

MEDIA RELEASE
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**Queenstown Bar Manager Carolina Front Wins 2024 Visa New Zealand
Hospitality Scholarship**



L-R: Winner Carolina Front, Sherwood Queenstown; Finalist Carlita Campbell, Cellar 495; Finalist Shuchi Bhardwaj, Le Ciel

Images available [here](#)

Visa Wellington On a Plate is proud to announce Carolina Front, the bar manager at Sherwood in Queenstown, as the winner of the 2024 Visa New Zealand Hospitality Scholarship. Carolina has been recognised for her commitment to making hospitality more environmentally sustainable.

Commenting on the recognition, Carolina says “Every drink tells the story of our land and our commitment to ecological responsibility”.

At Sherwood, Carolina focuses on using only local products in the cocktail menu, and the wine list has an emphasis on natural and organic wines. Carolina inspires the bar team to continue innovating in waste reduction and engage suppliers who can support Sherwood’s commitment to sustainability principles. The hotel has been recognised internationally for its zero-waste practices in the kitchen and bar.



The Visa New Zealand Hospitality Scholarship, valued at NZD \$30,000, was launched in 2023 to inspire more young people to pursue a long-term career in the hospitality industry. The scholarship prize includes a five-day placement at a top international hospitality venue, professional development, a one-year mentorship, business training and future participation in Visa Wellington On a Plate.

Carolina says she is thrilled to win the scholarship and is particularly excited about the opportunity to learn from mentors and industry leaders working in sustainable hospitality.

"I am incredibly honoured to receive the Visa NZ Hospitality Scholarship. This opportunity not only allows me to continue my passion for supporting local and small independent producers but also empowers me to drive sustainable practices within an industry I love so much.

I would like to thank the amazing people I have had the privilege to work and learn with, especially the managers and owners of Sherwood, who have always trusted me and encouraged my creativity. A special thank you to Visa for providing the platform to expand my knowledge on sustainable hospitality and helping me make impactful choices for a greener future."

Country Manager, Visa New Zealand and South Pacific, Anthony Watson says, "Initiatives like the Visa New Zealand Hospitality Scholarship are critical in supporting and nurturing local industry talent. Emerging leaders like Carolina have an important role in driving a sustainable and innovative future for the hospitality industry in New Zealand and we are excited to support this journey."

Industry stars Chef Michael Meredith (Auckland), Master of Wine Stephen Wong (Wellington) and GM Sherwood Group Hayley Scott (Queenstown) formed the judging panel and were supported by the team at Visa Wellington On a Plate.

The judges said they were once again blown away by the talent, ambition and passion demonstrated by the applicants, with Stephen Wong commenting, "All three finalists impressed us with their goals of bringing something new and interesting to the New Zealand hospitality industry, and their commitment to their values. Carolina's dedication to green hospitality, her ability to inspire her colleagues, and her focus on creating exceptional experiences for customers shone through".

The judges also made special mention of the two other finalists, Carlita Campbell of Cellar 495 in Hastings and Shuchi Bhardwaj of Le Ciel in Wellington.



The scholarship was open to NZ residents aged 22 to 35 years with a minimum of two years' experience working in the hospitality industry.

Chef Joshua Ross of Bellamy's and Twenty Eight was the inaugural winner of the scholarship in 2023.

The Visa New Zealand Hospitality Scholarship is supported by the Hospitality Training Trust.

For more information and full details on application criteria visit <https://visawoap.com/visa-nz-hospitality-scholarship>

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About Visa Wellington On a Plate

Visa Wellington On a Plate is the largest culinary festival in the southern hemisphere, held in August. Festival goers can explore a curated programme of festival events, pop-ups, chef collaborations and burgers. Currently in its 16th year, Visa Wellington On a Plate is firmly established as a key event in the festival calendar for people across the Wellington region and New Zealand.

www.VisaWOAP.com

About The Wellington Culinary Events Trust

The Wellington Culinary Events Trust is a not-for-profit trust established in 2014 to run iconic culinary events including Visa Wellington On a Plate and Beervana.

www.wcet.org.nz