



## **New Zealand Winegrowers Sommelier Scholarship recipients announced**

New Zealand Winegrowers is pleased to announce the 14 successful sommeliers chosen to participate in the 2019 New Zealand Winegrowers International Sommelier Scholarship.

The New Zealand Winegrowers Sommelier Scholarship is a global initiative with sommeliers from Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, the UK and USA all eligible to participate.

The 2019 event will play host to just 16 international sommeliers, including hosts Master of Wine Stephen Wong, and Master Sommelier Cameron Douglas.

Sommit™ 2019 will be held in Northland, the country's northernmost, and most spectacularly coastal, wine region. 2019 also marks the 200 year anniversary of the first planting of grapevines in New Zealand. Reverend Samuel Marsden records 25 September 1819 as the day he planted a vine in the rich grounds of the Stone Store, Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands.

Sommit™ Northland will take place on the two days immediately prior to the anniversary, on 23 & 24 September, and will be an incredibly special Sommit™, exploring the regions, varieties, landscapes and personalities that make New Zealand wine extraordinary, 200 years on.

As per previous years, the experience remains 100% sommelier-exclusive, with the full day masterclass being a closed-door session, shepherded by Cameron and Stephen, but not presented by them. The discussion on the day will be informed organically, by what is tasted in the glass. The sommelier guests will then head to Hawke's Bay, Marlborough, and finally, Central Otago.

"Sommit™ is like no other experience for a sommelier," says New Zealand Winegrowers' Market Implementation & Education Manager, Felicity Turner. "It is an opportunity to taste amongst international peers, in the most astonishing New Zealand surrounds, and completely closed door. No winemakers, no wine marketers, just on-premise industry professionals tasting, discussing and debating without agenda. It's a truly unique experience for our guests."

The 14 successful sommeliers are:

### **Asia**

- Delphin Duan, Edition Hotels (Shanghai)
- Toshimichi Okamura, The Ritz-Carlton (Osaka)

### **Australia**

- Ashlyn Foster, Quay (Sydney)
- Bhatia Dheeraj, Est. (Sydney)
- Wiremu Andrews, Pt. Leo Estate & Laura Restaurants (Melbourne)

### **Canada**

- Brad Royale, Brad Royale Consulting (Alberta & BC)



#### **UK & Europe**

- Jacqueline Doucette, Geranium (Copenhagen)
- Julia Sewell, Hide (London)
- Philip Dunne, The Westbury Hotel (Dublin)

#### **United Arab Emirates**

- Amit Chavan, Hakkasan (Abu Dhabi)

#### **USA**

- Andrew Pettingell, Otium (Los Angeles)
- Chris Struck, Union Square Café (New York)
- Ezra Wicks, Bar Ferdinand (Seattle)
- Jonathan Lopez, The Milling Room (New York)

To date, the programme has hosted six Sommit™ events, for 97 Sommiters, from 16 countries. Previous Sommit™ events have seen a marked increase in listings of New Zealand wines in top international restaurants.

**-Ends-**

#### **Editors notes:**

New Zealand wine is exported to more than 100 countries, with total exports reaching \$1.83 billion in 2019.

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