

Winners of the 2015 Australian Women in Wine Awards announced

Women in wine in the spotlight

The winners of The Fabulous Ladies' Wine Society's inaugural Australian Women in Wine Awards were announced Tuesday 17th November 2015 via a web broadcast that was streamed to live events taking place all over Australia.

Four award winners were named, which AWIWA chair and founder of The Fabulous Ladies' Wine Society Jane Thomson said are now the first of what is expected to become an annual awards program.

The awards and their winners are:

Winemaker of the Year, Sponsored by Wine Ark - Rose Kentish, Ulithorne Wines (McLaren Vale) Viticulturist of the Year, Sponsored by Wine Australia - Irina Santiago-Brown, Inkwell Wines (McLaren Vale) Owner / Operator of the Year, Sponsored by Cellarhand - Rebecca Duffy, Holm Oak Vineyards (Tasmania) Workplace Champion of Change, Sponsored by Vinomofu - Dianne Laurance, Laurance Wines (Margaret River) "On behalf of the entire Board of the AWIWA we extend our congratulations to all the winners. The field was very tight, as we had an exceptionally high calibre and number of entries - something that exceeded even our own expectations for this, our first year," said Ms Thomson.

The judging panel for the awards included all the members of the AWIWA Board - Oliver's Taranga CEO and winemaker Corrina Wright, Stargazer Wines owner & winemaker Samantha Connew, eminent wine writer Jeni Port, esteemed wine marketer Toni Carlino, Maygar's Hill owner & viticulturist Jenny Houghton, as well as AWIWA Chair and The Fabulous Ladies' Wine Society founder Jane Thomson.

Samantha Connew, long time advocate of women in the wine industry and the first female Chair of the Royal Sydney Wine Show said it had been a privilege to be involved the awards process and that she "couldn't be more excited about the evolution of these awards."

For Corrina Wright, vocal champion of gender equality in the industry, it is the prospect of now having a framework with which to offer women support that has made her involvement in the AWIWA so fulfilling. "I want other women in the industry to know that there is a network out there to lean on when they encounter issues (of a gender nature). There are people to reach out to. You are not alone."

In what's believed to be an industry, and possibly Australian, first the winners of this year's awards were announced via a video broadcast. Events were held all over Australia to watch the broadcast and to allow the maximum number of women in wine to be included in the announcement and celebrations.

The full broadcast can be viewed [here](#).

The Australian Women in Wine Awards would not be possible without the support of our individual award sponsors (as above) and partners – especially our Gold Partners: Wine Business Magazine, the Winemakers Federation of Australia and The Truffle Man.

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Contacts

Jane Thomson
0413682377
mailto: jane@fabladieswine.com