



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Lisa Adams Walter

707-696-5006 ~ lisa@adamswalter.com

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A Homecoming like No Other At the 19th Annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction

Grand Finale to Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Presented by Visa Signature
Set for September 4, 2011 at Cline Cellars

(Sonoma County, CALIF.) — A “grown-up” tailgate party featuring classic and vintage winery trucks will be the first stop for auction-goers at the nineteenth annual **Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction sponsored by Trilogy Glass & Packaging** at Cline Cellars on **Sunday, September 4, 2011**. With a theme of “Sonoma Homecoming – Vintage 2011” characters such as cheerleaders, athletes, marching band members and homecoming queens are sure to rally spirits at the auction which will be the culminating event of the three-day **Sonoma Wine Country Weekend** set for **Labor Day Weekend September 2 – 4, 2011**.

While the “Vintage Homecoming” theme nods to the past, after nearly two decades, the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction has matured into a high-end, world-class charitable fundraiser that features many of Sonoma County’s hottest vintners and their highly-sought wines, as well as top-notch wine country chefs. Tickets to the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction and all Sonoma Wine Country Weekend events are on sale now at www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com.

“This year attendees will experience an elegant tail-gate party featuring Sonoma wines before gathering in the Wine Spectator tent for the fast-paced live auction with Auctioneer Fritz Hatton,” said **Maureen Cottingham**, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Co-Producer, “Every table will be hosted by a Sonoma County vintner, and the menu prepared by a team of all-star chefs. The day will end with a celebratory post-auction party and special ‘Class Reunion Wine Bar’ keeping in the theme of ‘Sonoma Homecoming – Vintage 2011.’”

The auction also features a gourmet luncheon highlighting the abundance of Sonoma County prepared by an enviable line-up of Sonoma chefs. The menu includes chilled corn soup with Dungeness crab, Black Pig prosciutto wrapped in watermelon, heirloom tomato and burrata salad, seared salmon, Kobe beef sliders and smoke-roasted BBQ pork loin. Participating chefs include: **Carlo Cavallo**, Meritage Martini Oyster Bar & Grille; **Duskie Estes**, zazu restaurant & farm; **Antonio Ghilarducci**, Depot Restaurant; **Jeff Mall**, Zin Restaurant & Wine Bar; **Thomas Schmidt**, John Ash & Co.; **Josh Silvers**, Petite Syrah Restaurant; **John Toulze**, the girl & the fig; **Justin Wangler**, Kendall-Jackson Wine Estates; **Brian West**, ESTATE and **Andrew Wilson**, Carneros Bistro & Wine Bar. **Bruce Riezenman** of Park Avenue Catering is the Culinary Director.

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Some of the hottest offering of the 35 lots that will be auctioned off to benefit a wide array of Sonoma County charitable organizations include:

- **A Sparkling Breakfast at Tiffany's** – A weekend for four in San Francisco with Joy Sterling of Iron Horse Vineyard featuring a private Breakfast at Tiffany & Co. on Union Square , complete with Iron Horse sparkling wine. Also includes a Gift Certificate from Tiffany & Co. toward a piece of diamond jewelry, a VIP Winemaker Dinner for four at Jardinière before an evening at the San Francisco Ballet and other sparkling surprises!
- **Visa Signature's New York City Culinary and Shopping Dream Come True at the Plaza Hotel** – Visit New York City and stay at the incomparable [Plaza Hotel](#) which is part of the Visa Signature Luxury Hotel Collection. The winning bidders will also experience a once-in-a-lifetime meal prepared by famed chefs Mario Batali, Nancy Silverton, Marc Vetri and Michael White at the James Beard Foundation Annual Gala Dinner and Auction at Guastavino's as well as a dinner of progressive American cuisine at Charlie Palmer's highly-acclaimed Aureole New York. In between the luxurious accommodations and enviable meals, a \$2000 Visa gift card for a shopping spree will make dreams come true in the city that never sleeps.
- **Desert Escape with Kosta Browne Winery** – An amazing weekend of golf, spas and outstanding food and wine with Dan Kosta, founder of Kosta Browne Winery including private jet transportation on XOJET to Scottsdale, Arizona as well as a stay at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess. A private wine dinner and tasting with the Kosta Browne Boys Dan Kosta and Michael Browne at one of their homes also included.
- **Buena Vista Winery - Around the World Wine Excursion** – As a tribute to the 150th anniversary of the Buena Vista Winery Vinicultural Society, Boisset Wines has graciously created an amazing 10-day international tour of some of the world's top wine regions for the winning bidder and three guests, which will cover Sonoma, Burgundy and Piedmont and include outstanding food and accommodations along with memorable wines at every stop.
- **Boys and their Toys with Dutton Ranch** – 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Honorary Co-Chair the Dutton Family has put together an amazing experience for the person who enjoys wine, sports cars, and once-in-a-lifetime adventures. Included in this weekend road rally to Palm Springs will be golf, wine dinners, use of a sports car and luxury accommodations.
- **Benziger Family Winery Senior Prom Party** – The Junior and Senior classes at the Benziger Academy of Fine Wine are planning the 2012 Senior Prom, "Save the Last Drink for Me," for July 2012. This Senior Prom will have plenty of exceptional wines from Benziger and Imagery along with food and live entertainment. Prom dresses, pastel tuxes, and seersuckers, befitting that of Prom King and Queen encouraged.
- **London with Sir Peter and Lady Michael and Rolls Royce** – For the car and wine enthusiast comes a unique opportunity to celebrate the best of London both stateside and abroad by winning this incredible lot, which includes tickets to the Goodwood Festival of Speed sponsored by Bonham, a tour of the Rolls Royce Factory, a winemaker dinner with Sir Peter and Lady Michael, Lord March, Richard Harvey, MW and Jancis Robinson, MW at Goodwood (Rolls Royce), a stay at London's Savoy Hotel—and then stateside, a tour and tasting at the famed Peter Michael Winery complete with a collection of specially selected Peter Michael wines.

