

## Janine Swales wins 2013 Restaurant Manager of the Year



2013 UK Restaurant Manager of the Year Janine Swales with chief judge Peter Avis

**Janine Swales of BaxterStorey** has won the Academy of Food & Wine Services 2013 UK Restaurant Manager of the Year, following a closely fought final in London yesterday [7 October].

Stephen Morrison of La Vallée Blanche, Glasgow, was the runner-up.

The judges were unanimous in their decision: 'Janine is the consummate restaurant manager - she has strong interpersonal and technical skills, she is creative, capable and business-minded. She ticked every box for the panel of judges,' commented chairman of judges Peter Avis, restaurant manager at Babylon, Roof Gardens, and former winner of the title.

Swales, 33, was delighted with her win. 'I'm so chuffed. I really didn't see that coming,' she said. 'I can now relax and enjoy the evening!'

South African-born Swales studied foodservice management at the University of Cape Town before coming to the UK. Her previous work experience includes a stint at London's Le Caprice as a commis chef, before embarking on a career in management. She joined BaxterStorey seven years ago and is now general manager of the Tottenham Hotspur Training Centre in Enfield where she oversees catering for both players and directors,

The three-phase competition culminated in eight of the UK's best restaurant managers battling for the title during a day of tasks at the Westbury Hotel. These included a Dragon's Den-style scenario in which the competitors pitched a business plan for their own pop-up restaurant, a restaurant scenario with difficult customers to deal with, and a challenging food and wine matching exercise.

The UK Restaurant Manager of the Year is organised by the Academy of Food & Wine Service and sponsored by Livebookings. The competition sets out to find Britain's top restaurant manager who can not only demonstrate top-class people skills and service skills, but also possesses good business knowledge, management skills and the ability to think on their feet.

John Croft, AFWS executive director said: 'We are delighted to have Janine as our titleholder this year, she will be a fantastic ambassador for the Academy and for the profession. It was particularly pleasing to receive entries from a wide range of establishments from across the board including pubs, foodservice, casual dining and fine dining. The skills of the restaurant manager apply to any establishment, regardless of which sector they operate in and the competition now reflects this.'

Judge Stephen Motion, director of group sales at associate sponsor Livebookings said: 'At Livebookings we work closely with front-of-house teams across the hospitality sector, so we are pleased to support a competition that highlights the importance and skills of the restaurant manager. We would like to congratulate Janine, she is a fantastic winner, but also say well done to all the competitors all of which were of a very high standard.'

As part of her prize Janine wins a stage in some of Daniel Boulud's Dinex Group of restaurants in New York gaining a unique insight into the running of various departments. The winning establishment also wins a 12-month subscription to Livebookings.

Runner-up Stephen Morrison receives a place at the renowned business summer school run by the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne, sponsored by the Savoy Educational Trust.

Last year's winner was Peter McAlister, restaurant manager at the Culloden Estate & Spa in Belfast.

The results were announced last night [7 October] at a Restaurant Manager of the Year Gala Dinner at the Westbury Hotel. During the dinner three industry personalities were invited to join the Academy's Restaurateurs Hall of Fame, sponsored by Champagne Lanson. These were restaurateur and consultant Michael Gottlieb, world famous sommelier and hotelier Gerard Basset and Brian Clivaz, chairman, Langan's Coq d'Or Restaurant.

With thanks to sponsors and supporters Livebookings, the AA Hotel and Restaurant Services, The Westbury Hotel, the Dinex Group, the Savoy Educational Trust, Champagne Lanson, Boutinot Wines and Wenlock Spring Water.

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

#### **UK Restaurant Manager of the Year 2013 finalists**

Shaun Corrigan, Grand Jersey Hotel & Spa, Jersey

Louise Denton, BaxterStorey at the English National Opera, London WC2

Rebecca Galland, The Vineyard, Stockcross, Berkshire

Clement Joseph, Royal Automobile Club, London SW1

Stephen Morrison, La Vallee Blanche, Glasgow

Paul Shanahan, Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons, Oxfordshire

Nola Sheng, The Hawksmoor, Spitalfields London E1

Janine Swales, BaxterStorey at Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, London N17

#### **Judges at the 2013 final**

Peter Avis, Babylon, Roof Gardens

Paul Breach OBE, AFWS

Brian Clivaz, Langan's Coq d'Or Restaurant

David Durack, The Arts Club

Louise Gordon, Jumeirah Carlton Tower, London

Michael Gottlieb, Buell Consulting Group

Rory Kelly-Naughton, Kingsway Hall Hotel

Jane Knight, AFWS

Peter McAlister, Culloden Estate & Spa, Belfast

Stephen Mannock MIH, Wivenhoe House

Ben McEwen, BaxterStorey

Stephen Motion, Livebookings

Ashley Shaw, The Westbury

About the Academy

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 by encouraging teamwork to foster good relations with other industry sectors. 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.

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