

MEDIA RELEASE

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S TOP HOTELS RECOGNISED AT NATIONAL AHA AWARDS

The **Walkers Arms Hotel** in Walkerville was a standout performer at tonight's **Australian Hotels Association National Awards for Excellence**, winning two of five awards won by South Australian Hotels. It took home the awards for **Best Environmental Practice** and **Best Outdoor/Non-enclosed facility**.

The hotel industry's night of nights was held at the **Four Seasons Hotel** in Sydney with **500 industry leaders** from around Australia attending, including the **Minister for Tourism, the Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP**.

Other SA Hotels which took home top national honours in their categories included:

- **Port Lincoln Hotel** – Best Tourism Initiative
- **Cremorne Hotel** – Best Bar Presentation & Service (Metropolitan)
- **The Highway** – Best Retail Liquor Outlet

South Australian hotelier brothers **Tony and Guy Matthews** from the **Matthews Hotel Group** were inducted into the AHA's **Johnnie Walker Hall of Fame** (the AHA's highest honour for individuals in the nation), recognised not only for their personal contribution to the South Australian and Australian hotel industry, but that of the Matthews Family over three generations. The Matthews family is involved in hotels such as the Feathers Hotel and the Buckingham Arms, whilst also having a strong presence in the South East of the state with the South Eastern Hotel, the Mount Gambier Hotel and the Park Hotel.

"These awards show that South Australian hotels continue to lead the Australian hotel industry in a range of areas, overcoming top class nominees from every state and territory to take out these awards" said AHA|SA General Manager, Ian Horne.

"We know our hotels are amongst the best in country, and these hotels should be justifiably proud of their achievements."

"Special congratulations must also be given to Tony and Guy Matthews, and the Matthews Family Hotel Group, who have been contributing to the quality of the South Australian hotel industry over seven decades and three generations."

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BEST BAR PRESENTATION AND SERVICE in AUSTRALIA is the CREMORNE HOTEL

The many comfortable zones of the bar at the Cremorne provide an area for all patrons needs. The unique design and bar layout offers a grand design of a central island bar with very unique finishes throughout. Glass bi-fold doors to the western end of the bar open up into a very efficient outdoor area, further enhancing the bar space, complimented with the large LED screen and state of the art lighting. The menu and service is polished and the product on offer is generous.

BEST RETAIL OUTLET in AUSTRALIA is the THE HIGHWAY

The retail bottle shop at The Highway is an iconic landmark for anyone travelling along Anzac Highway. This Thirsty Camel outlet provides consistent prices and a large portfolio allowing The Highway to easily fulfill guest's requests. The staff are well trained, offer knowledge and have confidence in their products. The store layout lends itself well to tastings and a comfortable experience for the browsing shopper. Together with a well thought out marketing campaign and banner promotion, The Highway provides an extremely generous overall retail offering.

BEST OUTDOOR OR NON-ENCLOSED FACILITY in AUSTRALIA – WALKERS ARMS HOTEL

The Walkers Arms has been credited with providing a 'cutting edge' into the way that outdoor areas have been designed, in particular the attention to detail in terms of the 'customer experience'. This versatile space implements many facets including a designated non-smoking area equipped with iPod docking stations, heating, comfortable furnishings and décor to create an extension of the inside space. This area is licensed for 290 people, and even in the heart of winter, offers comfort and atmosphere. The back to back LED screen is state of the art and accommodates many entertainment options. The innovative design of this area needs to be commended. The service is excellent and the broader food and beverage offering very impressive.

BEST TOURISM INITIATIVE in AUSTRALIA is the PORT LINCOLN HOTEL

Set in the heart of the Eyre Peninsula, the Port Lincoln Hotel has developed a tourism initiative to attract visitors not only to the hotel, but the entire region. Every booking receives local tourism information and guests are encouraged to book into the local activities. This also enables the hotel to support the many tourism operators in the area. The tourism marketing strategy developed by the hotel's staff incorporates organisations such as the South Australian Tourism Commission and the local tourism authority. Whether it is a swim with the sharks, a tour of the local Tuna farms or a visit to the many regional wineries, the Port Lincoln hotel has it covered.

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE in AUSTRALIA is the WALKERS ARMS HOTEL

The Walkers Arms has been designed and built from the ground up with an eco-sensitive focus. During the initial rebuild, over 98% of the demolished material was recycled. A 91,000 litre rainwater tank has been installed underneath the site which collects the rainwater and then supplies the hotel with irrigation and grey water for the entire building. The drought tolerant landscaping assist with the low water consumption, and touch sensitive tap ware eliminates wastage. Solar panels feature producing 5kw of power for power and heating. Great thought has gone into the building materials, recycling and power usage to ensure the eco-focus throughout. A great example of a hotel taking the lead on environmental initiatives.