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Sir George Fistonich receives IWC Lifetime Achievement Award

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Sir George Fistonich, owner and managing director of Villa Maria Estate, has received the International Wine Challenge Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sir George Fistonich, owner and managing director of Villa Maria Estate, has received the International Wine Challenge Lifetime Achievement Award.

Other former industry figures to have previously received this award, include: Peter Lehmann, Peter Lehmann Wines (2009) and Miguel Torres, Bodegas Torres (2010).

Sir George Fistonich founded Villa Maria Estate in Auckland in 1961 and has steered the company to a position where it has become New Zealand's leading wine award winner, both locally and overseas.

Fistonich was knighted for his services to the New Zealand wine industry in 2009.

He said: "It is very humbling to be recognised by the wine industry for Villa Maria's achievements.

"We've worked hard promoting our premium New Zealand wines to the world so it's a great feeling to be among such an elite group of wine industry icons.

I founded Villa Maria Estate nearly fifty years ago and feel very lucky to be part of an exciting and stimulating industry."

The International Wine Challenge Awards ceremony took place last night at The Hilton Park Lane.

The judging panel was chaired by Tim Atkin MW, Oz Clarke, Charles Metcalfe, Sam Harrop MW and Derek Smedley MW.

The award is given annually to one senior industry leader for significant contributions to the wine industry internationally.

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