



Tickets on Sale June 1 For Sonoma County's Biggest Wine and Food Event of the Year!

**Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Presented by Visa Signature® (September 3-5)
Features Acclaimed Taste of Sonoma, Legendary Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction and
Exclusive Winemaker Lunches and Dinners**

Proceeds Benefit Local Sonoma Charities Serving Youth, Farmworkers and Families in Need

Sonoma County, CA (May 26, 2010) It's that time of year again... the poster has been printed, the [auction](#) lots are being assembled, the chefs are planning their menus and **tickets are going on sale June 1** for Sonoma County's biggest party of the year. [Sonoma Wine Country Weekend](#), presented by [Visa Signature®](#), will take place September 3-5 throughout [Sonoma County](#). The three-day, grape-to-glass harvest celebration combines the prestigious **Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®** and the iconic **Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction Presented by Trilogy Glass & Packaging** at Cline Cellars with a series of intimate winery-hosted lunches and dinners. In all, more than 200 world class growers, wineries and chefs will take part in what has been hailed as California's largest outdoor food and wine event – and one that has, over the years, raised more than \$10 million for local Sonoma charities. Tickets to Sonoma Wine Country Weekend can be purchased, beginning June 1 at www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com. Visa Signature cardholders receive special savings and event perks when they use their card to purchase tickets.

Three Days. Two Hundred Wineries and Chefs. One Unforgettable Sonoma Wine Country Experience

For three days, wine, food and travel enthusiasts from all over the world converge in the birthplace of California wine for a unique “insider” opportunity to celebrate the grape harvest in a series of events that showcase the region's farm-to-table bounty and the more than 200 acclaimed growers, vintners and chefs who comprise Sonoma County's artisan wine and food community.

Honorary Chairs: St. Francis Winery & Vineyards

In recognition of their significant contribution to advancing the image of the region's grapes and wines, St. Francis Winery & Vineyards has been selected as Honorary Chairs for 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend. As honorary chairs, St. Francis Winery & Vineyards will serve as spokespeople for the event, as well as hosts of the special “Chairman's Dinner” on Saturday, September 4.



Event Schedule and Venues

Winemaker Dinners and Lunches Presented by Caliber WinePak

Friday and Saturday, September 3, 4 at various winery venues

12:30pm - Winemaker Lunches, \$85/person

6:00 pm - Winemaker & Specialty "Varietal" Dinners, \$160/person, \$175/person Specialty Dinners

Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®

Saturday, September 4, 11am – 4pm

General - \$150/person

Visa Signature Cardholder General Ticket - \$95/person

Grand Reserve - \$195/person

Visa Signature® Cardholder Grand Reserve - \$175/person

Chairman's Dinner Hosted by Honorary Chair St. Francis Winery & Vineyards

Saturday, September 4, 6:00pm

\$175/person

Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction Presented by Trilogy Glass & Packaging at Cline Cellars

Sunday September 5, 11am - Silent Auction Preview, 1pm - Live Auction

General - \$500/person

Visa Signature Cardholder - \$450/person

Tickets for all events available at www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com

Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®: An Annual Gathering of More than 200 Acclaimed Wineries and Chefs

Wine lovers and foodies alike can immerse themselves in Sonoma's world class food and wine culture at the Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch® from 11am – 4pm on Saturday, September 4 in the vineyards of Sonoma's historic MacMurray Ranch®. More than 200 award winning wineries and chefs will be on hand to showcase their talents in a gala tasting set among the vines at the storied ranch formerly owned by actor Fred MacMurray. In addition to the boundless opportunities to sip and savor the diversity of Sonoma's rich *farm-to-table* heritage, visitors can deepen their Sonoma experience through a series of informative and entertaining wine seminars, cooking demonstrations and vineyard tours. Grand Reserve ticket holders (\$195/person versus \$150 for general admission) will enjoy special access to rare, hard-to-find and limited edition wines offered in Club Reserve. **Named one of the 10 Best Wine & Food Events in the United States by Celebrated Living Magazine**, Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch® presents attendees with unparalleled access to Sonoma's unmatched wines and cuisine.



Nestled in the heart of the Russian River Valley, the historic MacMurray Ranch® is home to award-winning Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Gris. Winemaker Susan Doyle 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 online at www.macmurrayranch.com.

Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction Presented by Trilogy Glass & Packaging: The Weekend's Grand Finale and the Year's Biggest Party

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend culminates with the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction, taking place Sunday September 5 on the grounds of Cline Cellars in Sonoma. Doors open at 11am with auctioneer Fritz Hatton getting the live auction underway at 1pm in the [Wine Spectator](#) Auction Tent. Having raised more than \$8 million dollars for local charities since its inception, the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction is famous for its irreverent skits, lavish auction lots, and record breaking charitable donations. Surf's Up! This year's auction goes **California Beach Party** with the tagline "**Endless Sonoma**" as in endless wine, endless food and endless fun. Board shorts, puka shells and flip flops will be *de rigueur* as Sonoma Valley's most celebrated growers and vintners take to the stage to introduce this year's auction lots, cowabunga-style.

