

YOUNG GUNS OF WINE

- for immediate release -

For the first time, one winemaker has won both the People's Choice Award and the Young Gun of Wine

The Young Gun of Wine Awards started in 2007 and never before have both awards been won by the same winemaker. In 2012 **Abel Gibson of Ruggabellus** has proven most popular on all accounts, with the judges choosing him for the Young Gun of Wine and consumers picking him for the People's Choice.

Max Allen, author of The History of Australian Wine, said, *"Past finalists of the Young Gun of Wine Awards have gone on to become legends of the industry, so it is remarkable that one winemaker has taken both awards – particularly so in a year that has arguably the strongest lineup of finalists thus far."*

Abel Gibson grew up in the Barossa and started Ruggabellus in 2009 after the encouragement of Pete Schell of Spinifex (the 2008 Young Gun of Wine), whom he was then working for.

Chief Judge of the Young Gun of Wine Awards, Nick Stock said, *"Six years in and the competition was once again fiercer than ever. Abel Gibson's wines show a level of poise and class that most winemakers only achieve after decades of experience. Looking at the wines he is making at this early stage of his career, you can't help but be excited about the wines he will produce in years to come."*

The awards were held at Virginia Plain with a five-course degustation menu designed by Andy Harmer matched to wines from each of the 12 finalists. **Head Sommelier, Raul Moreno Yague**, said, *"The Young Gun of Wine Awards have become a barometer for new trends in wine, and have become the place to spot hot new wines and winemakers. We were very proud to be able to host the awards at our new restaurant."*

After the clean-sweep of the awards night Abel Gibson today said, *"It was an amazing evening for Emma and I. We were shocked to receive both the People's Choice and the Young Gun of Wine. Only eighteen months ago we never could have imagined anything like this happening much less our wines being welcomed into Australian wine the way they have"*

Abel Gibson also commented, *"After tasting all of the finalists' wines over the course of the day and meeting many of them for the first time I am very happy to report that the character, inspiration and resolve amongst them is huge, making our achievement all the more humbling."*

Founder of the Young Guns of Wine Awards, Rory Kent said their purpose is to champion a new approach to wine for a new age. *"This Young Guns of Wine thing is about making wine current. With Abel Gibson winning both awards whose Ruggabellus wines are hand made with a focus on farming and not packaging gimmickry, it says very clearly that the way to win consumer's hearts is through their taste buds,"* he said.

The judging panel included Chief Judge Nick Stock, Young Gun of Wine Founder Rory Kent, Max Allen, Phillip Rich and last year's winner, Mike Aylward of Ocean Eight.

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