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Orana named Restaurant of the Year in The Advertiser Food Awards

- by: FOOD EDITOR SIMON WILKINSON
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Chef Kenji Ito, from Kenji Modern Japanese restaurant, the winner of Best Asian in the 2014 Advertiser Food Awards.

Source: News Limited

ORANA, the pioneering restaurant that introduces diners to the distinct flavours of the Australian bush and beach, took out top honours in the prestigious The Advertiser Food Awards.

In a year of tremendous growth and change in the state's dining culture, particularly in the city, it was perhaps appropriate that the Vittoria Coffee Restaurant of the Year accolade went to a venue that is less than 12 months old.

More than a dozen awards were presented to chefs, owners and other food heroes during a ceremony at Keith Murdoch House attended by a who's who of Adelaide eateries.

Zonfrillo said the award was great recognition for a project he described as "a huge gamble in every sense".

"I think it was the most ridiculous thing we could have done in the style of food, with limited budget... for all of us as a team was a huge gamble," he said. "It's fantastic everyone's enjoyed it and we're really happy people are enjoying it."

He added that he was thrilled to be part of Adelaide's growing restaurant scene.

Other big winners included Jordan Theodoros, whose vibrant, generous cooking at Peel St was recognised with the Best Chef title, and Simon Bryant, named Vittoria Coffee Adelaide Food Legend for his tireless work in supporting a variety of causes and co-directing this year's Tasting Australia festival.



Chianti Classico owners Maria and Frank Favaro with chef Toby Gush.

Source: News Corp Australia

The Best Italian Restaurant was long-time favourite Chianti Classico, while Best Asian went to the innovative Japanese diner Kenji.

More than 180 people attended the awards and were treated to Italian-themed treats, including, as is tradition, something cooked by the previous year's Chef of the Year, Duncan Welgemoed, who is about to move across town from Bistro Dom to his new venture Africola.

The awards are judged by our food team, who have visited more than 200 venues this year for the reviews that appear in The Advertiser Food Guide, also launched last night.

Orana, also named the Best New Restaurant, stood out with its new approach to the sometimes challenging flavours of native ingredients.

Scottish-born chef Jock Zonfrillo and his young team use leaves, seeds, berries and flowers in a spectacular set-piece dinner in which the flavours are distinctly Australian but always delicious.

The succession of up to 20 tiny starters alone has enough “wow” moments for a full meal. Wine matches, from talented sommelier Josh Picken, rise to the challenge of keeping step with it all.

Theodoros was lauded for staying true to the Peel St mantra of “cooking the food we eat at home”. This translates as a big-hearted, boldly flavoured collection of dishes that are more about pleasing customers than any form of cheffy ego. The collection of Thai salads, Middle Eastern braises and other treats appeal equally to food lovers and those just wanting a ripping night out.



Simon Bryant (right) has been acknowledged for his work with Tasting Australia alongside Paul Henry (left).

Source: News Corp Australia

While Bryant is perhaps best known for his TV show with Maggie Beer, *The Cook and the Chef*, he is a passionate advocate and supporter of many food-related causes, including sustainable seafood and recognition for local producers.

These interests were reflected in the themes behind this year’s Tasting Australia festival that he co-directed with Paul Henry, the first to be run by local management.

Details of all award winners will be published in a special edition of Taste in The Advertiser on Wednesday.

THE WINNERS

Vittoria Coffee Restaurant of the Year and Best New Restaurant
(Restaurant) Orana

A thrilling adventure from start to finish in a menu that shows off Australia's native ingredients like never before.

Chef of the Year

Jordan Theodoros (Peel St)

The diner comes first as Theodoros turns out food that is bold, brilliant and good for the heart in more ways than one.



Chef of the Year. Jordan Theodoros from Peel Street Restaurant.

Source: News Corp Australia

Vittoria Coffee Adelaide Food Legend

Simon Bryant

This indefatigable chef, author and advocate is an inspiration to all those who care about what they eat.

Best Italian

Chianti Classico

A long-time favourite has revamped its approach in the kitchen with spectacular results. Try the crab pasta and you will see what we mean.



What a classic. Chianti Classico has been named Best Italian in The Advertiser Food Award. Photo: Naomi Jellicoe

Source: News Corp Australia

Best Asian Kenji

Whether it is exquisitely crafted sushi or something more creative, Kenji's Japanese cooking has no peer across all the genres in this category.



Kenji Modern Japanese restaurant has won best Asian restaurant in the 2014 Advertiser Food Awards. Source: News Limited

Best Indian

Cinnamon Club

Re-ignite your love of Indian cooking with street food, curries and more at this suburban newcomer.



Cinnamon Club owners Harsh Kumar and Jwala Pratap Singh. Photo: Mike Burton
Source: News Limited

Best Regional Restaurant

Hentley Farm

Restaurant of the Year in 2013, Hentley Farm captivated us again. If anything, its connection to the surrounding region is more focused than ever.



Hentley Farm in the Barossa Valley.
Source: Supplied

Best Community Restaurant

Jarmer's Kitchen

The welcoming, practical kind of eating place that every neighbourhood would covet from one of our best-known restaurant names.

Best Hotel Dining

Daniel O'Connell

The nose-to-tail cooking of Phil Whitmarsh goes from strength to strength but you'll also love what he does with vegies. Check out the SA-only wine list.

Best lunch in the CBD

Peel St

The cooking of Jordan Theodoros is pitch-perfect at lunchtime, as is the warm, efficient service.



Crispy Fried Snapper Wings, Cucumber relish and Jeow at Peel St. Photo: Mark Brake

Source: News Corp Australia

Best Café

Flinders Street Project

Great bread, top coffee, a small selection of fast, innovative dishes. What more could you want in a cafe?

Best Service

Jo Reschke (d'Arry's Verandah)

The diminutive Jo's combines genuine sweetness with a steely determination that ensures husband Peter's food is delivered at its best.

Best Bar

The Apothecary 1878

New bars are popping up all over the city but, in one of our hardest-fought categories, we favoured the classic grace of this old favourite.

Best Wine List

FermentAsian

Back-to-back wins for Grant Dickson's wine list that is a joy to read as well as to drink from.

■ The Advertiser Food Guide 2015, with more than 150 restaurants reviewed, as well as top bars, cafes, food shops and markets, will be available from Friday for \$14.95 at newsagents, book stores and the News Shop, 31 Waymouth St, Adelaide.

■ Starting Saturday. Collect 14 taste.com.au mini cookbooks, just \$2 when you buy The Advertiser and Sunday Mail. Find out more. (<http://www.advertiser.com.au/hungryforideas>)

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josh

14 hours ago

Hoose Gow on Magill Rd is worth a try, Delicious meats on charcoal.