

# ESCARPMENT GROUP

*Blue Mountains Collection Of Luxury Escapes*

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## **Circa 1876 best in the nation**

Hunter Valley restaurant Circa 1876 is officially the top restaurant caterer in Australia, after winning a gold gong at a prestigious industry awards on Monday [October 28].

The National 2019 Savour Australia Restaurant & Catering HOSTPLUS National Awards for Excellence were held in Brisbane and celebrated the achievements of Australia's finest hospitality businesses which had previously won category awards at a state and territory level.

During the past four years, Circa 1876 executive chef Trent Barrett and his team have won NSW Best Regional Restaurant (fine dining) three times and was named Best Restaurant Caterer (weddings) for three consecutive years and again in 2019. Circa 1876 also took out Restaurant of the year Regional NSW 2018 and won bronze for Best National Restaurant in 2018.

Barrett was "elated" at the win: "It is a fantastic reward for all the hard work and dedication from my team throughout the year and the countless number of hours that go into making these special events for people so memorable, and I could not be prouder of the results and my team.

"The award also highlights just how amazing our local produce and providores are throughout the Hunter Valley for all types of produce that we cannot grow or produce sustainably ourselves in the Circa 1876 kitchen gardens."

He commended all the finalists for making the competition quality of a high calibre and congratulated fellow awardees: "It goes to show how talented the Australian culinary scene really is through this fantastic (R&CA) annual event."

Escarpment Group operations manager Raphael Guillien praised Barrett and the whole Circa 1876 kitchen and wait team for the achievement, which he also attributed to the fresh local produce served, the garden-to-plate philosophy where much of the produce served is grown just metres from diners in the kitchen garden, and the restaurant's fascinating heritage story.

The whole dining experience from whimsical décor to outstanding customer service had also ensured that Circa 1876 was the premier venue for intimate dining and group celebratory occasions such as weddings, he said.

Restaurant & Catering (R&CA) CEO Wes Lambert said the awards were "undoubtedly a highlight of the association's calendar and it is fantastic to be able to acknowledge and celebrate the best

that Australia's hospitality industry has to offer".

"On behalf of R&CA, I want to pay tribute to Circa 1876, who is among the best and most talented our industry has to offer. This year's awards saw again a strong and competitive field and the standard of entries received across all categories was exceptionally high."

Located next to Peppertree Wines, Circa 1876 and The Convent boutique hotel on the same property are part of the Escarpment Group collection of luxury properties which also includes Lilianfels Resort & Spa, Echoes Boutique Hotel, Parklands Country Gardens & Lodges and the famous Hydro Majestic Hotel in the Blue Mountains.

The Savour Australia Hostplus Awards for Excellence is a nationally recognised, independently judged awards program that recognises exceptional service and culinary talent in restaurants, cafes, takeaway and catering businesses across Australia. It provides publicity for hospitality businesses, a chance to network with key suppliers and acknowledges the achievements of hospitality staff.

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**Editor's note:**

Circa 1876 executive chef Trent Barrett is available for interviews