

## Academy of Food & Wine Service announces the winners of the 2010 Awards for Excellence



From left to right Academy of Food & Wine Service Patron Lord Thurso; John Robertson, regional development manager at Whyte & Mackay; David Galetti, head sommelier, Le Gavroche, London.

**David Galetti**, head sommelier at Le Gavroche, London, has been announced as this year's winner of the Academy of Food & Wine Service (AFWS) Dalmore Award for Excellence.

The prestigious award, sponsored by Dalmore brand owner Whyte & Mackay, is given each year to an outstanding personality in the hotel and catering sector. David, who was presented with a bottle of the flagship Highland malt whisky The Dalmore 18, was given the award for his contribution to sommelierie and outstanding wine and food matching skills.

"This was a big surprise and I'm very pleased," said David. "My aim has always been to please our customers and give them the best experience and the best service I can. For me it is all about simplicity and making people feel comfortable without being intrusive."

As part of his prize David receives a personal tasting of Dalmore malt whiskies conducted by master distiller Richard Patterson. The Dalmore distillery contains some of the oldest maturing stock of any Highland distillery.

The Dalmore Award was presented as part of this year's Academy of Food & Wine Service's annual Awards for Excellence, held on 22 October at London's Innholder's Hall. Other winners were as follows:

### **Company of the Year**

Awarded to a company that has shown outstanding support throughout the year in the Academy's bid to raise the profile of front-of-house as a profession and demonstrate the importance of training and developing new front-of-house talent.

**Winner: Hyatt Regency London ? The Churchill**

### **College of the Year**

Presented to a college that stands out as providing young people in the industry with outstanding support and encouragement.

**Winner: Stratford-upon-Avon College, Warwickshire**

### **The Virgin Rising Star Award**

This award, sponsored by Virgin Limited Edition, recognises an up and coming star and future leader in hospitality service. This year's winner was praised as being someone who inspires a high degree of loyalty from his team, as being tireless in his efforts to

achieve service excellence through training, and for being a natural people manager and team builder. He receives a 'stage' at the Roof Gardens in London.

**Winner: Richard Hurley, conference and events services manager, The Langham London**

#### **Louis Jadot & Savoy Educational Trust Sommelier Scholarship**

Supported by the Savoy Educational Trust, this travel scholarship offers an educational visit to the Burgundy region and first hand practical experience in advanced technical vineyard and winery procedures.

This year's winner was singled out as being an excellent ambassador for her hotel and for the role of sommellerie and as someone who as well as holding down a demanding position has found time to gain her Diploma in Wine and teach at Academy seminars.

**Winner: Louise Gordon, head sommelier, The Westbury Mayfair, London**

#### **The Savoy Educational Trust Phillip Thornton Award**

Given in recognition of the late Phillip Thornton's achievements over a lifetime in the industry. Phillip was a past trustee of the Savoy Educational Trust and this award was set up by his family to further the understanding of food and wine service. The award offers the winner work experience in several departments of the Andaz hotel, London.

This year's winner joined her hotel team from university in July 2008 and since then has become a pivotal member of the front-of-house team, gaining her intermediate WSET award and using her knowledge to inspire those around her.

**Winner: Katharina Praus, Isle of Eriska Hotel, Argyll**

#### **The New Zealand Winegrowers Award**

The winner received a trip to Berlin to attend the New Zealand Wine Trade Tasting where he met the winemakers, tasted over 200 premium New Zealand wines and attended a masterclass by Gordon Russell, senior winemaker at Esk Valley Wines and the 2007 New Zealand Winemaker of the Year.

**Winner: Romain Audrerie, Hotel du Vin, Edinburgh**

#### **Ramos Pinto Travel Award**

This award offers a two-day trip to the Douro Valley in Portugal to explore the quintas of Ramos Pinto including a guided tour of the vineyards, a hosted dinner and the chance to taste the Ramos Pinto range and tread grapes in the traditional granite lagares.

**Winner: Anja Gottwald, sommelier, The Carnegie Club, Skibo Castle, Sutherland**

#### **The Academy of Food & Wine Service Award for Journalism**

A new award for this year and presented to the journalist who has helped further the understanding of front-of-house as a career and profession.

This year's winner gamely took part of the UK Sommelier of the Year competition alongside the sommelier semi-finalists completing a wine tasting, questionnaire and role-play scenario. Her subsequent article successfully revealed the pressure of competing in a national competition at this level and the skill and depth of knowledge required to succeed.

**Winner: Tina Gellie, Decanter**

The Academy also granted honorary fellowships to two people who have shown outstanding support for craft skills training and the encouragement of young people in the industry. These were Derek Picot, regional general manager, Jumeirah Carlton Tower, London, and Jason Goddard, general manager of The Roof Gardens, London.

For further press information and pictures please contact Linda Pettit at Tilburstow Media Partners on 01737 82372, mobile 07973 789853 or email [Linda@tilburstowmedia.co.uk](mailto:Linda@tilburstowmedia.co.uk). Alternatively call Helen Glen at the Academy of Food & Wine Service on 020 8661 4646 or email [Helen@acfws.org](mailto:Helen@acfws.org).

#### **Editor's notes**

#### **About the Academy of Food and Wine Service**

The Academy of Food and Wine Service (AFWS), established in 1988, is the professional body for front-of-house service. It is

dedicated to improving the status and awareness of food and beverage service as a viable career choice, raising standards across the industry, and encouraging strong and effective teamwork between front-of-house and back-of-house. The Academy can offer advice and training to anyone following, or considering, a career as a sommelier, wine waiter, waiter, bar manager or restaurant manager. [www.afws.co.uk](http://www.afws.co.uk).

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