



**** PRESS RELEASE ****

CONTACT: CARMELA@FINGERLAKESWINEALLIANCE.COM

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The Finger Lakes Wine Alliance is excited to announce their launch of Virtual Riesling Camp. The four-part series occurs each Wednesday in May and involves trade representatives from around the U.S., including restaurant managers, professional chefs, retail store managers, sommeliers, consultants, wine educators, a wine TV host, and a well-followed group of wine writers. Participants receive wine to sip while they learn.

Finger Lakes Riesling Camp is typically held the first week of April. Finger Lakes wineries reworked their marketing plans in response to the Covid-19 crisis during April and planned virtual camp for May. "This year we had our most competitive group of applicants for the program", stated Carmela Barbagallo, Executive Director of the Finger Lakes Wine Alliance. "Our wines showed well at 2019 events like Riesling Roadshows, Star Chefs Congress in Brooklyn, and FLXcursion, an international celebration of Riesling hosted in Geneva, N.Y. in July. We had the chance to interact with Riesling fanatics and received keen interest in our aromatic, cool climate wines. We were thrilled to see so many applicants to our 2020 Riesling Camp program. When we had to postpone our event, we were crushed (no pun intended). We kept in close touch with our campers, many of whom were furloughed from their work in restaurants, and felt we needed to do something to lift spirits" stated Barbagallo. Virtual Riesling Camp offers a sense of normalcy for wine professionals: continuing education, the chance to taste wine with peers from all over the U.S. and a virtual introduction to the Finger Lakes wine community.

Finger Lakes Wine Alliance Board Chair, Bruce Murray, owner of Boundary Breaks Vineyard, is excited to participate. He partnered with neighboring winery, Wagner Vineyards, for the FLX Viticulture Class for week two. The class involves a prerecorded session from their vineyards where the owners collaborate to discuss vineyard practices on newly established as well as mature vineyards.

"One aspect of the Finger Lakes that will truly shine during virtual Riesling Camp is the sense of camaraderie between Finger Lakes wineries. The group worked together to design a virtual program. Instead of a sense of competition, we see team-oriented behavior and partnership. It is impressive to witness and part of what defines the Finger Lakes region" states Barbagallo. The gushing response from the campers is rewarding. Virtual Riesling Camp is a win-win. FLX Wine Alliance wineries get the opportunity to connect with talented wine professionals, which restores promise for the future. In turn, we're offering a much-needed distraction during this challenging time where many of our campers are grappling with the stress of our current reality. We invite you to follow us by tracking **#VirtualRieslingCamp** and **#FLXRieslingCamp**.

Virtual Riesling Camp is hosted by:

Billsboro Winery
Boundary Breaks Vineyard
Buttonwood Grove Winery
Dr. Konstantin Frank Winery
Fox Run Vineyards
Heron Hill Winery
Lakewood Vineyards

Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars
Red Newt Winery & Bistro
Silver Thread Vineyard
Sheldrake Point Winery
Thirsty Owl Wine Company
Wagner Vineyards

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About Finger Lakes Wine Alliance

Founded in 2004, Finger Lakes Wine Alliance is a not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to increase the visibility and reputation of the Finger Lakes region, its wines and wineries. The alliance is comprised of 31 members and 15 affiliated businesses and vendors, and it is guided by a board of directors comprised of

principals representing all four wine trails and non-wine trail wineries of the Finger Lakes. The Finger Lakes Wine Alliance offers a wide range of programs to its members that include coordinating wine submissions for review by trade publications, presenting seminars on best practices in social media and online marketing, and a number of local and national events that increase visibility for Finger Lakes Wines.

With its glacier-sculpted landscapes, ideal microclimates and gifted winegrowers, the Finger Lakes region is home to over 100 wineries that produce exceptional cool-climate wines and world-class Rieslings. For more information, visit www.fingerlakeswinealliance.com, call 585.993.1325 or connect on Facebook or Instagram.