

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**TICKETS ON SALE JUNE 1 FOR THE
2nd ANNUAL SONOMA WINE COUNTRY WEEKEND,
SEPTEMBER 4-6th**

Presented by Visa Signature, the Three Day Fundraising Fest Combines Showcase: Taste of Sonoma and the Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction in a Pre-Harvest Celebration of Sonoma's Unparalleled Grape Growing Tradition

Sonoma, Ca (June 1, 2009) Tickets will go **on sale June 1** for Sonoma's premier [food](#), [wine](#) and social fundraiser of the year. The [Sonoma Valley](#) Vintners and Growers together with the Sonoma County Vintners and event sponsor Visa Signature present the **2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, held Labor Day Weekend, September 4-6th at venues throughout [Sonoma County](#)**. 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 unrivaled quality of Sonoma's grape growing tradition, while **raising more than \$8 million for local charities**. The three day grape-to-glass celebration is highlighted by Showcase: Taste of Sonoma, the 17th Annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction and a series of special winemaker and grower-hosted dinners. Individual event tickets as well as weekend packages are available now by visiting www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com. Visa Signature cardholders receive special savings and event perks when they use their card to purchase tickets and packages.

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 4th – Various winery venues

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

Saturday, September 5th – MacMurray Ranch, Healdsburg

11am – 4pm Showcase: Taste of Sonoma
\$150/person – General
\$195/person – Grand Reserve
\$95/person – Visa Signature Preferred

Saturday, September 5th – Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn and Spa, Sonoma

6pm Honorary Chair Dinner Hosted by the Sangiacomo Family
\$175 /person

Sunday September 6th - Cline Cellars, Sonoma

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

*Visa Signature cardholders enjoy exclusive savings and event perks when you use your card to purchase tickets or packages.

Visit www.SonomaWineCountryWeekend.com for tickets, event information, and updates.

Honorary Chairs: The Sangiacomo Family

In keeping with this year's focus on Sonoma grapes and grape-growing, the Sangiacomo family has been selected as Honorary Chair for 2009 Sonoma Wine Country Weekend. This marks the first time that a grape grower has received this honor. 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 Honorary Chair Dinner on Saturday, September 5th.

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 5th at [MacMurray Ranch](#) 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, which was previously owned by the late 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. 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.

***New this year:** Grand Reserve ticket holders (\$195/person versus \$150 for general admission) will enjoy special access to rare, hard-to-find and limited edition wines offered at the Reserve Club.

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

Sonoma Wine Country Weekend culminates with the 17th Annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction, taking place Sunday September 6th 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 \$6 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 at the time of purchase, 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 beginning August 1st. 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 and Sonoma County Vintners, Sonoma Wine Country Weekend is the area's largest wine and food fundraiser, having donated more than a combined \$8 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 perks and savings 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.

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.

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 \$6,000,000 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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