



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Journalists:** High-Resolution Event Artwork  
Immediately Available

## Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is all about Wine *AND* Food

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Set for September 2 – 4, 2011  
Celebrating Sonoma Wine, Food and Lifestyle – Presented by Visa Signature

(Sonoma County, CALIF.) — Foodies who love wine will have even happier taste buds at the fourth annual **Sonoma Wine Country Weekend** set for **Labor Day Weekend September 2 – 4, 2011** as more than 200 Sonoma County wineries, grapegrowers and chefs are preparing for the three-day festival. **Sonoma Wine Country Weekend**, the premier wine and epicurean event that showcases the birthplace of California wine is presented by **Visa Signature®**.

The Benziger family of **Benziger Family Winery** and the Dutton family of **Dutton Ranch** are the respective vintner and winegrape grower honorary chairs for the 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend. Along with many other vintners, these families will be hosting intimate lunches, barbecues or dinner parties—many held in private homes—that reflect their personal style. Tickets to all Sonoma Wine Country Weekend events are on sale now at [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com).

“Our family has farmed in Sonoma County for more than 130 years where the bounty of our property fills the kitchen and the table,” said **Steve Dutton, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Honorary Co-Chair**, “We have some long-standing traditions, and in classic Dutton Ranch style we are hosting a rustic-yet-elegant ranch-style dinner party that will feature not only rare wines made from our vineyards, but also family recipes including homemade apple pie made from the fruit of our orchards.” Many of the fabulous, high-end, highly-sought wines from wineries such as Dutton-Goldfield, Dutton Estate, Kistler, DuMOL and Patz & Hall that are made from grapes grown on Dutton Ranch will be poured at this dinner.

“Just like we’ve always welcomed visitors to our winery estate we look forward to welcoming guests to our winery dinner party that will feature many award-winning Benziger vineyard designate and library wines paired with delicious cuisine made from local, Sonoma-grown ingredients from our ranch,” said **Kathy Benziger-Threlkeld, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Honorary Co-Chair**, “This dinner, which reflects our leadership in the green movement, is the type of celebration that we have when the Benziger family gathers at the table.”

Produced in partnership by the **Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation** and the **Sonoma County Vintners**, the 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend event features the **Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®**, the **Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars** and an assortment of additional events throughout Sonoma County.

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Highlights of the Sonoma Wine Country Weekend lunches, dinner parties and BBQs include:

- **Arrowood Vineyards & Winery Dinner Party** – Dine poolside to live acoustic guitar at the Arrowood Estate Guest House with **Winemaker Heidi von der Mehden** while experiencing a harvest sunset. Arrowood's philosophy of producing classic varietal wines with grapes grown exclusively in Sonoma County will be featured while library wines and rare vintages from the cellar are poured. A five-course dinner will be prepared by one of Sonoma's favorites: **the girl + the fig restaurant**.
- **DaVero Farms & Winery Dinner Party** – Guests will enjoy the bounty of DaVero's certified Biodynamic farm with **Owners Ridgely Evers and Colleen McGlynn** who will tour and taste with wine and olive oil while introducing the fascinating practice of Biodynamic farming. **Chef Christopher Greenwald**, a renowned Sonoma County rising star, will build a meal from the abundance of DaVero and neighboring farms.
- **Hidden Ridge Lunch** – An unforgettable picnic in a breathtaking high-altitude vineyard with **Proprietors Lynn Hofacket and Casidy Ward** awaits guests. Designed to thrill the adventurous explorer, this experience begins with a four wheel-drive tour of the mountaintop vineyard - a place so steep, so well developed so interesting that it has been described as "really that amazing." **Chef Duskie Estes of Zazu** lends her formidable culinary talents to create a seasonally inspired meal perfect for the Hidden Ridge Vineyard wines.
- **Keller Estate Dinner Party** – The remarkable summertime scenery of Keller Estate's vineyards and olive groves will set the tone at this dinner hosted by Keller Estate **Winemaker Jacqueline Yoakum** and **Chef Joey Ray**. Keller Estate is a true Estate: from vine to bottle everything is done on the property – and the result is a lineup of wines that are deeply expressive of their individual terrior.
- **Little Vineyards Family Winery BBQ** – Little Vineyards Family Winery promises a fun, sunny Sunday barbecue at their Glen Ellen winery. Little Vineyards' rare and small lot wines will take center stage, pairing perfectly with a variety of grilled treats, while the winery's beautiful property provides an inspiring backdrop for a relaxed afternoon of simple pleasures.
- **Stone Edge Farm Lunch** – Known for dedication to sustainable farming, Stone Edge Farm produces both the outstanding wines and the heirloom vegetables and olive oils that will be featured at this al fresco meal. Winemaker Jeff Baker will pair wines with each course created by **Winery Chef John McReynolds** for an unparalleled experience of field-to-table dining. Hors d'oeuvres in the vineyard will lead to a shady meal overlooking the bountiful gardens and vineyards.

