
A WORD FROM VICKI MAYELL (PRESIDENT)

📷 WA Hospitality Celebrated at the 59th Gold Plate Awards

The 59th Gold Plate Awards brought together 500 guests at Crown Towers Grand Ballroom on Monday, 27 October 2025, for a night of celebration, connection, and well-earned recognition.

Hospitality professionals from across WA—from the Kimberleys to the Great Southern Region—gathered to reward venues that continue to deliver an excellent dining experience. So many are worthy, but unfortunately, not every entrant can be awarded.



“This event is a chance to pause and applaud the incredible work happening across our industry,” said Catering Institute President Vicki Mayell. “It’s always inspiring to see the passion and dedication that drives WA hospitality.”

🏆 Award Highlights:

- **Prix d’Honneur:** This year awarded to Airirang Korean BBQ & Silks Restaurant at Crown Resort. Awarded to venues winning three their category for 3 consecutive years and maintaining the standard in the 4th year.
- **Premier’s Award:** Presented by Hon. Don Punch MLA to **Nobu**, recognised for consistent excellence.
- **Chair of Judges Award:** Presented to **Lime 303** in Albany for regional creativity and standout hospitality.

This year also marked the return of the **WA Bartender of the Year** after a 17-year absence—an exciting addition that was enthusiastically received. Held on Sunday 5 October at Pourhouse – Stories, the event saw finalists complete a written test and craft two signature cocktails, with **Dilmah Tea Elixirs** as the inspiring ingredient.

With the 60th anniversary on the horizon, excitement is building for what promises to be a landmark celebration. There’s growing hope that it will also see the return of the much-loved **Chef of the Year**—a chance to spotlight the creative forces behind the industry’s most memorable dishes.

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“A Cautionary Tale: What the UK’s Hospitality Crisis Means for Australia”

In the heart of London, once-bustling pubs now sit shuttered. Michelin-starred kitchens echo with silence. The UK’s hospitality sector—long a cornerstone of culture and commerce—is facing a reckoning. Since April 2025, over 1,100 venues have closed their doors, casualties of a perfect storm: rising wages, vanishing government support, and mounting personal liabilities for owners.

The crisis is not just economic—it’s emotional. Restaurateurs are being pursued for debts under personal guarantees. Staff shortages have become endemic. And with the cost of living soaring, diners are staying home, leaving tables empty and futures uncertain.

Australia watches from across the globe, not immune to the tremors.

The Parallels Are Uncomfortable

- **Wage pressures:** Australia’s hospitality wages are rising, and while fair pay is essential, sudden hikes without offsetting support can destabilize small venues.
- **Talent drain:** Like the UK, Australia faces high turnover and burnout, especially in regional areas.
- **Consumer caution:** Inflation and housing stress are reshaping discretionary spending, with dining out often the first to go.

But Australia Has a Choice

Unlike the UK, Australia still has time to act. The sector can pivot from reactive to resilient—if it listens.

1. Invest in wellbeing

Mental health workshops like those in Perth this summer—IGNITE, Mental Health First Aid, and art therapy sessions—shouldn’t be fringe offerings. They must be embedded in hospitality culture, from onboarding to leadership training.

2. Champion flexible models

Venues can reduce trading days, shift to high-margin menus, or explore hybrid formats (e.g., catering, pop-ups, chef collaborations) to diversify revenue.

3. Protect owners from personal risk

Legal education and financial literacy must become standard. No chef should lose their home over a lease clause they didn’t understand.

4. Celebrate and elevate

Awards like the Gold Plate and Gourmet Escape aren’t just accolades—they’re lifelines. They spotlight excellence, drive bookings, and restore pride. Australia must continue to invest in recognition and storytelling.

A Call to Action

The UK’s crisis is a warning, not a prophecy. Australia’s hospitality sector is rich with talent, tradition, and tenacity. But without strategic foresight, it risks following a similar path.

Let this be the moment we choose differently.

