

## YALUMBA'S VIOGNIER QUEEN GETS HER CROWN

**LONDON:** The International Wine & Spirit Competition (IWSC) has announced Australian winemaker, **Louisa Rose from Yalumba** as winner of the prestigious 2004 Women in Wine Award.

Each year the IWSC commends the achievements of those members of the international wine and spirit community who make an outstanding contribution to the industry. The Women In Wine Award is a new accolade (the inaugural recipient was Jane Hunter of Hunter Wines, New Zealand in 2003) designed to recognise a woman who has demonstrated exceptional dedication, drive and skill.

Of the award, IWSC representative, Maryan Hook said, *"All those short listed for the Women in Wine Award were worthy candidates and with the extremely high standard of nominations to only select one person for this award was truly a difficult decision. However, Louisa demonstrated a quiet confidence, which only comes with depth of knowledge. She continues to pass on her knowledge to others, humbly paying tribute to those who taught her. She is a true professional and it was these qualities that made her stand out amongst the judging panel and to be awarded this trophy."*

*"Louisa's achievements with white wine, particularly Viognier and Riesling, have set a standard of excellence for the rest of the industry to follow."*

Rose made the first Pewsey Vale "The Contours" Riesling in 1995 and was instrumental in developing Yalumba's Viognier portfolio. A challenging variety to grow, Viognier produces amazingly full-flavoured wines with exotic flavours of musk, apricots, peaches and lychees – to name a few. With the aromatics of Riesling, and the structure and palate-weight of Chardonnay, Viognier occupies a middle ground that suits the Australian lifestyle perfectly.

On accepting her award Louisa said, *"Leading the charge with Viognier in Australia has been an incredibly rewarding journey. Since the first significant plantings by Yalumba in Eden Valley in 1980, my focus has been on working at how to extract the best of this demanding variety, and harness its versatility. Our commitment is such that Yalumba is now one of the world's most influential producers of Viognier."*

Rose's position as Senior White Winemaker at Yalumba is the culmination of opportunities and experiences, from a small family vineyard in the Yarra Valley, to a vintage cellar hand at Yalumba, to one of Australia's leading exponents of Viognier, Riesling and 'wild' fermentation. The completion of a Bachelor of Science Degree at Melbourne University inspired a move to South Australia to study winemaking. Rose graduated as Dux from Roseworthy Agricultural College in 1992, and joined the Yalumba winemaking team in January 1993.

*"Viognier has plenty to offer the consumer," says Rose. "It has so much richness and flavour, and gorgeous aromatics. The palate is lush and opulent, but still has freshness. It's a great food wine because its naturally lower in acid, but it's complex enough to go with a wide range of foods, from delicate to spicy."*

Central to Rose's winemaking approach is her use of indigenous or 'wild' ferment yeasts which travel with the grapes from the vineyard, and are present in the winery environment. Rose explains that a series of yeasts perform a natural ferment. *"Indigenous yeasts seem to make the wine richer, with a better integration of oak into the wine and better overall balance. It works particularly well with Viognier."*

Rose's responsibilities encompass Yalumba's portfolio of white wines as well as the Estate Vineyards in Eden Valley – Pewsey Vale and Hill-Smith Estate. Named 1999 Barossa Winemaker of Year and nominated for the 2000 Qantas/Wine Magazine Winemaker of the Year Award, the IWSC's recognition confirms Rose's position at the leading edge of Australian winemaking.

For more information, images or to arrange an interview with Louisa Rose:

Jo Triglar  
The Yalumba Wine Company  
Tel: 02 8344 8291 / 0403 600 545  
Email: [jtrigar@yalumba.com](mailto:jtrigar@yalumba.com)

For comment:

Robert Hill Smith  
Proprietor  
The Yalumba Wine Company  
Tel: 0412 201 222  
Email: [rhillsmith@yalumba.com](mailto:rhillsmith@yalumba.com)

Maryan Hook  
Sales & Marketing Manager  
International Wine & Spirits Competition  
Tel: +44 (0) 1306 627 477  
Mob: +44 (0) 7881 942 450  
Email: [maryan@iwsc.co.uk](mailto:maryan@iwsc.co.uk)



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