

Winner of The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award announced

Kayetan Meissner was recently announced the winner of the The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award 2013 at the Queen Victoria Hotel at the V&A Waterfront. Meissner, sommelier of Bosman's Restaurant at the Grande Roche Hotel in Paarl, received the Riedel Glass Trophy and a trip to France including a visit to the Champagne House of Bollinger. The prize includes airfare and accommodation in Champagne.



Kayetan Meissner

After a testing morning of written exams and a blind tasting at the finals, the three finalists: Kayetan Meissner, Barry Scholfield, assistant sommelier of Rust en Vrede Restaurant in Stellenbosch, and Xolani Mancotywa, previously sommelier of the Saxon Boutique Hotel in Joburg and now sommelier of Captial Club Dubai, were faced with a rigorous practical assessment. This year's task was to pour a magnum of bubbly evenly into 16 glasses and serve these to a table of diners and their guests. Whilst performing this challenging exercise, the candidate had to answer a number of questions from the judges as well as respond appropriately in a few tricky moments.

Kayetan Meissner was The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award runner-up in 2012 when he was sommelier of the Saxon Boutique Hotel in Sandhurst, Joburg. The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award runner-up this year is Xolani Mancotywa.

A clear winner

Ginette de Fleuriot, Cape wine master, The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award organiser and one of the judges, was very pleased with the overall results, "As runner-up in 2012, Kayetan was given a taste of what the competition is all about. He clearly took on the challenge to hone his skills so that this year he performed even better and was a clear winner."

Meissner graduated with a Hotel School Diploma from Varsity College, a course affiliated to the International Hotel School of Adelaide, Australia. Whilst working as a sommelier on board the MS Seabourn Sun and the MV Crystal Symphony, he had the opportunity to visit vineyards across the world, including Bordeaux, Tuscany, the Napa Valley and the Maipo Valley in Chile. Subsequently, he has worked as a sommelier at the Saxon Boutique Hotel in Joburg, beverage manager at the Metropolitan Grand in Bur Dubai, and sommelier at the Sandton Sun. He is currently the cellar master at Bosman's Restaurant at the Grande Roche Hotel in Paarl and will be undertaking Certification with the Court of Master Sommeliers in November this year. His favourite South African wines come from the Swartland, his choice international wine style is Burgundy and he loves sparkling wine and champagne. His preferred cuisine is classical French and Italian and his interests include food and wine, travel, history and fly fishing.

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