



World's top wine influencers arrive for the International Sauvignon Blanc Celebration

The 'who's who' of the wine world are descending on Marlborough for the three-day International Sauvignon Blanc Celebration kicking off on Monday 28 January.

"We have over 100 international wine producers, experts and key influencers visiting, giving us an exceptional opportunity to shine the spotlight on our diverse Sauvignon Blanc offerings," said Sauvignon 2019 Chair, Patrick Materman.

The event boasts a world-class line-up of speakers who are experts in the fields of science, research, journalism and gastronomy. Internationally acclaimed wine writer Matt Kramer returns to New Zealand to explore Sauvignon Blanc's place in the world of wine and speak on the future of Sauvignon Blanc.

Nine Masters of Wine from all over the globe are among the speakers, including Debra Meiburg, founding Director of Meiburg Wine Media, and Sarah Heller, Asia Pacific's youngest MW at 30 years of age, from Hong Kong. From the UK comes Justin Howard-Sneyd, buyer and consultant for over 20 years with some of the UK's leading distributors, and David Allen, originally from the UK and Director of Wine-Searcher. Dirceu Vianna Junior was the first South American male to obtain the title of Master of Wine and joins from Brazil, and Tim Hanni hails from the US, where he is Managing Director of eCode.me and HanniCo LLC. Completing the exemplary line up are New Zealanders Emma Jenkins, Sam Harrop and Steve Smith.

Over 350 guests will attend the celebration, which will take attendees on a journey exploring the complexity of Sauvignon Blanc, emerging styles, vineyard practices, winemaking influences and future trends.

The International Sauvignon Blanc Celebration is built around three themes; Place, Purity and Pursuit. Day one is themed Place and will draw on Tūrangawaewae, the geographical places we feel empowered and connected to. Day two, with the theme of Purity, will explore topics such as climate, sustainability and flavour. Finally, Day three explores what we should pursue domestically and globally, outlining future challenges and opportunities for the New Zealand wine industry.

The spectacular evening entertainment is also proving to be a highlight, with the sold-out gala event 'Blanc', a dinner-en-blanc theme, to host 480 guests at Brancott Vineyard on the second evening of the 2019 celebration. Celebrity chef Martin Bosley is the culinary director of the gourmet feast that will be matched with older vintages from the cellars of our wineries.

The International Sauvignon Blanc Celebration promises to live up to its name, and bring this diverse, expressive and sought-after variety to centre stage for three action-packed days in Marlborough.

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Editor's note:

- Sauvignon Blanc is our top produced varietal, with 73% of all wine production
- New Zealand wine exports are currently valued at \$1.71 billion.
- Wine is New Zealand's sixth largest export good.
- New Zealand wine is exported to more than 90 countries.