


The Bon Vivant in the finals of Tales of the Cocktail



Thistle Street establishment Bon Vivant is in the finals for the award of Best International Restaurant Bar in the world's most prestigious drinks industry competition.

The restaurant bar has reached the finals of the world's most prestigious food and drink competition – the annual **Tales of the Cocktail, Spirited Awards 2014** in New Orleans, and the winner will be decided on 19 July 2014.

 Established by Stuart McCluskey in 2008, The Bon Vivant is one of four finalists in the Spirited Awards category for **'Best International Restaurant Bar'** – an award recognising the world's best restaurant bar dedicated to creating a great dining and cocktail experience for their guests. The only Scottish entrant in this category, The Bon Vivant is competing against *Delicatessen (Moscow)*, *Spitalfields Bar at Hawksmoor* and *Blind Pig at Social Eating House* (both London). The Bon Vivant will be critiqued on its approach to aperitif and digestif drinks, cocktail and food pairings, general bartending and mixing excellence.

The Bon Vivant is renowned for its winning formula of providing an informal 'European' style of dining, whereby high quality food is savoured and complemented by excellent libations in a stylish, relaxed setting. It is no stranger to industry recognition, with three awards under its belt. It received a Scottish Style Award for *Most Stylish Bar* in 2011, won the 2013 Food & Travel Magazine *Bar of the Year* award, and has been recommended in the Michelin Guide in 2013 and 2014. If it wins, it will be the first Scottish establishment to ever receive a Spirited Award.

✘ Taking place in New Orleans, the annual Tales of the Cocktail event is the world's premier five-day cocktail festival running from **16 to 20 July 2014**, with up to 20,000 attendees. It brings together the international spirits community to celebrate what's new and next in bartending with the climax of the festival being the esteemed Spirited Awards on 19 July 2014. Festival events also include networking, seminars, dinners, demos, competitions, tasting and new product launches. For more information [see the website](#).

The **Spirited Awards** were set up by Tales of the Cocktail in 2007 to provide some much needed recognition of the world's best bars and bar talent. This year's competition is bigger than ever, following the largest nomination pool in the history of the show. Thousands of nominations are whittled down to just four finalists in each category following a rigorous judging process carried out by a Governing Committee.

Chairman of the International Judging Committee and Global Trade Advocacy Director for Bacardi, Jacob Briars said:-“The Spirited Awards are regarded as the pinnacle of the industry. 50 well-travelled industry veterans voted on the top bars around the world, with nominations from more than 40 countries. This is the first year an international restaurant bar will be recognised, and the four finalists range from new openings to old favourites, and from Michelin-starred venues to relaxed (but no less excellent) eateries, all combining great food with some of the best drinks on earth in a seamless, professional manner.

“The Bon Vivant's recognition is a testament both to the amazing vitality of the Edinburgh hospitality scene, and to the hard work and passion of Stuart and his team. It is known around the world for its combination of high standards and relaxed atmosphere; I never visit Edinburgh without stopping here.”

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Stuart McCluskey, Founder and Director of The Bon Vivant said:-“I am absolutely over-the-moon that The Bon Vivant, my first born establishment, has been recognised by the world’s most prestigious drinks industry competition. It’s a tremendous boost for the team and the loyal following we’ve nurtured since 2008.

“We love what we do and work extremely hard to make sure that our customers do too. This sort of peer recognition is not only humbling but extremely motivating and will only spur us on to keep up standards. We’d absolutely love to take home the first Spirited Award to Scotland.”

Commenting, Jess Estes, Brand Ambassador, Ocho Tequila, said:-“The Edinburgh bar scene had always been notorious for churning out some of the world’s best bartenders, and the team at Bon Vivant – namely Stuart McCluskey – has been instrumental in doing so. This venue consistently delivers welcoming hospitality and knowledgeable service, coupled with world class cocktails and food. With that said the venue is larger than the sum of its parts; all these elements are skillfully incorporated to create a truly special and memorable dining and drinking experience.

The Bon Vivant is definitely in my list of top bars/restaurants in the world. They are up against strong competition but I firmly believe that the Bon Vivant and Edinburgh deserve the recognition for their influence on the global bar industry.’

