



New Zealand Winegrowers Sommelier Scholarship recipients announced

New Zealand Winegrowers and Sommeliers Australia are pleased to announce the five successful sommeliers chosen to participate in the 2019 New Zealand Wine Sommeliers Scholarship.

- Matthew Dunne, Solotel
- Emma Farrelly, State Buildings
- Stephanie Jacob, Supernormal
- David Murphy, One Penny Red
- Bridget Raffal, Sixpenny

First launched in association with Sommeliers Australia in 2015, the scholarship is now a global initiative with sommeliers from Asia, Canada, Europe, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, the UK and USA set to join the Australian scholars in 2019.

Limited to just 20 attendees, the two day Sommit™ will be hosted in Hawke's Bay by Master of Wine Stephen Wong and world renowned Master Sommelier Ronan Sayburn who attended the very first Sommit™ in 2016 as a guest. The events are a celebration of the lesser known aspects of New Zealand wine, with particular emphasis on the facets that resonate with the sommelier community and is just one part of an intensive programme of 11 days, including the International Sauvignon Blanc Celebration in Marlborough and the Chardonnay and Sparkling Wine symposium in Gisborne.

"We see the sommelier scholars as playing an important role in the on-premise growth of the New Zealand wine category in Australia, sharing personal discoveries from the experience with restaurant guests and the wider sommelier community. We are looking forward to welcoming the 2019 scholars across the ditch to explore the depth and breadth of our many wine regions and in turn creating the ultimate in-market ambassadors for New Zealand wine," said New Zealand Winegrowers' Manager - Australia, Natalie Grace.

2019 marked the Australian introduction of the 'One to Watch' category celebrating the role young sommeliers play in the industry. Two places were offered in its first year to Bridget Raffal of Sixpenny and Stephanie Jacob of Supernormal who throughout the application process demonstrated the qualities essential to becoming future leaders in their profession.

Visit <https://www.nzwine.com/en/events/new-zealand/new-zealand-wine-sommit/> for more information on the Sommit™ scholarship process and programme.

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For further information contact:

For further information contact:

Natalie Grace

Manager – Australia

New Zealand Winegrowers

Phone: +61 451 430 311

Email: natalie.grace@nzwine.com

Editor's note:

New Zealand wine is celebrating its 23rd consecutive year of export growth according to the 2018 Annual Report of New Zealand Winegrowers, with total wine exports now valued at \$1.7 billion. Australia is New Zealand's most mature export market with exports to Australia valued at NZ\$367 million for the year to the end of June 2018.