

## **Forest Byron Bay receives top gong at restaurant industry awards**

**Australia – 21 September 2022:** Forest Byron Bay, a restaurant by Crystalbrook Collection, has won *Regional Contemporary Australian Restaurant - Formal* category at the 2022 NSW Australia Restaurant & Catering Hostplus Awards for Excellence.

Jordan Rodgers, General Manager, Crystalbrook Byron, says he is thrilled to see the restaurant team's talent and dedication acknowledged with such a prestigious award.

"Since Forest's inception in November 2020, our chefs, front of house and beverage teams have all worked collectively to create a dining experience that focuses on sustainability, seasonality and connecting diners with incredible local Northern Rivers producers and suppliers" he said.

Set next to a lush rainforest oasis, Forest is passionately local with over 80% of ingredients coming from within a three-hour drive of the restaurant. Contemporary, social, approachable and distinctly Australian, Forest restaurant embraces the region's abundance of stunning ingredients.

More than 250 local restaurants, cafés and catering businesses gathered on Monday 19 September to celebrate the achievements of their peers in over 80 categories, with the winners announced at a gala ceremony held at Sydney's Royal Randwick Racecourse.

The Awards for Excellence is a nationally recognised, independently judged awards program that celebrates exceptional service and culinary talent across the state. The Awards for Excellence is the only program in Australia where the judging criteria is determined by consumers who rank what is important to them in the dining experience.

The Awards are judged by an independent team of trained judges who anonymously visit the venues to determine the restaurant/café winners. The scores are based on the entire dining experience from food to the customer service experienced when the judges anonymously dine.

R&CA CEO Belinda Clarke says, "Forest Byron Bay should be immensely proud of this win. The past two years have been incredibly tough for the entire hospitality industry in Australia but success stories like this show how far hard work can take you. With the right mix of staff, products, produce and service, the results can be extraordinary."

R&CA is the industry association representing tens of thousands of restaurant and catering businesses across Australia. To view the full list of category winners in the 2022 Australia Restaurant & Catering Hostplus Awards for Excellence, visit the R&CA website at [www.rca.asn.au](http://www.rca.asn.au).

**Editor's Notes** - What's in a name? Well, all of our love, sweat and tears as we see our family of hotels grow. Please note, Crystalbrook hotel names should not be shortened or altered. E.g. Crystalbrook Kingsley should not be referred to as The Kingsley or Kingsley.

*Correct hotel names:*

- Crystalbrook Albion
- Crystalbrook Bailey
- Crystalbrook Byron
- Crystalbrook Flynn

- Crystalbrook Kingsley
- Crystalbrook Riley
- Crystalbrook Vincent

– ENDS –

### About Forest, Byron Bay

Set next to a lush rainforest oasis, Forest Byron Bay celebrates sustainability working hand-in-hand with local farmers, growers and artisans. Forest is passionately local with over 80% of ingredients coming from within a three-hour drive of the restaurant. Contemporary, social, approachable and distinctly Australian, Forest restaurant embraces the region's abundance of stunning ingredients. The utmost care for the surrounding landscape has been woven throughout the menu, with only sustainably sourced seafood and free-range proteins used in the menu. We're doing our bit to grow, consume and compost with our on-site herb gardens, four beehives and seven Subpods®.

### About Crystalbrook Byron

Nestled in 45-acres of magical subtropical rainforest, Crystalbrook Byron is a celebration of nature, responsible luxury and the local environment. Offering 92 guest suites, each with its own front and rear Verandah, the Resort works with its surrounding landscape to offer guests an immersive experience in nature. Featuring signature restaurant, Forest, Eléme Day Spa, daily yoga classes, tennis court and infinity pool, Crystalbrook Byron is proud to offer sustainable luxury loved by locals and travellers alike.

### About Crystalbrook

Crystalbrook is one of Australia's leading sustainable and innovative independent hospitality companies. Each hotel in the portfolio carries an authentic expression of its location, a passion for responsible luxury, considered design and a twinkle of fun for a uniquely enriching experience.

Crystalbrook's portfolio includes:

- Crystalbrook Riley, Cairns, Queensland
- Crystalbrook Albion, New South Wales
- Crystalbrook Byron, Byron Bay, New South Wales
- Crystalbrook Bailey, Cairns, Queensland
- Crystalbrook Flynn, Cairns, Queensland
- Crystalbrook Kingsley, Newcastle, New South Wales
- Crystalbrook Vincent, Brisbane, Queensland

The Group also owns and operates a collection of fifteen restaurants, three spas, and Crystalbrook Superyacht Marina in Port Douglas.

### Responsible Luxury

Responsible Luxury and sustainability is at the forefront of the way Crystalbrook thinks and operates. At a glance:

- Operating a single use plastic free environment. No plastic straws, water bottles or single use bathroom amenity bottles (in the past two years the Group has saved over three million plastic bottles from entering landfill)
- Sourcing at least 80% of produce from within a three-hour drive of each hotel
- Use of technology, such as in-room iPads and mobile check-in to create paperless environments and experiences
- Use of recycled and upcycled materials. Examples include key cards made from recycled wood, coat hangers made from recycled paper and toothbrushes made from sugar cane and corn starch.

### Crystalbrook Collection and Ghassan Aboud Group

Crystalbrook Collection is part of Ghassan Aboud Group promoted by international entrepreneur and philanthropist Ghassan Aboud. The group is a multi-business conglomerate engaged in automobiles, real estate, hospitality, FMCG, food, retail, bespoke catering, media and logistics. In business for more than two decades, the group operates from its global headquarters in the United Arab Emirates with offices in Australia, Belgium, Jordan and Turkey.

#### For further information:

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