



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance Presents *Wine Basics 101*
First of Its Kind Sonoma Valley Wine Education Tour and Tasting Designed to
Break Down Barriers for Beginning Wine Drinkers**

SONOMA, Calif. (January 3, 2006) – The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is pleased to announce Wine Basics 101, an extensive day-long wine seminar designed to educate novice wine drinkers and introduce them to the pleasures of drinking Sonoma Valley wines. This first-of-its-kind event will be held from 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 4, 2006 at the Lodge at Sonoma Renaissance and Spa and at participating Sonoma Valley wineries including GlenLyon Vineyards & Winery, Kunde Estate Winery & Vineyards, Moon Mountain Vineyards, Nicholson Ranch Vineyards & Winery, Petroni Vineyards and Ravenswood Winery, among others.

A viticulturist will first lead participants on an educational vineyard tour where they will learn why Sonoma Valley terroir is so important to the outcome of each vintage. Next, they will be introduced to the winemaking process during a cellar and barrel room tour and tasting where they will learn about the various factors that affect the quality and style of wine. After the winery tour, participants will return to the Lodge at Sonoma for a two-hour Sensory Exploratorium taught by noted sommelier and wine educator Christopher Sawyer, followed by a winemakers lunch complete with a sumptuous multi-course meal and wine pairing. *Wine Basics 101* participants are also invited to test their newly acquired knowledge throughout the weekend at participating Sonoma Valley wineries that have waived their tasting fees.

Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Foundation Beneficiaries: F.I.S.H., Hanna Boys Center, Kenwood Education Foundation, La Luz, Sonoma Community Center, Sonoma Ecology Center, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Valley Community Health Center, Sonoma Valley Education Foundation, Sonoma Valley Hospital Foundation, Sonoma Valley Mentoring, Wilmar, Valley of the Moon Boys & Girls Club, and Vineyard Workers Services.

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“We hope to achieve two goals with *Wine Basics 101*,” says Grant Raeside, SVVGA Executive Director. “We want to make the wine drinking experience less intimidating for beginning wine drinkers by educating them on the many factors that go into the winemaking and wine tasting process, while at the same time introduce them to the wonderful wines produced right here in the Sonoma Valley. We anticipate participants will walk away from this seminar with a whole new appreciation for wine and for our Valley.”

Tickets for *Wine Basics 101* are currently on sale for \$150 per person or \$125 per person for Sonoma Valley wine club members or SVVGA members. Ticket price includes welcome reception at the Lodge at Sonoma with mimosas, coffee and pastries, transportation by chartered bus to and from a participating Sonoma Valley winery, the Sensory Exploratorium seminar, wine and lunch. For more information and to purchase tickets, contact the SVVGA office at (707) 935-0803 or visit www.sonomavalleywine.com.

About the Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA)

The Sonoma Valley Vintners & Growers Alliance (SVVGA) is a unique non-profit organization. It 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 are sharing a mission to promote Sonoma Valley wines and grapes, support cooperation and collaboration among vintners and growers, and develop community awareness of the industry. The annual Sonoma Valley Harvest Wine Auction is produced by the Alliance and has raised over \$4 million for local Charities over the last 13 years. For more information on the SVVGA, please call (707) 935-0803 or visit www.sonomavalleywine.com.

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