Sources: Morning Advertiser – UK Hospitality Budget Warning; The Caterer – Hospitality Insolvency Surge; BBC News – Hospitality Debt Crisis; Australian Bureau of Statistics – Labour Mobility;

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - 185 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE: SANDALFORD WINES

Long time Catering Institute member and multiple Gold Plate winner Sandalford Wines are marking a significant anniversary this year. It's 185 years since their Swan Valley estate was founded in 1840, coinciding with both European settlement in the burgeoning colony of Perth and the birth of Western Australia's world-famous wine industry.

Queen Victoria granted John Septimus Roe, Western Australia's first Surveyor General, 4,000 acres of land on the riverbanks at West Swan in honour of his 57 years of service to the Commonwealth. He named the property Sandalford after a priory in Berkshire, England. - his original home. Sandalford became the Swan Valley's pioneering agrarian estate with cropping, cattle grazing, vegetables and extensive vineyards and fruit orchards.

An early emphasis was on table grapes for the local market. Muscats, Malagas, Frontignacs, Chasselas and Ohanez, a thick-skinned Spanish grape which proved highly suitable for export, were harvested by hand.

A horse drawn lorry collecting the full cases supported the labour of picking. Table grapes positioned in open, overflowing jarrah boxes were carted to metropolitan markets the evening of the day they were packed. Sandalford's export grapes were the 'aristocrats of the vineyard.'

Roe was the first of the Swan Valley vignerons to engage overseas markets and pioneered the use of cork dust as a means of preserving grapes during the long sea transits.

Commercial winemaking accelerated during the 1940s after World War II. Migrants began to come to the Swan Valley after the first war, and the second wave was particularly auspicious for the wine industry as the immigrants brought new knowledge and techniques. The estate flourished and wines produced from its vines satisfied the requirements of the local community and indeed further afield as the region's reputation grew.

The 1990s heralded a new era for Sandalford Wines. Western Australia's Prendiville family, already immersed in tourism and hospitality, successfully acquired Sandalford and devised a plan to reimagine the classic Western Australian brand. After spending millions of dollars redeveloping the company's facilities, their vision of a business that not only produces wines of distinction but also has the perfect synergy of wine and tourism has come to fruition.

Today, Sandalford is a legacy of wine and cuisine reimaged as it proudly continues its tradition of exceptional hospitality, fine wines and unforgettable dining experiences lead by a talented team headed up by Ross Pamment, senior wine maker, and Alan Spagnolo, executive chef.

Having won no less than 47 Gold Plate Awards since 2008, Alan and his team are* hoping 2025 will see more gleaming Gold Plate Awards welcome diners to Sandalford.

"This year, we are thrilled to be finalists in 11 categories*. Our current Spring 2025 Menu is all about colour, energy, and renewal through heirloom vegetables, pristine WA seafood, and the very best produce from our growers and farmers."

Alan hopes guests will taste Western Australia on the plate: the sweetness of Torbay asparagus from Albany, the boldness of Southern Forest honey, the vibrancy of heirloom tomatoes and peppers and the richness of our state's Tiger Prawns.

"Dining at Sandalford Estate right now is all about enjoying our vineyard gardens and food that celebrates both the season and the region - offered with the word-class service and hospitality we are known for, of course!"

AND TO ADD TO 185 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE: SANDALFORD WINES

51 Gold Plate Awards in total now

Sandalford Wines, received the ultimate recognition for its cuisine, service, wine and overall hospitality on 27th October winning FOUR (4) CATEGORIES at the 2025 Gold Plate Awards:

RESTAURANT:

[🍴] Licensed Casual Dining - Metro

[🍴] Modern Australian Dining

[🍴] Tourism Restaurant

VENUE CATERERS:

[🍴] Wedding - Large



Gold Plate Bartender of the Year Returns After 17 Years – And What a Comeback It Was! – Adam Keane

After a 17-year break, I'm proud to say the Gold Plate Bartender of the Year Competition returned in full force this October—and what a day it was.

Held at POURHOUSE, Stories in Yagan Square, the event brought together 16 of WA's most talented bartenders for an afternoon of intense competition, creativity, and community spirit. The venue was ideal: spacious enough for bartenders to work their magic and for guests to enjoy the atmosphere.

