

# GOURMET TRAVELLER

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THE OLYMPICS

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# Suite life

Australia's top hotels were celebrated in style at *Gourmet Traveller's* 2016 Hotel Awards, supported by Nespresso.

**There was glamour** and plenty of glitz at Sydney's Primus Hotel for the launch of *Gourmet Traveller's* 2016 *Australian Hotel Guide*, supported by Nespresso, as the cream of Australia's hospitality industry gathered to celebrate the grand reveal of this year's award winners.

It's boom time in the Australian hotel industry, and *GT's* third annual guide features no less than 11 newly opened (or reopened) properties. As reflected by our winners, 2016 is certainly the year of revival and reinvention.

Among the newcomers is the grand \$110 million heritage restoration of Perth's State Buildings, reborn as Como The Treasury, which was awarded the two top gongs of the night, Best New Hotel and Hotel of the Year. "We are over the moon and delighted," said Como The Treasury's general manager Anneke Brown. "It's extremely rewarding for the entire team to win these awards. It will influence many of our guests throughout Australia and from overseas to come to Perth and experience our hotel."

Other winners that have undergone a reinvention included the revamped surfer-motel Halcyon House in Cabarita Beach, which claimed the titles for Best Service and Regional Hotel of the Year, while Sydney's Hotel Palisade took home Best Bar, and The Old Clare Hotel took out the award for Boutique Hotel of the Year.

Melbourne wasn't shy of winners, either: Crown Metropole won Best Pool, Crown Towers took out Large Hotel of the Year and, for the second year running, Grand Hyatt won Best Breakfast.


"Many of tonight's nominees and winners share that same passion for excellence as Nespresso," said general manager of Nespresso Australia and Oceania Loïc Réthoré.

TV personality and journalist Chris Bath kept the energy high as she announced the winners throughout the evening. First up was the prize for Best Minibar, awarded to not one, but six properties, QT Hotels & Resorts, while QT Sydney also snagged the award for Best Club Sandwich.

Among the fans of QT's unique approach was guest speaker John O'Sullivan, the managing director of Tourism Australia (the bar at QT is one of his favourites in Sydney, he told the audience). "What international visitors want to experience at the moment is living like locals. It's the things you can only do in Australia down at Halcyon House, or in Chippendale at The Old Clare," he said. "Thank you for giving us such a great platform to tell Australia's story."

In true *GT* style, food and drink took centre stage. Guests were welcomed by waiters carrying trays of Nespresso-spiked Negronis, which were served alongside canapés such as South Coast lobster on squid-ink crackers and kimchi arancini, prepared by Hotel Primus Sydney's executive chef Ryan Hong. Also on the menu, wagyu sirloin with soy and porcini purée, miso-glazed toothfish with a prawn and papaya salad, and slow-cooked and grilled pork belly with beetroot kimchi. A trio of Nespresso-infused desserts brought the evening to a lavish close (a gold-leaf-topped dark chocolate Martini wagon wheel the highlight).

*Gourmet Traveller* publisher Cornelia Schulze said the magazine's commitment to the finest editorial standards spoke directly to the title's authority and integrity. "No other media brand invests in coverage of the Australian travel industry like *Gourmet Traveller*, whether it be in this guide, where our hotel reviewers travel countrywide and pay their way in search of the nation's 50 best hotels, or our year-round coverage in print and online where we publish the best writers and photographers in the business," she said.

O'Sullivan shared a similar sentiment. "There's a great phrase going around in Australian tourism at the moment that there's never been a more exciting time to be in this country," he said. We couldn't agree more; it's time to get packing. 

## POLE POSITION

From left: guests gather for a sit-down dinner in the lobby of Primus Hotel Sydney.



**HOSTS WITH THE MOST**  
 Clockwise, from top left: The Old Clare Hotel's Timo Bures; chef Ryan Hong; (from left) Event Hospitality & Entertainment's Richard Dobransky, QT Sydney's Rhys Jones, EH&E's Adam Petta, QT Canberra's Paul Scott and EH&E's Michael Monteleone; Como The Treasury's Anneke Brown and Philip Engelberts of PEPR; pork belly entrée; GT publisher Cornelia Schulze (left) and editor Anthea Loucas Boshia; Nespresso-infused desserts; Crown Towers' Shaun D'Cruz and Nespresso's Loïc Réthoré; (from left) Halcyon House's Siobhan and Elisha Bickle, Alessandra Viel and Wanderlust Union's Sophie Baker; Nespresso-spiked Negronis; Tourism Australia's John O'Sullivan.