

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**13 January, 2009**

## **2009 MACQUARIE GROUP SYDNEY ROYAL WINE SHOW 2-5 February 2009**

### **Media invited to attend judging sessions**

Australia's top wine judges are fine tuning their palates as they prepare to critique more than 2300 wines entered in the 2009 Macquarie Group Sydney Royal Wine Show.

The entries represent nearly every wine region in Australia, from the Margaret River in Western Australia to Coal River Valley in Tasmania. 35 trophies and numerous Gold, Silver and Bronze medals will be awarded covering varietal and fortified wines and brandy.

Newly appointed **Chairman of Judges, Iain Riggs**, who took over from James Halliday says the 2009 Macquarie Group Sydney Royal Wine Show is eagerly awaited by industry.

"Being the final wine show of the year the Sydney Royal Wine Show benchmarks the previous vintage whites and two year old reds,"

"I'm elated to see that over 100 first time exhibitors will be vying for Sydney Royal recognition at this year's Show, this represents an increase of 20% in entries for 2009. It is also interesting to note the significant increase in varietals this year, particularly Shiraz, which is now Australia's leading red grape and planted across a wide range of exciting regions," said Mr Riggs.

2009 will see a change in the judging schedule, moving from judging style (medium bodied dry red, fragrant dry white) to judging by varietals (Shiraz, Chardonnay, Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc).

"This brings the show in line with the phasing out of all European generic 'style' names. The Show strives to attract the highest calibre judges, smaller class numbers, Reidel glassware and conditions to ensure the best results," said Mr Riggs.

**Acting Chair of the RAS Wine Committee, Lyndey Milan** is pleased to welcome international guest judge Barry Burton, Chairman of the Hong Kong Wine Society.

"The Sydney Royal Wine show is always a highlight at the beginning of the new calendar year. By constantly reviewing our classes we are able to stay relevant and at the forefront of industry developments. Credibility is all important to the RAS and it is gratifying to see 2355 entries, especially from so many new exhibitors," said Ms Milan.

Sydney Royal represents a stellar history and tradition of champions from the early competitions in the 1800s to the modern day. While the competition structure and award criteria have been refined and improved, in 2009 a medal win still embodies impartial judging standards, outstanding quality assessment and world class analysis.

The Macquarie Group Sydney Royal Wine Show is not only committed to awarding the best of the best, but also ensuring the level of quality is maintained in the years to come particularly through education initiatives.

"The RAS is proud to be hosting, for the first time, the McWilliams Wine Academy Training on Monday 2 February at the Showground. This will see 10 up and comers in the industry benchmark their skills and knowledge against the experts," said Ms Milan.

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A division of the **Royal Agricultural Society of NSW** ABN 69 793 644 351

Sydney Showground, 1 Showground Road, Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127 t 02 9704 1111 f 02 9704 1122 [www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au](http://www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au)

The RAS is also dedicated to ensuring the future of the industry through its involvement with the Wine Communicators of Australia mentoring programme “Young Guns and Gurus” with several participants visiting the judging.

“The Macquarie Group Sydney Royal Wine Show is unique in this respect in giving such an insight into the behind the scenes workings of wine show judging. The aim is to give the participants access to a number of Australia’s premier wine judges in one place and expose them to the judges thoughts on wine quality and industry direction,” said Ms Milan.

**Closed door judging – Media invited to attend  
Monday 2 February – Wednesday 4 February**

Judging, while closed to the public, is open to the media. Media are invited to attend at the following times;

Monday 2	12pm – 4pm
Tuesday 3	11am – 2pm
Wednesday 4	11am – 2pm

Results will be released at 5pm Friday February 6 via [www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au/wine](http://www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au/wine)

Chairman of judges Iain Riggs will be available for interview and picture opportunities.

“The judging panel also includes a selection of local wine makers, writers and educators who bring diverse skills and experience. It is this all encompassing cross section that completes the Sydney Royal Wine Show panel,” said Mr Riggs.

**Open Door Cellar Tasting  
Saturday 14 February 11am – 4pm**

**Hosted by Stuart MacGill  
Wine lover, legendary Australian spin bowler and host of Stuart MacGill Uncorked on Lifestyle Food**

Following the release of results, the cellar doors will open to the public on Saturday 14 February from 11am until 4pm for an exclusive preview of the best wines of 2009. Wine lovers and aficionados can purchase an entry ticket for \$50 which buys unlimited tastings of medal winning wines, a copy of the results catalogue, Sydney Royal medal winning food products and entry to an exclusive Judges’ Tutorial where guests will learn all about the judging system, new varietals and trends, and, most importantly, how to taste wine like a professional.

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au/wine](http://www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au/wine)

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