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Master Sommelier Ronan Sayburn to co-host Sommit™ 2019

World renowned Master Sommelier Ronan Sayburn has been confirmed as co-host of Sommit™ 2019, to be held in the Hawke's Bay next year.

Mr Sayburn joins Master of Wine Stephen Wong to host the event, which brings 18 leading international sommeliers to New Zealand to learn about our wine, with emphasis on the facets that resonate with the sommelier community.

The sommeliers will all be recipients of the 2019 Sommit™ Scholarship which is open to Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, the UK and USA.

Sommit™ is closed-door and sommelier-only, a very different kind of tasting directed by the attendees based on what they taste in the glass. The wines are a celebration of the lesser known aspects of New Zealand wine.

For the previous five years Stephen Wong and Master Sommelier Cameron Douglas have hosted the Sommit™ events, however this year UK-based Mr Sayburn will step in to fill Cameron Douglas' shoes.

New Zealand Winegrowers Global Marketing Manager Chris Yorke says having Mr Sayburn host the event, alongside Mr Wong, is an indication of the prestige that Sommit™ now enjoys amongst the international wine community.

"We are delighted to have Ronan join us in New Zealand and know he and Stephen will show our international guests expressions of New Zealand wine that will surprise them," Mr Yorke says.

Mr Wong says it's especially poignant to have Mr Sayburn join as co-host of Sommit™ as he was an attendee of the very first Sommit™ in 2016.

"I'm looking forward to working with Ronan to recreate some of the magic he experienced at Sommit™ for the latest group of Sommit™ Scholarship recipients," Mr Wong says.

Ronan Sayburn is a previous winner of the UK Sommelier of the Year competition and twice represented the UK in the European Sommelier Competition. He is a regular judge for the Sommelier of the Year Competition and various tasting competitions, including the Decanter World Wine Awards. He is also an examiner for the Court of Master Sommeliers and Head of Wine at 67 Pall Mall, a private members club in London.

Formerly he worked for the Gordon Ramsay group as Executive Head Sommelier for eight years, mainly in the three Michelin star Royal Hospital Road. He also created the wine lists and trained wine service teams for Claridge's, the Connaught, the Savoy, Boxwood Café, Maze and several overseas operations including in Dubai, Tokyo and New York.

To date, the New Zealand Winegrowers Sommelier Scholarship has hosted five Sommit™ events for 79 sommeliers from 15 countries. Previous Sommit™ events have seen a marked increase in listings of New Zealand wines in top international restaurants.

For further information contact:

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