We kicked off at 2pm on Sunday, October 5th, and while the day was not without its challenges—including a power outage that lasted over an hour—the energy never dropped. Everyone leaned in, adapted, and kept the show running. That resilience is exactly what makes our hospitality community so special.

The Format

Finalists were selected based on their Signature Cocktail entries, which had to feature Dilmah Tea and incorporate products from our generous sponsors. On the day, each bartender faced four rounds:

- A written test to assess industry knowledge
- A blind tasting challenge
- A classic cocktail round
- Signature cocktail presentation

It was a gruelling three hours, and every finalist brought their A-game.



The Judges

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our judging panel: Andy Mac, Steve Lambetsos, and Scott Grieve. Each of them tasted and scored over 34 cocktails—a massive effort. Also, a big shoutout to Gary Bird, who helped with marking and scoring, and to our MC Brendan Scott Grey, who kept the crowd engaged and the energy high throughout.

The Winners

Professional Category

- 🥇 Sujit KC – Lucky Chan's Laundry & Noodlebar
- 🥈 Riley Horspool – Light Years
- 🥉 Jack Beighton – The Old Synagogue

Sujit took home the \$1,000 prize, and all finalists received gift bags filled with sponsor ingredients and merchandise.

Next Generation Category

- 🌱 Genevieve Adlam – Somewhere in the Park

She received a \$500 prize and well-deserved recognition for her creativity and composure



Gold Plate Bartender of the Year Returns After 17 Years – And What a Comeback It Was! – Adam Keane

Our Sponsors

This event wouldn't have been possible without the support of our incredible sponsors. Their products were featured throughout the competition and helped elevate the cocktails to a world-class standard.

Special thanks to:

Dilmah Tea
Liquid Mix
Fever Tree
Ketel One Vodka
Johnnie Walker Black Label
Sailor Jerry Spiced Rum
Monkey Shoulder
Four Pillars Gin
Bombay Sapphire
Bacardi
Herradura
Altos Tequila
Woodford Reserve
Cointreau
Kota Pandan Liqueur
Three Foxes Range
Joseph Carton Liqueurs

Looking Ahead

Bringing this event back after nearly two decades was a personal milestone, and I couldn't be happier with how it turned out. The talent, the energy, and the support from our community were nothing short of inspiring.

I'm already looking forward to next year—and with the momentum we've built, I believe the Gold Plate Bartender of the Year will once again become a staple in WA's hospitality calendar.

For any questions, feedback, or interest in future events, feel free to reach out:

