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MEDIA RELEASE

17 July 2025

## That's the spirit! Sunshine Coast rum crowned Australia's best

A Sunshine Coast distillery has proven it truly has the winning spirit, taking home four champion trophies plus the title of Australia's best rum at the prestigious Royal Queensland Awards (RQA) Distilled Spirits Competition supported by King Street.

Nil Desperandum Rum's The Vintner's Barrel was awarded Champion Rum / Cane Spirit, The Star Brisbane Best Queensland Distilled Spirit and Grand Champion Distilled Spirit. The distillery itself was also recognised, taking out the King Street Best Queensland Distillery title.

Chief Judge Dave Withers said the winning rum set a high standard for Australian spirits.

"The Vintner's Barrel is an excellent expression of rum, showcasing a seamless integration of nose and palate," he said.

"It combines remarkable complexity and balance - a truly effortless and fantastic example of what Australian rum can be."

Founder and Chief Imagineer Matt Hobson said they were incredibly happy their vision of crafting delicious Queensland rum was on track.

"To have industry experts judge that our rum is just as incredible as we think it is - we're absolutely thrilled," he said.

"We work hand in hand with farmers and sugar mills to source our raw ingredients - Queensland sugarcane and molasses - and our rum is wild fermented and sub-tropically barrel aged to showcase our beautiful Sunshine Coast terroir.

"It's also certified organic, incredibly difficult to achieve but an important attribute to elevate our rums among the world's best."

Meanwhile, the new Champion Alternative Spirit trophy went to Schnapps Idea Distillery in Melbourne for their Pear Packham - a spirit inspired by traditional South German distillation methods.

This year's competition attracted 116 entries from 36 distilleries, judged over two days last week by a panel of seven industry experts.



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“We saw so much creativity, so much innovation, and so many novel flavours and approaches”, Mr Withers said.

“The quality of entries was fantastic - especially those that took out the champion trophies.”

Now in its second year, the RQA Distilled Spirits Competition celebrates excellence in Australian distilling and offers a vital benchmarking opportunity for the nation’s distillers.

## 2025 TROPHY WINNERS

### GRAND CHAMPION DISTILLED SPIRIT (Australia’s best)

Nil Desperandum Rum - The Vintner's Barrel

### CHAMPION VODKA

Twelve And A Half Acres - Lemon Myrtle & Kaffir Lime Vodka

### CHAMPION GIN

Sip and Banter Distillery - The Navy Gin

### CHAMPION RUM / CANE SPIRIT

Nil Desperandum Rum - The Vintner's Barrel

### CHAMPION WHISKY

Fleurieu Distillery - Country to Coast #6

### CHAMPION ALTERNATIVE SPIRIT

Schnapps Idea Distillery - Pear Packham

### THE STAR BRISBANE BEST QUEENSLAND DISTILLED SPIRIT

Nil Desperandum Rum - Class 13 Cat. No. 83 - The Vintner's Barrel

### KING ST BEST QUEENSLAND DISTILLERY

Nil Desperandum Rum

For the full results catalogue please [click here](#).

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