



Beer Vic Crossland

# WA brewers in bid for glory

International beer awards give local makers a chance to star

Judging of packaged beers for the 18th Australian International Beer Awards is happening now at the University of Ballarat, including Gage Roads IPA, Little Creatures ales, Nail Ale and Stout and Feral White cloudy Belgian-style wheat beer from Western Australia.

Many craft brewers concentrate on kegged beers, and these will be up for judging at the Melbourne Showgrounds from April 27 to 30.

In all, entries from 17 WA craft breweries are among the 622 Australian brews in the annual competition, run by the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria (RASV), in conjunction with the University of Ballarat.

Local brewers bidding for glory include previous trophy and medal winners such as Little Creatures and Gage Roads and smaller operators such as Bridgetown's Blackwood Valley and Ironbark of Caversham.

Last year, Feral triumphed as Champion Small Brewery with five

trophies, four gold medals and a silver and most of the Baskerville brewery's award winners — Razorback barley wine, Hop Hog IPA and White — are in the mix again, as well as some new brews.

Other front-runners must be: Billabong of Myaree, whose coeliac-sensitive beers have won national recognition, putting the inaugural Champion Gluten Free title in its sights; the tiny Blackwood Valley brewery, which earned the Champion Stout title in 2009; and Last Drop of Bedfordvale, Swan Valley's Mash Brewing, Nail Brewing of Perth and Palmyra-based Gage Roads, all gold-medal winners last time.

Not that it's a shoe-in for WA in any category. Eastern States craft breweries are lifting their game, with an increasing number of their beers appearing on bottle shop shelves.

Then there's the foreign contingent to contend with. For the first time, brews from Denmark, Fiji and Belarus join international competitors such as Belgium,

Britain, Chile, the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Brazil, Canada and previous champion beer-winning nations Germany and the US.

With 485 overseas entries making a grand total of more than 1100, it adds up to a massive task for the panel of local and international judges.

Among the visiting experts are Simon Jackson, executive director of the Institute of Brewing and Distilling (UK); Professor Paul Hughes, of Scotland's Heriot-Watt University; Bill Simpson, brewing industry entrepreneur, consultant and researcher (UK); and Jaime Jurado, brewing operations director for the Gambrinus Company (US).

The awards, with 16 trophies including Grand Cha Exhibitor, currently — will be announced presentation dinner in Melbourne on May 20.

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press clip

# Amber beauty is in the eye of the beer holder

By **Emma Brown**

IT IS A tough job but someone has to do it.

Judging for the 18th Australian International Beer Awards is being held at the University of Ballarat this week.

This year, 485 international beers and 622 national brews will be tasted by an esteemed panel of local and international judges.

Those judges include three brewing experts from the United Kingdom plus Jaime Jurado, who is director of brewing operations for The Gambrinus Company in the United States.

Local judge and AIBA chairman Peter Manders

knows his lagers from his ales, having worked for Carlton United Breweries for the past 50 years, the last six as the company's master brewer.

While Mr Manders jokes he has one of the best jobs in the world, he said these awards were taken very seriously.

"(Beer tasting) requires a high degree of concentration and the judges we have here are all professional brewers with a great range of views and experience," Mr Manders said.

"The increasing presence of overseas competitors and the continued strong showing from national entrants ensures the competition

provides a true representation of brewing excellence."

According to Mr Manders, the idea of the awards is to lift the standards throughout the industry through the exchange of information.

The beer is judged by three tasting panels who each assess a different style of beer.

Starting at 8.30am, each taster will try 60 different beers a day, rating it on appearance, aroma, flavour and body.

This year, a total of 16 trophies are on offer with the inaugural champion Gluten Free Trophy now a stand-alone AIBA category.

Judging on draught entries

will continue in Melbourne from April 27 to 30 with winners to be announced at the AIBA gala dinner on May 20 at the Crown Palladium in Melbourne.