 adam@thedrinksexperience.com.au |  0402 092 399



Gold Plate Awards 2025 Winners

WA BARTENDER OF THE YEAR

Next Generation Winner

- Genevieve Adlam – Somewhere in the Park

Professional Winner

- Sujit KC – Lucky Chans Laundry & Noodlebar

FRONT OF HOUSE EXCELLENCE AWARD

- Damien Speyer – Rambla on Swan

EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH

- Rambla on Swan, SOUTH PERTH

FRESH PRODUCE AWARD

- RT Café & Restaurant, GERALDTON

WINE LIST OF THE YEAR

- Bistro Guillaume, BURSWOOD
- C Restaurant, PERTH

BEST LICENSED CAFÉ

- Chapels on Whatley, MAYLANDS

UNLICENSED CAFÉ

- 8 Yolks, SUCCESS

RESTAURANT WITHIN A TAVERN/PUB

- Rose & Crown Hotel, GUILDFORD

BEST COFFEE SHOP

- Finlay & Sons, INGLEWOOD

BEST HIGH TEA

- Stewart's Restaurant, UPPER SWAN

LICENSED INDIAN

- Punjab Indian Restaurant, INNALOO

LICENSED CHINESE

- Grand Orient @ The Melbourne Hotel

LICENSED ASIAN

- Nobu, Crown Perth, BURSWOOD

UNLICENSED ASIAN

- Dusit Cottesloe, COTTESLOE

BEST PIZZA

- Ischia on Claisebrook, EAST PERTH

TAPAS/SMALL BAR

- Wharf Restaurant - Sanbashi Izakaya, Broome

BEST BREWERY

- Phat Brew Club, WEST PERTH

RESTAURANT/CAFE WITHIN A WINERY – METRO

- Pinelli Estate Winery Restaurant, CAVERSHAM

RESTAURANT/CAFÉ WITHIN A WINERY – REGIONAL

- Wise Winery, EAGLE BAY

EUROPEAN/MEDITERRANEAN DINING

Casual

- Modo Mio, Crown Perth, BURSWOOD
- Alba – Stories, PERTH

SEAFOOD DINING

- Art of Seafood, EAST PERTH

CASUAL SEAFOOD DINING

- The Cray Seafood & Grill, BELMONT

FAMILY DINING – METRO

- Bailey Brewing Co., HENLEY BROOK

FAMILY DINING – REGIONAL

- Rustlers Steakhouse, ALBANY

STEAKHOUSE/BBQ OR GRILL

- Elliott's Steakhouse, MARGARET RIVER

Gold Plate Awards 2025 Winners

BEST BREAKFAST - METRO

- Swell Mullaloo Beach, MULLALOO

BEST BREAKFAST - REGIONAL

- Wood & Stone, MANDURAH

MODERN AUSTRALIAN DINING

- Sandalford Wines, CAVERSHAM

VENUE CATERER'S AWARD

WEDDING LARGE

- Sandalford Wines, CAVERSHAM

WEDDING SMALL

- Novotel Vines Resort, THE VINES

CORPORATE

- Perth Convention & Exhibition Centre, PERTH

TOURISM RESTAURANT - REGIONAL

- RT Café & Restaurant, GERALDTON – Modern Australian

TOURISM RESTAURANT - REGIONAL

- Sandalford Wines, CAVERSHAM – Restaurant within a Winery

NEW RESTAURANT

- Madeleine on Beaufort, HIGHGATE – Licensed Dining Metro

NEW RESTAURANT - ASIAN

- Karla – Stories, PERTH – Licensed Asia

LICENSED CASUAL DINING – METRO

- Sandalford Wines, CAVERSHAM

LICENSED CASUAL DINING – REGIONAL

- El Toro, MARGARET RIVER

LICENSED DINING – METRO

- La Bastide, SHENTON PARK

LICENSED DINING – REGIONAL

- Blue Manna Bistro, DUNSBOROUGH
- Bali Hai Café & Restaurant, BROOME

FORMAL CONTEMPORARY

- Bistro Guillaume, BURSWOOD

PRIX D'HONNEUR

- Arirang Korean BBQ, KARRINYUP – New Wave Dining
- Silks, Crown Resort, BURSWOOD – Licensed Chinese

CHAIR OF JUDGES AWARD

- Lime 303, ALBANY

PREMIERS AWARD

- Nobu, BURSWOOD



The Gold Plate Awards Gala– Mon 27th October 2025 – Crown Resort - Gallery



The Gold Plate Awards Gala– Mon 27thOctober 2025 – Crown Resort - Gallery



MARCH 26–28, 2026: MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL COFFEE EXPO

The **Melbourne International Coffee Expo** is a major event in the Australian hospitality calendar, especially for coffee professionals, enthusiasts, and businesses. Here's a concise description based on your newsletter content:

Event Details

- **Dates:** March 26–28, 2026
- **Location:** Melbourne

What to Expect

The expo is a gathering point for the coffee industry, featuring:

- Exhibitions from leading coffee brands, equipment suppliers, and service providers.
- Opportunities to discover the latest trends, products, and innovations in coffee.
- Networking with industry professionals, baristas, roasters, and café owners.
- Educational sessions, tastings, and demonstrations.

Why Attend?

- Stay ahead of industry trends and technology.
- Connect with suppliers and potential business partners.
- Gain insights from experts and thought leaders in the coffee and hospitality sectors.

