

# Taste test: 3493 wines in the space of a week

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JUDGING for the 2009 Melbourne Wine Show "sipped off" last Monday at the Melbourne Showgrounds, with 30 expert judges making their way through 3493 wines from more than 560 wineries.

The tough job of spending a week testing Australia's best wine was guided by chairman of judges Steven Webber, with assistance from international wine judges Lim Hwee Peng of Singapore and John Belsham of New Zealand.

The Royal Melbourne Wine Show will offer 22 awards in 2009 including the much-coveted Jimmy Watson Memorial Trophy for the best overall wine.

This year's awards will also include more categories for boutique producers to compete against the big players.

Established in 1884, the awards were developed to support Australian wine making and help promote it to international markets.

The awards have achieved a 7per cent increase in entries from last year, with the largest increases from NSW, Victoria and Western Australia.

For the first time there is an entrant from the Northern Territory.

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Grape expectations: International judge Lim Hwee Peng makes his way through more than 3000 wines at the Melbourne Showgrounds last week.  
Picture: Fiona Evans