

# Vicky Crease's Winning Recipe

You might think catering superstar and TV host Vicky Crease would be accustomed to winning awards by now. This past March at Catersource, the owner of Johannesburg, South Africa's [Vicky Crease Catering + Events](#) pulled off a hat trick by adding three CATIE awards to her already impressive collection of laudatory hardware: Signature Caterer for Best Event, Best Plated Menu, and Best Buffet Presentation and Menu categories.



But despite earning numerous accolades, Crease is not one to take winning for granted. “You’re up against some amazing people and you’re never confident enough to know that you’ve got an award in the bag,” she says. Crease’s 11 (and counting) industry citations are not just mantle-flattering decorations signifying past accomplishments — they are practical business

tools.

They are also high-powered strategies to apply to the ever-expanding social media front. “When we win an award, we normally send out a newsflash to our existing client base and show them a picture of what won,” Crease explains. While Facebook and Twitter are important parts of Crease’s social media presence, she’s an enthusiastic Instagram partisan. For example, during the Catersource Conference, she [frequently shared photos](#) with her 110,000-plus followers. While she is a big fan of Instagram’s visual focus, she cautions, “I have to be careful with what I put out there because I’m followed by a lot of competitors.”



When beginning work with a client, Crease is already looking downfield at the job’s CATIE potential. Thanks to her experience and knowledge of the categories, she has a good idea early on if a concept is award worthy. Crease

usually documents and photographs the creative process herself, but will call in a photographer if the details of a job are too consuming. She's clear to emphasize that no amount of collateral information will remedy a lack of inspiration: "If you're not behind the concept and you don't have the passion for it, the judges can see that," she cautions.

Crease says the process also engages and excites her clients. Because planning an event is a collaborative affair, clients share the pride of being awarded for their vision. Not to mention, it's just good advertising. "Winning these awards gives my clients that much more confidence that they're in good hands," she says.

From her home base in Johannesburg, Crease has watched the CATIE awards become more representative of the global catering industry over the years. While the international recognition that comes with winning a CATIE carries a lot of weight, Crease says nothing beats the excitement and validation of being recognized by her peers.

"Winning in front of a bunch of engineers would mean nothing. I owe so much to the ICA and take great pride in it." When asked how it felt to win three CATIES at this year's conference, Crease doesn't hesitate: "Winning never gets old!"

Keep up with international catering sensations like Vicky Crease by becoming an ICA member. To find out how, please visit [www.internationalcaterers.org](http://www.internationalcaterers.org).

by Mike Schulte

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