Upcoming for 2026

- **MICE2026** will feature extended hours ("MICE after dark") to accommodate café owners and hospitality professionals, and a new "Trip to Origin" area to celebrate coffee farms and pro
- For the latest updates, visit the [MICE official news page](#).



HOSPITALITY EVENTS – THE WORLD

Gulf Host

- **Dates:** January 26–30, 2026
- **Location:** Dubai, UAE Dubai World Trade Centre

Description: In an era driven by innovation, fierce competition, and ever-evolving consumer demands, the hospitality and foodservice equipment industry in the MENA region stands unrivalled. And there's no finer arena than GulfHost 2026 to discover groundbreaking solutions and strike transformational deals. As the largest and most influential exhibition of its kind in the region, GulfHost 2026 will showcase a diverse array of cutting-edge foodservice equipment and solutions reshaping the hospitality landscape.

Over five dynamic days, GulfHost 2026 will unite key industry players, including internationally renowned exhibitors, global foodservice consultants, QSR and hospitality leaders, top retailers, and culinary experts.



World Chefs Congress 16 – 19 May 2026

Get ready for Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2026, taking place **16–19 May 2026** in Newport, Wales. This edition's theme, 'Pasture, Passion, Plate,' celebrates the journey of food from its origins to the final dish and highlights how food connects us all—from farm to fork, across borders and cultures.

Network and expand your professional bonds with the most influential culinary body worldwide. Don't miss out on this global event that contributes to the shaping of future food.

About Worldchefs Congress & Expo

Since 1928, Worldchefs Congress & Expo has united a global community of chefs and cross-industry innovators to explore the past, present, and future of the culinary trade.

Connect with thought-leaders and key influencers from progressive, relevant industries for an immersive program designed to promote collaboration, build relationships, and set light to a shared vision for the future of hospitality.

1. <https://www.worldchefscongress.org>



Protecting your Mental Health while Working in Hospitality

The Burnt Chef Project

Provides free mental health support, therapy and workplace training for hospitality professionals. Offers e-learning, resources, and podcasts focused on reducing stigma and improving wellbeing in the industry.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU REACH BOILING POINT.

Reaching out early can make all the difference. A conversation today could help you start to sort things before they build up.

The Burnt Chef support service is here to help you work through challenges, whether it's an in-the-moment crisis, ongoing stress, relationship worries, or practical issues like legal or financial advice.



You're not alone. Whatever you're facing, we're here to listen and help you find a way forward.

[Contact Us | Burnt Chef Project](#)

Mental Health Professionals Network Webinars

Free interactive webinars on a variety of mental health topics, including workplace wellbeing and multidisciplinary care. Suitable for hospitality managers and staff seeking broader mental health education

Register for upcoming webinars.

[MHPN | Mental Health Professionals' Network](#)

Mental Health First Aid for Hospitality (Healthy Mind Menu)

Two-day face-to-face training for hospitality workers, teaching how to support colleagues and customers in crisis, recognise warning signs, and provide practical assistance. Led by instructors with hospitality experience.

Recognising **common mental illnesses** in hospitality settings

Understanding **risk factors and stigma** associated with mental health

How to **approach and communicate** with someone experiencing mental health challenges

Supporting someone with **anxiety, depression, or stress-related burnout**

Techniques to **de-escalate distress** in high-pressure situations

How to talk to someone experiencing **suicidal thoughts**

Helping someone through a **crisis or traumatic event**

Addressing **drug and alcohol-related conversations** in hospitality

Encouraging someone to **seek professional support**

A **practical action plan** for mental health conversations

How to Access: Express interest and register for upcoming courses. [Course info](#)

CCIWA Warns Extra WA Public Holidays Will Hit Small Businesses Hard

The addition of two extra public holidays in Western Australia will deliver a direct hit to small and family businesses already being squeezed by rising costs.

Under the changes, Easter Saturday will become a holiday, and a new weekday holiday will be added in September, with both dates attracting penalty rates.

WA will now have the second highest number of public holidays in the nation.

CCIWA Chief Economist, Aaron Morey, said the move will hit businesses and the broader economy.

