



Second Annual Gingerbread Winery Contest Highlights
Sonoma Valley's *Holiday in the Vines* Celebration

Local Wineries Welcome Holiday Visitors with Special Events, Performances, Shopping,
Wines, Food and More

Sonoma, CA (November 19, 2007) For those looking to make holiday plans, start a new tradition, shop for special gifts or just soak up the sights, sounds and flavors of the season, Sonoma Valley's Vintners and Growers Alliance (SVVGA) has announced plans for this year's **Holiday in the Vines Celebration**, which runs November 23rd - January 6th at wineries throughout Sonoma Valley. Highlighted by the second annual **Gingerbread Winery Contest**, this year's Holiday in the Vines Celebration offers visitors six weeks of seasonal open houses, after hours shopping, holiday performances and of course plenty of the finest food and wine.

The Gingerbread Winery Contest (December 1st - 31st)

What started as a friendly challenge from Ramona Nicholson of **Nicholson Ranch** to fellow Sonoma Valley wineries is now one of the valley's most popular and highly anticipated traditions. In an effort to outdo each other, competing wineries pull out all the stops to erect the most elaborate likeness of their winery, which they display in their tasting rooms throughout the month of December. Winery visitors 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.

Last year's winner, **Landmark Vineyards**, is defending their title with an entry created by Becoming Independent of Santa Rosa and will feature the beautiful Spanish Mission architecture for which Landmark Winery is known. **Little Vineyards Family Winery** is turning to local pastry chef Jen Demerest, owner of Sonoma's newest hot spot Harvest Moon Café, while Susan Stone of Yucatan Sunset Products & Catering will be creating a gingerbread replica of the Redder the Better Lodge at **Homewood Winery**. The winners of the Gingerbread Winery Contest and raffle will be announced on January 8, 2008. For more information on the Gingerbread Winery Contest, including a full list of participating wineries, visit www.sonomavalleywine.com.

Holiday in the Vines Celebration (November 23rd – January 6th)

With close to twenty wineries participating this year, Holiday in the Vines offers something for everyone; from family fun for all ages to special wines for the collector. For their part, **Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery** will swing open their doors from 5pm-8pm November 23rd and December 20th for an after-hours shopping spree that includes gourmet food sampling, special discounts, free grab bags (with \$50 purchase while supplies last) and live holiday entertainment from contemporary guitarist Don Trotta

(www.sebastiani.com). Over at **Gundlach Bundschu**, they're ringing in the season on December 1st from 12pm – 4pm with their Annual Holiday Open House and Toy Drive to benefit “Children’s Race to the Holidays”. Revelers will enjoy delicious holiday treats by Grapevine Catering, special cave tastings of rare library wines, the beautiful sounds of the season and the opportunity to take part in a worthy cause (www.gunbun.com). From November 30th – December 2nd, **Nicholson Ranch** will present “The Gift” and “The Gift of the Magi”; two one-act plays per evening performed by local thespians. Shows begin at 7 pm preceded at 6:30 pm by performances from talented 12 year old Melissa Mullen on harp and The Valley Girls singing a capella carols (www.nicholsonranch.com). Join **Schug Carneros Estate Winery** each weekend in December for a rare tasting of Magnum Library Wines from their cellar; a great opportunity to purchase the perfect wine lover’s gift (www.shugwinery.com). **Ledson Winery** will be celebrating the 12 Days of Ledson December 1-2nd, 7-9th, 14-16th and 21-24th. For \$25, guests to the winery will enjoy a selection of tempting holiday dishes paired with award winning wines, as well as a chance to win great prizes spinning the “Ledson Wheel of Fortune” (www.ledson.com). **Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards** will celebrate the traditions of their Spanish heritage with two unique events. On December 8th at 11:00 am they will host a sit down Catalan Holiday Luncheon featuring reception, private winery tour and traditional feast pairing the winery’s sparkling wines with Catalan cuisine. On December 30th Gloria Ferrer will host “El Dia de Los Reyes Magos”, the traditional Spanish festival celebrating the journey of the Three Kings. Visitors will enjoy special performances by members of the local choral group, hot chocolate served with the traditional Kings Day treat, Roscon, and a special gift for each child from the Three Kings (www.gloriaferrer.com). Of course we can’t forget Santa! The jolly giver of gifts will be making a special appearance at **Larson Family Winery** from 1pm – 4pm on December 15th, 16th, 22nd and 23rd. Guests of all ages can have their picture taken with Santa for free with wine purchase (by adults only, of course!). Santa will be joined by his trusted side kick, Rudolph the Red Nosed Wine Deer and Frosty the Sonoman! (www.larsonfamilywinery.com). For more information on the Holidays in the Vines Celebration including a full list of participating wineries and events, visit www.sonomavalleywine.com.

About the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA)

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, terroir and history as the birthplace of the California wine industry. The Sonoma Valley Vintners and Growers Foundation (SVVGF) is a non-profit organization that has raised over \$7,000,000 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.

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