

WELL DONE BEN!!

MITCHELTON WINEMAKER BEN HAINES YOUNG WINEMAKER OF THE YEAR 2008

Central Victoria, 3 November 2008 – Mitchelton Winemaker Ben Haines has been named as the Wine Society's Young Winemaker of the Year.

At a gala dinner in Sydney at the Westin Hotel, Haines was awarded the prestigious accolade from a field of ten young winemakers drawn from across Australia and New Zealand. A field of Australian and New Zealand key up and comers meant there was some stiff competition for the top prize.

According to Haines: "To win this award has been overwhelming and humbling, and the calibre of the finalists makes it even more special."

Established in 2001, The Wine Society's Young Winemaker of the Year Awards celebrates today's best young Winemakers from Australia and New Zealand – those who will set the benchmark for the future.

The wine which clinched the award for Haines was the 2006 Mitchelton Print Shiraz. Print Shiraz is Mitchelton's finest expression of Central Victorian shiraz. It is considered the winery's benchmark wine and the foundation of its shiraz pedigree.

"The support of my mentors past and present and the support of the entire team at Mitchelton has been invaluable. In particular my partnership with Viticulturist John Beresford has been enormously rewarding and pivotal to our success. The responsibility of nurturing the legacy of previous Mitchelton winemakers – Colin Preece, Don Lewis and Toby Barlow – has been a fantastic opportunity and challenge."

Along with Ben's award as The Wine Society 2008 Young Winemaker of the Year, two other awards were given out – that of The Wine Society Members Choice Award awarded to Helen McCarthy, Taylors Wines (AUS) and The Sommeliers Choice Award awarded to Malcolm Rees-Francis, Rockburn Wines (NZ).

Ben's career started in viticulture, before branching into winemaking with various wineries in the Adelaide Hills and McLaren Vale, South Australia, the Coal Valley in Tasmania and the Napa Valley in California. Ben joined Mitchelton as Assistant Winemaker and in 2007 became Winemaker.