"We calculated that the two extra public holidays will cost WA businesses more than \$100 million each year," he said.

"Small and family businesses will now have a tough choice to make. Do they open on these new public holidays? Or do they close their doors and lose a day of revenue?"

Mr Morey said the decision comes at a time when WA businesses were already doing it tough.

"Base wages have climbed dramatically in the past few years, along with every other cost you can think of, and it's having a real impact on smaller businesses," he said.

"Around 10% of hospitality businesses in WA have closed their doors in the year to April.

"The addition of two more public holidays is rubbing salt in the wound for these business owners."

Mr Morey said the changes could also have unintended consequences for workers.

"Many businesses will decide it's simply too expensive for them to open on these extra public holidays, and for casual workers like university students, that's two extra days they won't have the opportunity to make an income," he said.

"Even those who are able to add a surcharge would still be left out of pocket, because a 10% or 15% surcharge doesn't come close to covering wages that are, on average, 250% above base rates."

CCIWA supports the government's decision to bring WA's other public holidays in line with the East Coast.

"This move will make it easier for any business that works across multiple states or those who have clients or suppliers on the East Coast," Mr Morey said.

"With the Government's decision on public holidays finalised, it is now vital that they turn their attention to relieving the pressure on small and family businesses, including by lowering the highest payroll tax burden in the country."

Source: CCIWA Media Release 14.09.25



Do you agree with the CCIWA article? How will it affect your business and what are your plans when the 2 new public holidays to ensure that your business survives? We will happily print any feedback about what affects you in your hospitality business.

Catering Institute of Australia News and Events

CATERING INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA(WA) MEMBERSHIP

Join the Catering Institute today and become part of a vibrant community dedicated to excellence in the hospitality industry. As a member, you will enjoy exclusive benefits, including discounts to The Finalist Night and the Gala Event. These prestigious events offer unparalleled networking opportunities and celebrate the achievements of our industry's finest.

Join today as a Business or Multi-Business Membership. Entry fees already paid as a non-member will have the member discount credited. Or join as an individual member, as well as discounts to the Gala event, if you are interested in becoming a committee member this might be the right fit for you.

Plus, your membership fees may be tax deductible, making it a smart investment in your professional growth. Don't miss out on the chance to connect, learn, and thrive with the Catering Institute. Sign up now and be part of the future of hospitality!

For more information contact the [Catering Institute of Australia \(WA\)](#)

IMPORTANT CATERING INSTITUTE DATES

9th February 2026 – Official Launch of the 2026 Gold Plate Awards. Diamond Jubilee – 60years of the Gold Plate Awards

Late March to end of June - Round 1 judging

Mon 20th July 2026 – Finalist Cocktail Event. Venue to be confirmed

Late July – End of September Round 2 judging

Mon 26th October 2026 – Gala Event Gold Plate Awards – the ultimate night and presentation of the Gold Plates to winner for each category.

Other events to be confirmed Chef of the Year and WA Bartender of the Year



PHOTOS AVAILABLE

Just a note to all who attended the Gold Plate Awards 2025 – photos are available on the Catering Institute website and they have been uploaded to Facebook. If you would like a high-resolution photo email a request to Janice janice.ciawa@outlook.com.

Do you have a story?

As we approach the 60th anniversary of the Gold Plate Awards—our Diamond Jubilee—there's never been a more important time to support this iconic event. The diamond is a symbol of strength and endurance, qualities that have defined our industry and this award for six decades. We hope to maintain these values as we celebrate this milestone.

We invite everyone in the hospitality community: Do you have memories of past Gold Plate Awards? Special moments, funny stories, or reflections on how the event has shaped your journey? Please share your memories with us! Your stories help keep the spirit of the Gold Plate alive and inspire the next generation of hospitality professionals.

Please support the Gold Plate Awards, especially as we celebrate this remarkable 60th anniversary. Let's honour our shared history and look forward to many more years of excellence together.

Also, don't forget feedback or suggestions. Send contributions to info@cateringinstitute.com.au

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