

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**SAVE THE DATE: 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sonoma Wine Country Weekend,  
September 4-6<sup>th</sup>**

**Presented by Visa Signature, this three day celebration combines Showcase: Taste of Sonoma and the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction**

**Sonoma, Ca (March 18, 2009)** Mark your calendars for Sonoma's premier food, wine and social fundraiser of the year. The Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers, in partnership with the Sonoma County Vintners have announced the date and preliminary details – including the auction theme and honorary chairs - for the **2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend**, which takes place over Labor Day Weekend, **September 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**. One of the country's top wine events, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend brings together hundreds of artisan growers, vintners and culinary stars in a series of events that showcase the breadth and diversity of Sonoma's distinct wine regions, while **raising more than \$10 million for local charities**. Visa Signature returns again this year as presenting sponsor, offering cardholders event perks and savings, including access to an exclusive ticket presale starting May 1. The general public will be able to purchase event tickets, weekend passes and packages beginning on **June 1<sup>st</sup>** at [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com).

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

For three days, visitors from all over the world converge in the birthplace of California wine for a pre-harvest celebration that combines two of Sonoma's signature events – the prestigious Showcase: Taste of Sonoma and the iconic Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction – with a series of intimate winemaker-hosted lunches and dinners. This is a unique “insider” opportunity to celebrate the harvest season and enjoy the bounty of more than 200 acclaimed growers, vintners and chefs who comprise Sonoma's artisan wine and food community.

## **Event Schedule and Venues\***

### Friday September 4<sup>th</sup> – Various winery venues

12:30pm Winemaker Lunches  
6pm Winemaker & Specialty “Varietal” Dinners  
Lunch - \$75/person  
Dinner - \$160/person, \$175 Specialty Dinners

### Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup> – MacMurray Ranch, Healdsburg

11am – 4pm Showcase: Taste of Sonoma  
\$150/person – General  
\$175/person - VIP  
\$95/person – Visa Signature cardholder

### Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup> – Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa

6pm “Chairman’s Dinner” Hosted by the Sangiacomo Family  
\$175 /person

### Sunday September 6<sup>th</sup> - Cline Cellars, Sonoma

11am – 6pm Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction  
1pm Live Auction  
\$500/person  
\$450/person, Visa Signature cardholder

\*Visa Signature cardholders receive special perks and savings.

Visit [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com) for detailed ticket and event information and updates.

## **Honorary Chairs: The Sangiacomo Family**

In recognition of their significant contribution to advancing the image of Sonoma grapes and wines, the Sangiacomo family has been selected as Honorary Chairs for 2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend. This marks the first time that a grape grower has been named Chairman for the event. Sonoma valley natives since 1927, the Sangiacomo family first planted grapes in Carneros in 1969. Since then, three generations of Sangiacomos have overseen a family business that has risen to become one of the most respected in viticulture. Today the Sangiacomo family farms over 1,300 acres of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon with an unwavering commitment to the land, the grapes and the wines they produce. It is no wonder, then, that the “Sangiacomo Family Vineyard” designation has become one of the most coveted by winemakers and wine connoisseurs alike. As honorary chairs, the Sangiacomo family will

serve as spokespeople for the event, as well as hosts of the special “Chairman’s Dinner” on Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Showcase: Taste of Sonoma: A Once a Year 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 30th Annual Showcase: Taste of Sonoma from 11am – 4pm on Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup> at MacMurray Ranch Vineyards in Healdsburg. 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 historic ranch 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. **New this year:** VIP ticket holders (\$175/person versus \$150 for general admission) will enjoy special access to rare, hard-to-find and limited edition wines offered at the Reserve Tasting. Named one of the 10 Best Wine & Food Events in the United States by Celebrated Living Magazine, Showcase: Taste of Sonoma presents attendees with unparalleled access to Sonoma’s unmatched wines and cuisine.

### **Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction: The Weekend’s Grand Finale and the Year’s Biggest Party**

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend culminates with the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction, taking place Sunday September 6<sup>th</sup> on the grounds of Cline Cellars in Sonoma. Doors open at 11am with the live auction getting 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. Sporting the tagline, “Party with *Us* and You’ll Want to Come Bacchus” this year’s Greco-Roman theme will be played out in a series of unforgettable performances by Sonoma’s best known growers and winemakers, who will introduce each lot channeling the spirit of Bacchus. **New this year:** In addition to the auction’s legendary display of fine wine, culinary extravagance and incomparable hospitality, this year’s ticket holders will enjoy full access to all pre and post auction festivities and lounge parties. Also, for the first time, 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.

### **Online Auction: Back by Popular Demand**

For the second 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.cMarket.WineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.cMarket.WineCountryWeekend.com) beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>. This pre-auction online bidding is being made available through cMarket, 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 2009 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 donated more than \$10 million to local charities that support students, children, farm workers and people in need.

The 2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by Visa Signature, whose cardholders will receive exclusive benefits 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. In addition to a choice of numerous airline, hotel and other premium reward partners, cardholders enjoy access to around-the-clock complimentary concierge services; epicurean events and reservations at the hottest restaurants; premium merchant offers; and access to exclusive events such as the Olympics, Super Bowl and the Tony Awards, as well as preferred access and seating at local sporting events, concerts and movie screenings. For more information about Visa Signature, visit [www.visa.com/signature](http://www.visa.com/signature).

Other partners include Media Sponsors Wine Spectator, Gourmet Magazine and San Francisco Magazine; Executive Sponsor, MacMurray Ranch Vineyards and Winery Sponsors, Cline Cellars and Jacuzzi Family Vineyards. For a complete list of beneficiaries and sponsors of the 2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, please visit [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com).

### **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](http://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](http://www.sonomawine.com).

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