



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tuesday, January 22 2013**

### **Villa Maria founder's biography up for international award**

Along with his wines, Villa Maria founder Sir George Fistonich's biography is going global too with *The Winemaker – George Fistonich and the Villa Maria Story* (by Kerry Tyack) recently named as a finalist in the prestigious Gourmand World Awards for Wine and Drinks Books (part of the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards). With five finalists in the category "Drink History" at Gourmand, Sir George's book is joined in this competitive category by publications from France, China, the UK, and the USA.

Carrousel du Louvre in Paris will be the elegant venue for the awards ceremony on February 23, with finalists from all over the world converging on the city world-renowned for its fine food and wine. All finalist books will also be featured at the Paris Cookbook Fair held in conjunction with this event.

Upon its release in late 2012, *The Winemaker – George Fistonich and the Villa Maria Story* was showcased on shelf as one of Whitcoulls' Top 5 New Zealand biographies. Reviewer Deborah Walton-Derry heaped praise on the publication, saying "Sir George's story is one of youthful optimism, tenacity, and determination", and sums it up as a "fascinating read".

2012 was an extraordinary year for Sir George and Villa Maria Estate as their 50<sup>th</sup> vintage was celebrated with a tour of 36 cities worldwide, a celebratory event at the architecturally designed Auckland Winery, the release of this book, and numerous wine industry and sustainability accolades leading to Villa Maria maintaining its status as New Zealand's most awarded winery, a title it has held for over 30 years.

The Gourmand World Cookbook Awards are run by international culinary organisation Gourmand International, headquartered in Madrid, Spain; and this year garnered entries from over 170 countries.

For further information about the competition and finalists, please see [www.cookbookfair.com](http://www.cookbookfair.com).

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For further information contact:

Stella Johnston (PR Coordinator)

Tel: +64 9 2551733

Email: [stellaj@villamaria.co.nz](mailto:stellaj@villamaria.co.nz)