



## Most Admired Wine Brands

# Wine Tourism Awards

As the world gets smaller with more people travelling, so the opportunities to capitalise on people's curiosities increase incrementally.

The story of wine has something to interest virtually everybody – from the tending of vines and growing of grapes which would interest gardeners and anyone with an interest in geography, geology and meteorology to the work in the winery, which would enthral someone with a scientific bent.

Then there is the history and culture surrounding

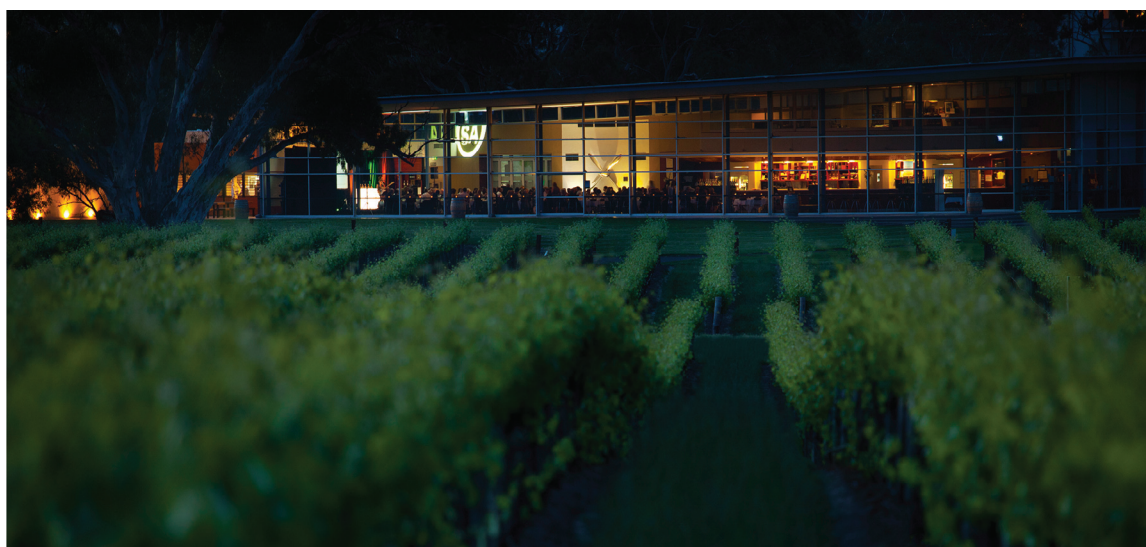
the expertise of vine growing, wine producing, blending and ageing. You really do not have to be an avid wine drinker to find something of interest in a visit to a vineyard and winery.

Wine producers the world over have been quick to see the opportunity of selling wine – along with a lot of other things – and raising awareness of their products and brands by attracting tourists. So, ever vigilant, *Drinks International* launched its Wine Tourism Awards last year.

Our panel of experienced judges chose the following winners.

**Judges:** David Cox, consultant and former head of New Zealand Winegrowers; Jochen Erler, wine writer, consultant and member to the Circle of Wine Writers; Ian Harris, chief executive of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust; Emma Roberts, director Eviva wine consultancy and *Drinks International* editor Christian Davis

## Best Visitor Centre



### Jacob's Creek

The visitor centre is the home of this global wine brand in arguably Australia's most famous wine-producing region, the Barossa valley.

It has already won Best Major Tourism Attraction three years in a row and has picked up awards for Best Tourism Restaurant and Best Tourism Winery.

The judges could not help but be impressed. Over the past year, a leading chef has been appointed to oversee the catering; a bridge has been built as part of the Barossa bike and walking trail; two Mandarin-speaking staff have been appointed due to more Asian visitors; there has been a season of outdoor films; and a second solar tracker and a kitchen garden have been completed.

## Most Innovative Visitor Centre

### Torres

The Miguel Torres winery opened its visitors' centre in 1992 and currently more than 100,000 people pass through its doors every year.

The company says its goal is to "transmit its passion for wine culture and gastronomy" and "awaken emotions and sensations in every one of its visitors".

The centre offers wine tasting courses, cheese and wine pairing classes, cooking classes as well as tours of the vineyard and the winery to explain the winemaking process. The centre provides a "train" for the less fit and mobile, while there are walking tours focusing on the ecological aspect of winemaking.

The centre also organises special activities and one particularly caught the eye of the judges looking for something a little bit different – summer walking tour by night guided, by an astronomer who points out constellations and ending with a tasting of Torres's Celeste wines, which feature star systems on the label.





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### Best Food & Wine Matching



#### La Motte

The La Motte Wine Estate is in one of the most scenic areas of the beautiful Cape winelands. Franschhoek is a couple of hours' drive from Cape Town.

When it comes to food and wine matching this premier estate offers various options, including the five La Motte wines, the three Pierneef wines or all of the wines complemented by fresh rolls and an amuse bouche.

Each item on the menu has a recommended wine and La Motte wines are available by the glass.

A bevy of wine ambassadors take visitors through a tasting developed by the estate's chef and cellar master. There is a Chef's Table where guests are encouraged to work with the chef to develop food and wine combinations.

The estate also does a Winelands Tea where tea and confectionary is served with a glass of sweet or sparkling wine.

### Best Generic Body Wine Council of Ontario

Although the Wine Council of Ontario is not by any standard the largest or best-known generic body, the judges reckoned it punched well above its weight when it comes to telling potential visitors what is on offer if they visit the Canadian state.

It claims to get approximately 1.3 million visitors to its 130 wineries. It uses social media

extremely effectively with more than 5,544 followers on Twitter (@WineCountryOnt) and 26,638 on Facebook (WineCountryOntario). It publishes annually a travel guide with winery listings, touring tips and descriptions of wineries, accommodation and where to eat. This is supported by the user-friendly website which boasts more than 100,000 unique visits a year.

