



Update: Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, Presented by Visa Signature, September 3-5

Details Announced for the 31st Annual Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch

“California’s Biggest Outdoor Food and Wine Event” - Santa Rosa Press Democrat
“One of the 10 Best Wine & Food Events in the U.S.” - Celebrated Living Magazine

Sonoma County, CA (August 6, 2010) Organizers of this year’s [Sonoma Wine Country Weekend presented by Visa Signature®](#) have announced details for the [Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®](#), which is part of the three day series of events that includes the [Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars presented by Trilogy Glass and Packaging](#) and [Winemaker Lunch and Dinner Series presented by Caliber WinePak](#) at venues throughout the county. More than 200 award winning wineries and chefs will be on hand Saturday, September 4th from 11am – 4pm to showcase their talents in a gala celebration set among the vines of the storied ranch formerly owned by actor Fred MacMurray. In addition to the boundless opportunities to sip and savor the diversity of Sonoma County’s rich *farm-to-table* heritage, attendees can deepen their Sonoma experience through a series of informative and entertaining wine seminars, cooking demonstrations and vineyard tours.

General Admission (\$150/person) and Grand Reserve (\$195/person) tickets to this year’s Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch® can be purchased online at www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com. Grand Reserve ticket holders enjoy special access to rare, hard-to-find and limited edition wines offered in the exclusive Club Reserve. As with the entire weekend’s slate of events, Visa Signature® cardholders receive special savings and event perks when they use their card to purchase tickets.

Taste of Sonoma Highlights:

- **Shuttle Service:** Safe and convenient round trip transportation from Santa Rosa and Sonoma provided by Pure Luxury Transportation. For details and to reserve seating contact SWCWshuttle@pureluxury.com.

- **Club Reserve:** An exclusive opportunity for Grand Reserve ticket holders to hob-nob with Sonoma County's most acclaimed winery owners and winemakers, who will personally pour and discuss their limited production, reserve and award-winning wines from large format bottles. Visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend for a list of featured wineries.
- **Sonoma Appellation Grand Wine & Food Tasting:** Stroll, sample and savor the bounty of wines and culinary delights presented by more than 200 of Sonoma County's top wineries and chefs.

New This Year: Increased AVA focus throughout Taste of Sonoma, with AVA-specific food and wine pairing in each of the 4 AVA tents as well as AVA-specific seminars in the White Barn.

- **Sommelier Stars Wine Tours presented by Southern Wine & Spirits and Rodney Strong Vineyards:** Sonoma Sommelier **Christopher Sawyer** and an all-star team of nationally acclaimed sommeliers lead 30-minute guided tasting tours through the Grand Tasting Tents, pointing out hidden gems, and new varieties while sharing their wine and food pairing expertise.

2010 Sommelier Stars Lineup:

Silvio Garcia, Ritz-Carlton, Atlanta, GA

Brent Fraser, Grouse Mountain Resorts, Vancouver, BC

Jason Zaleski, Cabernet Steakhouse, Alpharetta, GA

Marita Esteva, Kimpton Hotel and Restaurant Group, San Francisco

Petra Polakvicova, Epic Roasthouse, San Francisco

Noah Dranow, Michael Mina, San Francisco

Jessica Norris, Ritz-Carlton, Northstar

New this year - Sommelier Star Tour tickets will be available for purchase at \$20 per person; providing ticket holders with personal head sets to maximize their "insider" experience.

- **Taste of Sonoma Grill:** Certified Angus Beef®, California Lamb Board and Alaska Seafood® will be on hand all day to serve up tips and grilled-to-perfection samples.
- **The Gloria Ferrer Bubble Lounge:** Sonoma Valley's legendary Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards gets festive; pairing the winery's famed sparklers with unique culinary bites.
- **Crushpad:** The [Sonoma County Winegrape Commission](http://www.SonomaCountyWine.com) presents this unique harvest inspired, grape-to-glass experience, featuring tastings of freshly picked wine grapes, a demonstration of

basket pressing (and a taste of the results), and samples of a finished wine from the highlighted vineyard.

- **Sonoma Steel Chef Competition at the Viking Range Kitchen presented by Kendall-Jackson Wines:** Watch some of Sonoma County's top chefs in a fast paced, fun and educational competition for the coveted title of Sonoma County's Chef of Steel. New recipes, techniques and flavor enhancing demonstrations by top Sonoma Chefs throughout the day.
- **Wine Talk in the Wine Barn presented by American AgCredit:** A comprehensive lineup of informative wine seminars, lively panel discussions, and focused tastings with renowned winemakers from throughout Sonoma County. For a full list of seminars, visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com.
- **Sonoma County Marketplace:** An event-only opportunity to taste and purchase offerings from Sonoma's artisanal farms and purveyors.
New this year: The "green" grocer section features organic, biodynamic and sustainable foods.
- **TASTE 2.0:** Facebook, Twitter, Snooth & More! Taste of Sonoma has joined the social networking nation with computer terminals for uploading videos and photos, tweeting event updates, logging on to Snooth.com for reviews of wines tasted, and more.
New This Year: AT&T, the official carrier of Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, will provide enhanced AT&T cellular coverage.
- **Legacy of the Land: 150 Years on a Russian River Valley Ranch:** A never-before-seen exhibit from the MacMurray family archives, detailing ranch life from the late 19th Century to today; including Sonoma County's journey from subsistence farming to elite Pinot Noir growing.

Online Auction: Bidding is Just a Click Away

For the third year, those who can't make it to Sunday's auction in person or wish to get an early start on bidding may do so online at www.WineCountryWeekend.cMarket.com. 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.

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.

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®**; Visa Signature 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, Wall Street Journal, 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 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 have exclusive access to complimentary concierge services, the Visa Signature Luxury Hotel Collection, and complimentary wine tastings at more than 60 Sonoma County wineries year-round. Plus, cardholders enjoy premium merchant offers, as well as preferred access and seating at epicurean events, premier concerts, Broadway shows, and sporting events. 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.

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