In addition, food-related events will also be hosted by these wineries: Arrowood Vineyards & Winery, Balletto Vineyards and Winery, Deerfield Ranch Winery, deLorimier Winery, Dutcher Crossing Winery, Foppiano Vineyards, GlenLyon Winery, Hamel Family Wines, Hanzell Vineyards, Hartford Family Winery, Hidden Ridge Vineyard, Hook & Ladder Winery, Hughes Family Vineyards, Kendall-Jackson, La Follette Wines, Landmark Vineyards, Little Vineyards Family Winery, MacMurray Ranch Vineyard, Matanzas Creek Winery, Meadowcroft Wines, Montemaggiore, Muscardini Cellars, Quivira Vineyards and Winery, Robert Hunter Winery, Rodney Strong Vineyards, Schug Carneros Estate, Simi Winery, Soda Rock Winery, and Stryker Sonoma Winery.

Proceeds from Sonoma Wine Country Weekend benefit local communities and charities serving students, children, farm workers and people in need. To date, more than \$10 million has been raised jointly by the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners.

Tickets, which range from \$85 to \$500 per person, are on sale now. Presenting Sponsor Visa Signature is also offering cardholders event perks and savings. For more information visit [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com), like it on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/winecountryweekend> and follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/SonomaWCW>.

### **2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Schedule At-A-Glance**

#### **Friday, September 2 and Saturday, September 3 – Winery Lunch and Dinner Parties**

12:30 p.m. – Winery Lunch Series, sponsored by TricorBraun WinePak (Fri. only)

6:00 p.m. -- Winery Dinner Parties, sponsored by TricorBraun WinePak (Fri. & Sat.)

#### **Saturday, September 3 – Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch, Healdsburg**

11 a.m. - 4 p.m. – Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch

#### **Sunday September 4 – Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction at Cline Cellars, Sonoma and Winery BBQs**

12:30 p.m. – Winery BBQs across Sonoma County

1 p.m. – 7 p.m. Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction, sponsored by Trilogy Glass & Packaging

2:30 p.m. – Live Auction Begins

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## **Tickets**

**All Tickets On Sale:** June 1, 2011

**Winery Lunches:** \$85/person; **Winery Dinner Parties:** \$160/person

**Chairman's Dinners:** \$175/person

**Taste of Sonoma at MacMurray Ranch®:** \$150/person (General), \$95/person (General Visa Signature) \$195/person (Grand Reserve) \$175/person (Grand Reserve Visa Signature)

**Winery BBQs:** \$85/person

**Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction:** \$500/person (General), \$450/person (Visa Signature)

*\* Special Visa Signature Cardholder pricing and other benefits available at [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com)*

## **About Visa Signature®**

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by **Visa Signature**, a premium consumer payment card bringing cardholders instant access to dozens of perks in addition to the points, miles, or cash back they may already earn. Cardholder perks include access to and discounts at Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, complimentary 24-hour concierge services to assist with travel and entertainment planning, exclusive hotel perks through the Visa Signature Luxury Hotel Collection, and much more. For complete information visit [www.visa.com/signature](http://www.visa.com/signature).

## **About MacMurray Ranch**

Nestled in the heart of the Russian River Valley, the historic MacMurray Ranch is home to award-winning Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Gris. MacMurray Ranch 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 us online at [www.macmurrayranch.com](http://www.macmurrayranch.com).

## **About 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Sponsors and Beneficiaries**

A partnership **between Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation** and **Sonoma County Vintners**, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is California's premier wine, food and social event, taking place on Labor Day weekend each year. The events comprising Sonoma Wine Country Weekend have raised over \$10 million in support to local charities that benefit students, children, farm workers and people in need. The 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is presented by Visa Signature®. In addition to Visa Signature, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend sponsors include: TricorBraun 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, please visit [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com).

## **About Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance and Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners**

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is a non-profit trade organization serving over 500 members 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. For more information on the SVVGA and SVVGF, please visit [www.SonomaValleyWine.com](http://www.SonomaValleyWine.com).

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. Learn more about SCV at [www.SonomaWine.com](http://www.SonomaWine.com).

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**Journalists:** High-resolution artwork is immediately available. For more information, to speak with an event representative or to inquire about press credentials for the 2011 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend please email or call **Lisa Adams Walter at (707) 255-0300 or [lisa@adamswalter.com](mailto:lisa@adamswalter.com)**. For more information visit [www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com](http://www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com), like it on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/winecountryweekend> and follow on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/SonomaWCW>.