

Melbourne scoops national excellence awards

Vue de Monde and Atlantic Group [V] brought home the top awards at the annual industry awards recognising our top performers in the restaurant and catering industry.

THE SYDNEY Melbourne rivalry fires got a good stoking as a result of the announcement of the winners of the two top awards at the annual Restaurant and Catering Australia Savour Awards for Excellence—both from Melbourne.

Shannon Bennett's Melbourne fine diner Vue de Monde was named the Restaurant of the Year while the Atlantic Group [V] was crowned Caterer of the Year.

All up, Victorian operators grabbed 14 of the 35 awards, followed by NSW (11 awards), Western Australia (five awards), Queensland (four awards), and South Australia (two awards) at the award ceremony that was this year held in Canberra, at Parliament House.

Chair of judges, Joanna Savill, said the awards confirmed that Australia is a "formidable player in the international culinary scene". "The competition was tighter than ever this year, and in partic-

ular the judging was very difficult because so many restaurants in Australia can now be considered of a truly international standard," Savill said.

And as the industry puts one of the most challenging 12 months ever behind it, Savill said the industry had shown great resilience. "The restaurant and catering industry has weathered the financial downturn and, like a good soufflé is ready to rise," she said. "Tonight was a great display of the industry's innovative and entrepreneurial spirit."

Shannon Bennett, who recently announced plans to move Vue de Monde to new digs at almost the top of Melbourne's 55-floor Rialto building, wasn't present on the night but said he was honoured the restaurant had again taken the coveted title. "It's an honour to be recognised as a leader in the industry and it really makes all our hard work worthwhile," he said.

"These awards are important drivers of innovation across the industry."



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