

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance**  
**Presents “1<sup>st</sup> Annual Gingerbread Winery Contest”**

SONOMA, Calif. (November 20, 2006) – Visitors to the wineries of Sonoma Valley will have something extra to enjoy this holiday season as several wineries take part in the **First Annual Gingerbread Winery Contest**. Wineries will use in-house chefs, local bakeries, or their own dedicated team of winery staff to create gingerbread likenesses of their winery, which will then be on display in their tasting rooms from December 1 through 24.

This wonderful new holiday tradition creates a fun and exciting outing that can be enjoyed by the entire family. Tasting room visitors can sample Sonoma Valley's fine wines, select from great gifts, and vote for their favorite Gingerbread Winery. Guests can pick up a map and a ballot at any of the participating wineries and cast their ballots for the “People’s Choice Award.” As an added bonus, each time voters cast a ballot they’ll be entered into a raffle to win a case of Sonoma Valley wines.

The Gingerbread Wineries will be judged on appearance, creativity, difficulty and precision. They can be of any size, but must be made entirely of hand-made gingerbread. Any additional decorations used must be edible as well.

The Gingerbread Winery Contest started as a friendly challenge from Ramona Nicholson of Nicholson Ranch Winery to fellow Sonoma Valley wineries. Nicholson Ranch’s tasting room manager, Charles Whittaker, has been reviewing the architectural drawings of the winery for weeks in hopes of making his gingerbread creation as accurate as possible.

At Chateau St. Jean, the Gingerbread Winery will be constructed by their chef, Rachel Robenolt. Fat Angel Bakery will create the Gingerbread Winery at Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves. The “Kaz Famfamily” is working together to create their own Gingerbread Winery and offering tasting room visitors holiday snacks and hot apple cider all month long.

Landmark Vineyards' structure will feature the beautiful Spanish Mission architecture for which Landmark is known. Deanna Holzapfel of Landmark and her husband, Gavin, an architect at AXIA Architects in Santa Rosa, are also using the original blueprints to create their gingerbread masterpiece. Benziger's Graphic Designer, Paulette Nolan, is creating their rendition. And at Castle, Sebastiani and Cline Cellars, their in-house team from the sales, marketing and hospitality will join forces and try to create the winning Gingerbread Winery.

The entire list of participating wineries includes: Benziger Family Winery, Castle Vineyards & Winery, Chateau St. Jean, Cline Cellars, Gloria Ferrer Champagne Caves, Kaz Vineyard & Winery, Landmark Vineyards, Nicholson Ranch, and Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery.

The first place winner of the Gingerbread Winery Contest and the winner of the raffle will be announced on January 8, 2007. For more information, call (707) 935-0803 or visit [www.sonomavalleywine.com](http://www.sonomavalleywine.com).

#### **About the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA)**

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) was formed in 1992 through a merger of the Sonoma Valley Vintners Association and the Sonoma Valley Grape Growers Association. Hundreds of vintners and growers share a mission to promote Sonoma Valley wines and grapes, support cooperation and collaboration among vintners and growers, and develop community awareness of the industry. For more information on the SVVGA, please call 707.935.0803 or visit the Web site at [www.sonomavalleywine.com](http://www.sonomavalleywine.com).

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