



Australian Gourmet Traveller

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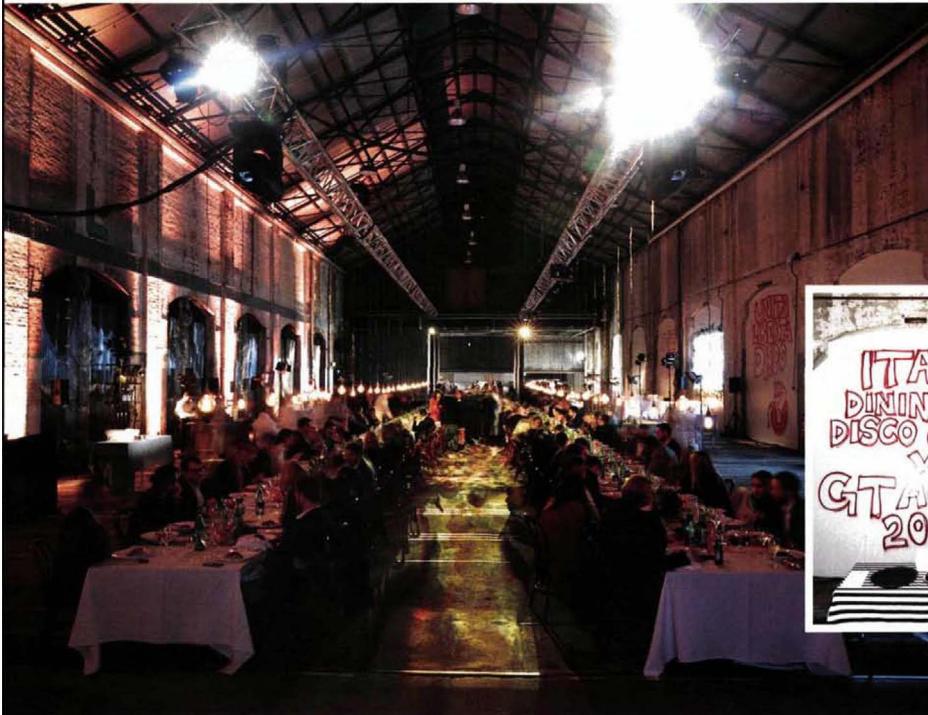


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EVENT



Prize night

It was glamorous yet gregarious, soigné and street – the *Gourmet Traveller* Restaurant Awards honoured Australia's hospitality luminaries in fitting style.

The usually discrete worlds of elite dining and Italian dancing collided in the tastiest of ways at the *Gourmet Traveller* Restaurant Awards last month.

A creative collaboration with the Italo Dining and Disco Club project of Sydney restaurateurs Maurice Terzini and Giovanni Paradiso gave proceedings a cracked-mirror-ball sparkle as Rockpool was named Australia's Restaurant of the Year, Brae's Dan Hunter walked away with Chef of the Year and, in a surprise turn-out, Bennelong won New Restaurant of the Year. "It's a very special award to win," says Bennelong's Peter Gilmore. "It's one of the most coveted awards in the country because it's national."

It was an evening that brimmed with celebration and glammed-up bonhomie. Redfern's Carriageworks was a feast for more senses than one, with the teams from Icebergs and 10 William St putting together a menu that was gutsy and inventive in just the right measure. Natural wines from prosecco producer Zanotto and South Australian vino-provocateur Tom Shobbrook flowed as platters of anchovy grissini and gnocco fritto with speck were ferried around the crowd by a platoon of crisply white-jacketed waiters. And as

the awards got under way in earnest, guests rolled up their sleeves to make the most of radishes and laver cream, steamed artichokes and schmaltz, and mozzarella with black-garlic bread before the main event arrived: seriously luscious, piping-hot roast suckling pig with cime di rapa gratin and roasties.

It was a rocking night. As grand a spectacle as it presented, it was, as they say, one of those success stories that's the result of a lot of small things done well. The contributions from the crack team at Aria Catering, a kitchen led by Icebergs chef Monty Koludrovic and 10 William's Enrico Tomelleri, aperitivi and digestivi fuelled by Campari, Aperol, Four Pillars Gin, Peroni and Fox Beverages, and the support from Ilve, Uniworld, Sydney Kitchens and, above all, the essential sponsorship of major partner Vittoria Coffee, came together to make it a party truly worthy of celebrating the best in Australian hospitality.

The unfailingly glamorous Leila McKinnon cut a dash as host, friendships were forged and renewed over the table and the bar, laughs were had, and the good times (and disco tunes) continued well into the night, fuelled by Negronis and pizza. 

DISCO MAGIC

Clockwise from top left: dinner under way at Sydney's Carriageworks, buffalo mozzarella with black-garlic bread and sorrel; Italo Dining and Disco Club creative directors Giovanni Paradiso (left) and Maurice Terzini.

PHOTOGRAPHY: NIC GOSSAGE & BENJAMIN HANSEN



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PARTY PEOPLE
Clockwise from top left: Peter Gilmore (left) and John Fink of New Restaurant of the Year, Bennelong; tiramisu is served; Phil Wood and Neil Perry of Restaurant of the Year, Rockpool; Outstanding Contribution to Hospitality winner, Joost Bakker; kingfish crudo; (left to right) Aria Catering's Simon Sandall, and Icebergs' Monty Koludrovic and Alex Prichard; Darren Robertson (left) and Mark LaBrooy of Regional Restaurant of the Year, Three Blue Ducks; host Leila McKinnon (left), restaurant guide editor Pat Nourse and GT editor Anthea Loucas; coffee from our sponsors, Vittoria Coffee; DJ Touch Sensitive; Giorgio De Maria with Nicola Calvert (centre) and Kylie Kwong of Wine List of the Year winner, Billy Kwong; chef Matt Moran and McKinnon; Chef of the Year Dan Hunter, of Brae.