

Media Release
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New Zealand Winegrowers 2017 Sommit scholarship recipients announced

New Zealand Winegrowers and Sommeliers Australia have today announced the names of ten successful sommeliers who have been chosen to participate in the 2017 *Sommit Scholarship*.

The 2017 programme includes two *Sommits* (each is one and a half days long), and runs from 26 January to 6 February 2017 in New Zealand. The successful sommeliers will each attend one of the two events.

New Zealand based Master Sommelier Cameron Douglas and Master of Wine Stephen Wong will host the *Sommits*, which will be targeted solely at the interests of sommeliers, and include a deep dive into some little unknown, interesting aspects of New Zealand wine.

The first *Sommit* will be held on Waiheke Island, known as the 'Island of wine', situated in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf. Attendees then travel to the Aromatics Symposium in Nelson, before crossing the Cook Strait to Pinot Noir NZ 2017 (Pinot2017) in Wellington. Described as 'the best Pinot Noir event on the planet', Pinot2017 showcases top New Zealand Pinot Noir, and attracts some of the world's greatest minds and palates on the subject.

The second *Sommit* will take place in Wairarapa, following Pinot2017, and is preceded by a Classic Reds Symposium, held in Hawke's Bay, featuring Syrah, Cabernets and Merlot. The Symposium will include a full day Classic Reds Masterclass, showcasing the best examples of these varieties, following specific themes.

"Following the inaugural *Sommit* in 2016, New Zealand Winegrowers is focussed on building on this annual event for top Australian and international sommeliers. Australia is our most mature export market, and is poised to progress to the next stage of New Zealand wine discovery. The *Sommit* experience will provide New Zealand wine with a group of strong, influential, Australian based ambassadors," said Catherine Wansink, New Zealand Winegrowers' Marketing Manager - Australia.

The ten successful Australian sommeliers are:

- Seamus Brandt, Bouche on Bridge, Sydney, NSW
- Gerard Higgins, Bentley Restaurant and Bar, Sydney, NSW
- Alexander Kirkwood, Quay, Sydney, NSW
- David Lawler, Comptoir, Melbourne, Vic
- Banjo Harris Plane, Bar Liberty, Melbourne, Vic
- Eva Hudson, Attica, Melbourne, Vic
- Aleks Balodis, Otto, Brisbane, Qld
- Olivia Evans, The Wolfe, Brisbane, Qld
- Jonathan Brook, Restaurant Orana, Adelaide, SA
- Josie Phillips, Duende Tapas Bar, Perth, WA

Visit www.nzwine.com/sommelierscholarship for more information.

-ENDS-

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