Additional live lots range from a Giants game and dinner with Bruce Bochy from Jordan Vineyard & Winery, to an insider's experience at the Sonoma Valley Film Festival and Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards, to a vineyard adventure and other treats at Pride Mountain Vineyards.

For those who cannot attend the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction and would like to participate in the charitable effort, an online auction of additional lots, including many of Sonoma County's finest large format wine bottles and exclusive experiences, is open for bidding through September 9, 2011 at

<http://www.winecountryweekend.biddingforgood.com>.

Produced in partnership by the **Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation** and the **Sonoma County Vintners**, the 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend event features the **Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®** as well as the **Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars** and an assortment of additional events throughout Sonoma County. More than 200 Sonoma County wineries, grapegrowers and chefs participate in **Sonoma Wine Country Weekend**, which is presented by **Visa Signature®**.

Proceeds from Sonoma Wine Country Weekend benefit local communities and charities serving students, children, farm workers and people in need. To date, more than \$10 million has been raised jointly by the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners.

Tickets to the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars sponsored by Trilogy Glass & Packaging, are on sale now. Presenting Sponsor Visa Signature is also offering cardholders event perks and savings. For more information visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com, like it on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/winecountryweekend> and follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/SonomaWCW>.

2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Schedule At-A-Glance

Friday, September 2 and Saturday, September 3 – Winery Lunch and Dinner Parties

12:30 p.m. – Winery Lunch Series, sponsored by TricorBraun WinePak (Fri. only)

6:00 p.m. -- Winery Dinner Parties, sponsored by TricorBraun WinePak (Fri. & Sat.)

Saturday, September 3 – Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch, Healdsburg

11 a.m. - 4 p.m. – Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch

Sunday September 4 – Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars, Sonoma and Winery BBQs

12:30 p.m. – Winery BBQs across Sonoma County

1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction, sponsored by Trilogy Glass & Packaging

2:30 p.m. – Live Auction Begins

Tickets

Winery Lunches: \$85/person; **Winery Dinner Parties:** \$160/person

Chairman's Dinners: \$175/person

Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®: \$150/person (General), \$95/person (General Visa Signature) \$195/person (Grand Reserve) \$175/person (Grand Reserve Visa Signature)

Winery BBQs: \$85/person

Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction: \$500/person (General), \$450/person (Visa Signature)

*** *Special Visa Signature Cardholder pricing and other benefits available at*** www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com

About Visa Signature®

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by **Visa Signature**, a premium consumer payment card bringing cardholders instant access to dozens of perks in addition to the points, miles, or cash back they may already earn. Cardholder perks include access to and discounts at Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, complimentary 24-hour concierge services to assist with travel and entertainment planning, exclusive hotel perks through the Visa Signature Luxury Hotel Collection, and much more. For complete information visit www.visa.com/signature.

About MacMurray Ranch

Nestled in the heart of the Russian River Valley, the historic MacMurray Ranch is home to award-winning Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Gris. MacMurray Ranch crafts a collection of elegant, expressive wines from cool-climate vineyards in premier growing regions. Look for MacMurray Ranch at fine wine shops and dining establishments nationwide, or visit us online at www.macmurrayranch.com.

About 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Sponsors and Beneficiaries

A partnership **between Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation** and **Sonoma County Vintners**, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is California's premier wine, food and social event, taking place on Labor Day weekend each year. The events comprising Sonoma Wine Country Weekend have raised over \$10 million in support to local charities that benefit students, children, farm workers and people in need. The 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by Visa Signature®. In addition to Visa Signature, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend sponsors include: TricorBraun WinePak, MacMurray Ranch®, Trilogy Glass & Packaging, Wine Spectator, Wall Street Journal, San Francisco Magazine, Cline Cellars and Jacuzzi Family Vineyards. For a complete list of beneficiaries and sponsors, please visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com.

About Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance and Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is a non-profit trade organization serving over 500 members who share a mission to promote awareness of Sonoma Valley's grapes, wine, and history as the birthplace of the California wine industry. The Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Foundation (SVVGF) is a non-profit 501c.3 organization that has raised over \$8,000,000 for local Sonoma Valley charities. For more information on the SVVGA and SVVGF, please visit www.SonomaValleyWine.com.

Sonoma County Vintners (SCV) is the leading voice of Sonoma County wine, dedicated to raising awareness of Sonoma County as one of the world's premier wine regions, noted for its heritage of artisan winemaking, distinct growing regions, and extraordinary quality. Founded in 1944, SCV represents more than 175 wineries of all sizes throughout the county. Learn more about SCV at www.SonomaWine.com.

Journalists: High-resolution artwork is immediately available. For more information, to speak with an event representative or to inquire about press credentials for the 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend please email or call **Lisa Adams Walter at (707) 255-0300 or lisa@adamswalter.com**. For more information visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com, like it on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/winecountryweekend> and follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/SonomaWCW>.

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