



Press release

Yohann Jousselin at The Vineyard at Stockcross wins UK Sommelier of the Year

The Vineyard at Stockcross in Newbury, Berkshire is very proud to announce that head sommelier, Yohann Jousselin, has been awarded UK Sommelier of the Year at the prestigious competition organised by the Academy of Food and Wine Service.

The awards, held last night at the Jumeirah Carlton Tower hotel, celebrate the very best professional sommeliers and waiting staff in the UK, with 16 renowned sommeliers reaching the final. It proved to be third time lucky for Yohann, who has competed in both the 2009 and 2010 finals, where he came third and second respectively so he was delighted to be awarded the trophy this year.

“It’s quite a relief. I felt on a high during the competition and quite relaxed throughout. It was a tough competition this year and I am delighted to win.”

The final round of the competition included a role-play situation, a blind tasting and the chance to invent a fish-based menu with accompanying wines.

Chief judge and AFWS technical director Gerard Basset MS, MW, commented on the challenging and tough tasks that this year’s contestants faced: *“Yohann’s experience won through on the day, he was the more complete sommelier – he has very good service skills and has that extra flair that the judges were looking for. The final three were all of a fantastic standard.”*

This year’s panel of judges included: wine and food writer Nick Lander; Gerard Basset MS, MW; Matt Wilkin MS, AFWS director; Victor Lanson, marketing controller, First Drinks; and Ian Harris, chief executive of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust.

Yohann has worked at The Vineyard at Stockcross since 2010, a hotel which prides itself on its extensive wine cellar and dedicated wine programme. The programme, which launched recently, includes a regular wine school, complimentary tastings on arrival every Saturday, regular wine fairs and dinners and *Seven Days of Wine*, which offers a unique wine or Champagne offer every day of the week.

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