



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VETERAN WINEMAKER – DAVID SHEPPARD, CELEBRATES 40th VINTAGE IN STYLE

April 1st, 2021 – After completing his 40th vintage during the 2020 harvest, pioneering winemaker David Sheppard has announced that he will be stepping back from his winemaking position effective June 30th, 2021. “We are ecstatic for Dave! Over the last four decades he has been a driving force in the development of not just Flat Rock Cellars, but the entire Niagara wine industry” says Ed Madronich, President of Flat Rock Cellars. He adds, “the vineyards and production of our wines have continued to improve with every vintage since Dave took the reigns.”

Originally from Niagara-On-The-Lake, Dave got his start in the Mittelrhein region of Germany in 1980 when he worked for a small family-run winery. After that he returned home and worked for 21 years at Inniskillin in Niagara-on-the-Lake under the tutelage of renowned Canadian wine icon, the late Karl Kaiser. During that time Dave had the good fortune of working in Burgundy at Clos de Epeneaux in Pommard and Maison Louis Latour in Aloxe-Corton. During this period at Inniskillin, Karl and Dave catapulted Canadian wine into the global spotlight after receiving the most prestigious award in the wine world at Vin Expo, France - the Grand Prix d'Honneur for the 1989 Vidal Icewine.

In 2003, Dave joined Coyote's Run as founding winemaker where he gained notoriety for the wines he made there. He crafted the iconic Red Paw and Black Pinot Noirs, two distinctly terroir driven wines from the property that helped new wine consumers better understand a wine's sense of place.

The final stage of his career saw Dave join the team at Flat Rock Cellars in 2017 where he brought his expertise and continued to push forward the level of quality wines that people have come to expect from Flat Rock. Winemaking was the job, but Dave has been a mentor and friend to many in the industry including our up-and-comer Allison Findlay who has been the Assistant Winemaker at Flat Rock Cellars since 2016. While Dave will be stepping out of the spotlight and handing the reigns over to Findlay, he will be around in a consulting capacity. Throughout 2021-22 there will be several special events and tributes to honour Dave's contributions to the world of wine.

With his well-deserved spare time, Dave is looking forward to travelling, perfecting his drumming skills which were often used on weekends at the winery and spending more time with his family at the cottage. “I am really grateful for the opportunity and support from Ed and the team. I'm proud of where we have taken Flat Rock Cellars and excited to see what Allison does from here. The sky is the limit!”, states Sheppard.

About Flat Rock Cellars

Flat Rock Cellars is an architecturally unique, five-level gravity flow winery surrounded by 80 acres of vineyards, located on the Twenty Mile Bench in Jordan, Ontario; specializing in Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Riesling. Flat Rock Cellars was established based on a commitment and the inextinguishable passion of its founders. The winery is guided by the mastery of modern techniques where viticulture and winemaking come together with architecture and hospitality to create an experience as memorable as it is enjoyable.

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