



MEDIA RELEASE

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Whitsundays' restaurants recognised for excellence

The Whitsundays' dining scene is giving the big cities a run for their money with the announcement that a third restaurant in the region has been awarded a Chef Hat by the Australian Good Food Guide.

Hemingway's Restaurant, on the waterfront at Abell Point Marina, received the news last week having only been open for seven months.

The restaurant, which offers contemporary modern Australian cuisine, is the third Whitsundays restaurant to be awarded a Chef Hat, along with Walter's Lounge (Airlie Beach) and qualia, on Hamilton Island.

The prestigious awards reward exceptional chefs and recognise food excellence, with the key areas looked at being ingredients, taste, presentation, technique, value and consistency.

Abell Point Marina general manager Luke McCaul said the whole team was very excited to receive the accolade and to be a part of the Whitsundays emerging fine dining scene.

"Being awarded a Chef Hat after less than a year in business is a great achievement for Hemingway's and particularly for head chef Matt Dixon and his team," he said.

"The focus for the restaurant from its inception has been to offer a fresh and innovative menu with dishes that look incredible and taste even better. Matt has certainly succeeded in doing that.

"To now have three restaurants in the Whitsundays with Chef Hats is a reflection of the direction the food scene is heading in our region and we are thrilled to be part of that with Hemingway's."

Australian Good Food Guide (AGFG) Chef Hats have been awarded to talented chefs around the country since 1982. The awards are the result of careful deliberation, with the inspectors dining anonymously at the restaurants. Their reviews, and the opinions of the dining public, who send in their comments throughout the year, determine the results.

On the AGFG website, Hemingway's is described as having "...exciting, innovative flavours" that will "impress even the fussiest guests", as well as an exceptional range of wines.

Walter's Lounge, at Port of Airlie, has been re-hatted and also received the Regional Reader's Choice Award 2017. It is described as a "unique experience" and a "classy venue" on the AGFG website, with chef Robert Mohr's food applauded for its creativity.

Qualia's Pebble Beach restaurant, on Hamilton Island, is also described in glowing terms: "The view isn't the only thing to take your breath away – Pebble Beach's Mod Oz menu captures the essence of fine dining, each dish carefully presented in a harmonic melody of flavours, textures and colour."

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Craig Turner said it was fantastic to see three Whitsundays restaurants recognised for their excellent food in this way.

"The Whitsundays dining scene has definitely taken off in recent years and these Chef Hats are testament to the quality of food on offer in the region," he said.

"All three restaurants are members of Tourism Whitsundays and we see first-hand the level of dedication and commitment they put into their businesses.

"They are to be congratulated on providing a top class product and experience, and we are confident that other restaurants in the region will follow their shining example."

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