In addition to the auction's legendary display of fine wine, culinary extravagance and incomparable hospitality, ticket holders will enjoy full access to all pre and post auction festivities and lounge parties. Tables for the live auction will be hosted by, and feature the wines of, Sonoma's most prestigious growers and vintners, allowing ticket holders the opportunity to select their preferred table assignments, based upon availability.

Winemaker Lunch and Dinner Series Presented by Caliber WinePak: An Exclusive Invitation to Dine with Sonoma's Most Acclaimed Vintners

From Friday afternoon through Saturday evening, more than 40 of Sonoma County's most renowned vintners will open their homes, vineyards and cellar doors for a series of intimate lunches and dinners. From elaborate multi-course meals prepared by renowned chefs, to small, intimate dinners at the winemakers' private homes, guests will enjoy an exclusive insider experience.



Winemaker Lunch and Dinner Highlights include:

- Cabernet Sauvignon Varietal Dinner hosted by **Chateau St. Jean** featuring the wines of this venerable Sonoma Valley producer, as well as those from co-hosts **Atmosphere Wines, Hidden Ridge Vineyard, Moon Mountain Vineyard** and **Rodney Strong Vineyards**.
- An afternoon of epicurean delights and expressive wines on the croquet terrace of the beautiful **Sonoma-Cutrer Vineyards** in Russian River Valley.
- A picture perfect evening of sumptuous foods, world class wines and spectacular surroundings featuring the estate wines paired with seasonal cuisine from the estate gardens of Alexander Valley's **Lancaster Estate**.
- Rustic northern Italian fare, inaugural release tasting, estate grown heirloom rose bouquets for the ladies and Jazz standards from torch singer Sheila Whitney at the newly re-born, historic **Annadel Estate Winery** in Sonoma Valley.
- Al fresco dining with sweeping valley and vineyard views accompanied by the musical stylings of the Susan Comstock Swingtet at the newly renovated **Francis Ford Coppola Winery** in Alexander Valley.
- Inventive five course "estate grown" dinner created by Chef Joe Reuter, The Green Grocer, and served in the estate gardens. Estate preserves and copies of the dinner recipes for guests at **Quivira Winery** in Dry Creek Valley.
- Walking tour and olive oil tasting followed by four course meal featuring the produce and animals raised at the biodynamically farmed **DaVero Farm & Winery** in Russian River Valley.

Seating for the Winemaker Lunch and Dinner Series is extremely limited and sells out quickly. Those wishing to attend are advised to purchase tickets as soon as they become available on June 1 at www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com.

Online Auction: Bidding is Just a Click Away

For the third year, those who can't make it to the auction in person or wish to get an early start on bidding may do so online at www.WineCountryWeekend.cMarket.com beginning August 1. This pre-auction online bidding is being made available through Bidding for Good, an on-demand, online auction platform designed solely for organizations engaged in fundraising for nonprofit causes. Visitors to the site can bid on select lots ranging in value from \$100 - \$5,000.



About 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Sponsors and Beneficiaries

A partnership between Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is the area's largest wine and food fundraiser, having jointly donated more than \$10 million to local charities that support students, children, farm workers and people in need. The 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by Visa Signature, whose cardholders will receive exclusive benefits throughout the event. In addition to Visa Signature, the 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is being made possible by the following sponsors: **Caliber WinePak, MacMurray Ranch®, Trilogy Glass & Packaging, Wine Spectator, San Francisco Magazine, Cline Cellars and Jacuzzi Family Vineyards.** For a complete list of beneficiaries and sponsors of the 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, please visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com.

About Visa Signature

The 2010 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by Visa Signature. Visa Signature cardholders will receive exclusive savings and perks throughout the event. From benefits that save time to benefits that help to safeguard purchases, Visa Signature helps cardholders get the most out of life. Visa Signature offers cardholders a range of benefits and perks, in addition to a number of rewards programs that may be offered by Visa Signature partners, such as airline, hotel and cash back programs. Visa Signature cardholders enjoy complimentary concierge services, the Visa Signature Luxury Hotel Collection, complimentary wine tastings at more than 60 Sonoma County wineries year-round, and premium merchant offers, as well as preferred access and seating at epicurean events, premier concerts, Broadway shows, and sporting events such as the Olympics and FIFA World Cup™. For more information about Visa Signature, visit www.visa.com/signature.

About Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance and Foundation

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is a non-profit trade organization serving over 500 vintners, growers and associates 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 through the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction. For more information on the SVVGA and SVVGF, please call 707-935-0803 or visit www.SonomaValleyWine.com.



About Sonoma County Vintners

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. www.SonomaWine.com.

###

Media: Michael Coats 707-935-6203
michael@coatspr.com
Marty LaPlante 707-939-1243
mlpspotzy@aol.com