**COOL TREAT:** Ian Morgan of Holgate Breweries, Woodend, takes a closer look at a beer he is tasting. Picture: **Andrew Kelly**

# tiger tales

TIGER AIRWAYS MAGAZINE  
MAR-APR 2010

## Ride on the wild side

Burning down the Tweed Coast  
on two wheels

+ TASMANIA + HONG KONG + KOH JUM +

Food  
news

## The Dish

Small bites from around the region

## US INVASION

Some of America's best chefs are headed to Melbourne for the International Food Festival, including David Kinch from Manresa, Nancy Silverton from Osteria Mozza, and Nobu Matsuhisa from world-famous Nobu.

## STEAK AU VIN

Wagyu beef cattle in the Margaret River region of Western Australia are being fed red wine. The idea was suggested by a Japanese chef. The beef cattle are fed one litre of wine per day for 60 days before export to Japan.

## STREET EATS

Boutique hotels continue to spring up in Singapore. One of the latest, the non-smoking Hotel Nostalgia in Tiong Bahru, offers food tours of the local heartland, which is famous for time-honoured dishes such as Hainanese curry rice and chilli crab.

## CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT

On May 20, the 2010 Australian International Beer Award winners are announced at Melbourne's Crown Palladium. The awards are the second-largest such competition in the world, with entries from 39 countries.

## SHOW AND TELL

Diners from around the world can vote to determine Asia's best restaurants. Online voting for the 2010/2011 edition of *The Miele Guide* ([www.mieleguide.com](http://www.mieleguide.com)) opens on 10 March and closes on 19 May.

## SNIP, SNIP

A Brisbane laneway is home to an Australian first – Vapiano, part of a chain with 65 locations worldwide. The restaurant in inner city Albert Lane has a herb garden where diners can snip basil for their pasta or pizza.

## SURFING THE MENU

In Queensland, the southern Gold Coast and Tweed regions have produced a guide to the local ocean harvest and the best places to feast on it – from beachfront surf clubs through to fine dining restaurants. Find it at [www.seafooddiscoverytrail.com](http://www.seafooddiscoverytrail.com)

## MOVING ON

Mövenpick Hotel Saigon, 10 minutes from the international airport, is giving its Japanese restaurant, previously known as Nishimura, a top-to-bottom makeover. It is scheduled to re-open in April, as Hashi.

Behind  
the bar  
with...

## Matt Bax

Forget 'mixologist' – the owner of Melbourne's Der Raum and Singapore's The Tipping Club is fine to be called a 'bartender'



## YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER?

Anyone in a good mood with a sense of adventure.



## YOUR NIGHTMARE CUSTOMER?

Bad drunks and cocktail snobs.



## YOUR FAVOURITE DRINKS AT DER RAUM AND THE TIPPING CLUB?

I like my new cocktail muesli (smoked Martinique rum, jackfruit and pomelo nitro crumble, and honey topped with Champagne). Thinking about it now, it's hardly a drink!



## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE WORD "MIXOLOGIST"?

I'm not a huge fan, but it's actually a really old term (from the 1800s, I think) used to distinguish the skills of a bartender. I'm comfortable with the lowly bartender tag and let my drinks define how fancy-pants I am.



## MOST UNDERRATED DRINK?

Hmm... tough one. Maybe a classic Champagne cocktail (remember to rub the sugar cube on the orange skin before you soak it in bitters).



## WHAT'S A GREAT MELBOURNE NIGHT OUT?

Drinks in the city (Gin Palace, Madam Brussels) then a meal at say, Bar Lourinha or if we are in the mood to celebrate, Vue de Monde or Attica.



## UPCOMING COCKTAIL TRENDS?

Infusions are back in a big way – I love infusing vermouth, signature bitters, Ben and Jerry's ice-cream, edible cocktail face creams – okay, I'll stop there!

**Der Raum**, 438 Church St, Richmond, Melbourne, tel: +61 (0)3 9428 0055, [www.derraum.com.au](http://www.derraum.com.au); **The Tipping Club**, 8D Dempsey Rd, Singapore, tel: +65 6475 2217, [www.tippingclub.com](http://www.tippingclub.com)