

Winning mix for stylish bars

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As the small and sophisticated bar revolution in Perth continues, one of the newest kids on the block has proved quality, sophistication and quirks are winning ingredients.

The increasingly sophisticated tastes of the community have been rewarded in recent times with the establishment of a number of stylish bars and pubs catering to the more sophisticated set.

The Cabin in Mt Hawthorn, open since June, has proved immensely popular with people content to sip good wine in a homely yet quirky interior without a hot-headed drunk in sight.

And last night it won the best contemporary bar award at the Australian Hotels Association Awards For Excellence, sharing the prize with The George in the city, where a stunning refurbishment and fantastic wine list (The George also won best hotel wine list) has reinvigorated the top end of St Georges Terrace.

The night was also a winner for the Breakwater at Hillarys Boat Harbour, which also proved the value of a good refurbishment. The now gorgeously decked out venue overlooking the water took out the prizes for bar presentation and service and best redeveloped hotel and best restaurant in a hotel for the Ishka Restaurant (an award shared with the Subiaco Hotel, where a great kitchen continues to complement the bar).

Cockburn's The Gate Bar and Bistro won Perth's pub of the year for the second year running, a momentous feat considering it only opened two years ago.

Jo Chapman from the AHA said The Gate was a real pub where attention to detail made all the difference.

"It has paid attention to all of the fine details of the pub experience," she said.

"It's a traditional pub, but it's doing things at a higher level."

She said bars and pubs were being rewarded for catering to an increasingly sophisticated audience keen to enjoy a quiet cocktail with friends.

"It's great for Perth to have that dynamic scene starting to emerge," she said.

"These venues are becoming more sophisticated in every aspect of hospitality."