

## Academy reveals 2012 Award for Excellence winners

**Brasserie Blanc** and **TGI Friday's** emerged as the winners of two new Academy of Food & Wine Service (AFWS) awards designed to highlight and reward establishments achieving excellence in service.

At the Academy's Annual Awards for Excellence, held yesterday in London's Vintners' Hall, Paul Taylor, general manager of TGI Friday's, Luton, was given the first of a new Food Service Award. Taylor received praised for his enthusiasm and expertise in delivering outstanding levels of service as well as his ability to inspire new team members to adopt his standards.

The Award for Wine Service went to Jason Wright, general manager of Brasserie Blanc Opera Terrace in London's Covent Garden. Wright was recognised for helping the recently opened restaurant stand out in London's West End by offering high levels of service and wine knowledge and for establishing an excellent front of house team.

AFWS vice chairman Paul Breach said: "These two new awards really reflect what the Academy is all about - excellence in front of house service. We have two worthy winners of the first of these awards, picked from six sector winners, and it's a reflection of improving levels of service in the UK's hospitality sector that both of these winners are from high street chains."

The Academy also gave its first Diamond Award to Pride Of Britain Hotels CEO Peter Hancock, an "outstanding personality in the UK hotel and catering industry who has done much to promote the industry and encourage those within it".

The full list of award winners in the AFWS 2012 Annual Awards for Excellence were:

**AFWS Award for Excellence** - Laura Rhys, head sommelier, Hotel TerraVina, Southampton

**Company of the Year Award** - De Vere Hotels

**Pub Wine List of the Year** - The Swan, Salford

**Virgin Rising Star Award** - Amelia Thornhill, The Bell, Fetcham

**The Worshipful Company of Innholders & Maison Louis Latour Sommelier Award** - Stefan Neumann, The Fat Duck, Bray

**Phillip Thornton Award** - Kiri Rayner, The Cavendish London, SW1

**L'Academie de Lanson Taste Award** - Romain Crozat, Galvin at Windows, London W1

**Fine Dining Food Service Award** - Luigi Ferrara, Babylon, Roof Gardens, London W8

**High Street Food Service Award** - Paul Taylor, TGI Friday's, Luton

**Pub Dining Food Service Award** - Juliet Stone, The White Lion, Suffolk

**Fine Dining Wine Service Award** - Kathrine Larsen, Orrery, London W1

**High Street Wine Service Award** - Jason Wright, Brasserie Blanc Opera Terrace, London WC2

**Pub Dining Wine Service Award** - Rozanne Stringer & Melissa Doyle, The Bear, Oxshott

**AFWS Food Service Award:** Paul Taylor, general manager, TGI Friday's, Luton

**AFWS Wine Service Award:** Jason Wright, general manager, Brasserie Blanc Opera Terrace, London WC2

**Diamond Award:** Peter Hancock, chief executive, Pride of Britain Hotels

**AFWS Fellowships** were presented to: Conor O'Leary, director of f&b, Hyatt Regency London; Nigel Wilkinson, Boutinot Wines; Stephen Mannock, Edge Hotel School.

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High resolution pictures of the winners can be downloaded at <http://www.afws.co.uk/newsroom/gallery/>

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### **About the Academy**

Founded in 1988, the Academy of Food & Wine Service is the professional body for front-of-house service, dedicated to improving the image of front-of-house service as a viable career choice as well as improving the standard of food and beverage service in the UK. The Academy does this through training programmes, master classes, events, PR and high profile competitions.

In its role as the professional body, the Academy works with individuals, colleges, employers and sponsors to achieve its aims of developing the renaissance of front-of-house service in the UK. Currently the Academy has over 1,500 members. [www.afws.co.uk](http://www.afws.co.uk).