

Christchurch/South Island Best of Wine Tourism Awards 2012 Media Release – November 3, 2011

Trail-blazing Tour Company wins International Wine Tourism award

A trail-blazing boutique tour company has won a prestigious International Best of Wine Tourism Award for its work showcasing Central Otago wines.

[Appellation Central Wine Tours](#), which was set up in 1999 when wine making in Central Otago was still in its infancy, has won the award for Wine Tourism Services in the Great Wine Capitals Global Network awards.

It is the second year in a row that Appellation Central Wine Tours has won the regional Christchurch/South Island Wine Tourism Service award but the first time they have been successful in being awarded the international award in their category.

The company specialises in taking small groups and individuals on customised tours around Central Otago's wineries.



"This tour company offers an exceptional wine tourism experience for the novice or more experienced wine consumer, with each tour tailored specifically to meet the needs and interests of the clients on the day, in terms of the detail of commentary and even the wineries visited,"

Chief Judge - Dr Joanna Fountain.



Dr Fountain says the standard of entries in this year's awards was extremely high. This is the second year that the Christchurch | South Island region has had an international winner, with Yealands taking out the sustainability award last year.

This year [Northburn Station](#), a high country sheep station in Central Otago with its own 23ha winery, was judged the best Innovative Wine Tourism Experience in the Christchurch | South Island wine region. The judge were full of praise for the experience on offer at the 13,500ha station where cellar door visitors can taste a selection of wines alongside a delicious selection of canapés made from the best local produce, much of it sourced from Northburn's own organic gardens, orchards and farm.

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“The setting of Northburn Station’s cellar door, overlooking a trout pond and with stunning views towards Lake Dunstan and the Pisa Ranges, and the hospitable welcome received cap off what is a wonderful winery experience where the best of Central Otago food, wine and landscape is on display,” Dr Fountain says.

Canterbury’s Melton Estate won the award for the Best Wine Tourism Restaurant. “Melton Estate are worthy winners in this category this year; they have overcome regional adversity to provide a restaurant and venue offering high quality food and a strong hospitality atmosphere,” Dr Fountain says. “There is little doubt that the presence of Melton Estate is providing real benefits for the local community and Canterbury region as a whole.”

For the second year in a row Yealands Winery has been named as the winner of the regional award for Sustainable Wine Tourism Practices. Dr Fountain says Yealands is an exceptional showcase for best practice in sustainable wine production.

“Every aspect of the winery, vineyard and production at Yealands is focused on premium sustainable wine production and they ably demonstrate their commitment to sustainability in the wine tourism experience they offer,” she says.

Judges also highly commended Nelson Wine Art for “the professional and energetic” work it is doing in promoting the wineries of the Nelson region to the local, national and international community.

Some 46% (295) of New Zealand wineries are located in the Christchurch | South Island wine region, which includes the Waipara Valley, Canterbury, Marlborough, Nelson and Central Otago.

The region has been a member of the Great Wine Capitals Network since 2009. Other members of the network include Bordeaux, Cape Town, Florence, and the San Francisco-Napa Valley. Only one wine region from each country can become a member of the global network.

The coveted Great Wine Capitals Network awards are run annually and honour outstanding wineries and other tourism-related businesses in the Network’s member cities and regions.

The Christchurch | South Island Best of Wine Tourism Awards and the Global Network International Wine Tourism Services trophy will be presented to the international winner and regional winners during the New World Wine and Food Festival taking place in Christchurch on Saturday, December 3.

The festival is a celebration of the South Island region's membership of the network. Fifty of the leading wineries from Central Otago, Canterbury, Waipara Valley, Nelson, and Marlborough will be showcasing their wines. Several wineries from the Mainz | Rheinhessen region in Germany, which is also a member of the Great Wine Capitals network, will also be represented at the festival.