprised chardonnay, pinot noir and shiraz, in recent years other varietals such as Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Riesling and Cabernet Sauvignon - as well as a broad range of sparkling wines have emerged as celebrated showpieces for the region."

Mrs Sharp said many of the top rating Geelong wines would be showcased at participating wineries in the upcoming Toast to the Coast Festival, Melbourne Cup weekend, October 29 and 30.

"The annual Toast to the Coast wine, food and music festival celebrates all that is great about Geelong wine – the Geelong wine industry pulls out all stops during the weekend to ensure patrons sample, savour and celebrate with them!"

For further information about Geelong wine – or the Toast to the Coast Festival, www.winegeelong.com.au or www.toasttothecoast.com.au

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