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Photos available upon request

**Rhone Ranger Vintners to Gather for the
17th Annual San Francisco Bay Area
Weekend Celebration of American Rhone Wines
April 5 – 6, 2014**

Albion, Calif. (March 11, 2013) For two days in April wine lovers will gather for the country's largest celebration of Rhone wines, with a full slate that explores the rise of the *garagiste* winemaker, a *terroir* tour of Grenache, and an opportunity for wine lovers to taste more than 400 Rhone wines in a single place. Tickets are now on sale at: WWW.RHONERANGERS.ORG.

“We are very excited about this year's events in the Bay Area, where we will celebrate the craftsmanship of American winemakers producing wines from the 22 grape varieties approved by the Cotes du Rhône. We begin with a winemaker dinner at The General's Residence at Fort Mason, San Francisco, during which we will honor Robert Haas for his leadership in bringing Rhône grape varieties through the USDA quarantine process. The next day, we move across the Bay to the Craneway Pavilion, a fitting venue for the Grand Tasting, as we celebrate our winemakers in the historic building that once housed the Ford Motor Company assembly plant,” explained David Gates, President of the Rhone Rangers Board of Directors. The events take place on April 5 & 6.

Saturday, April 5, 6 PM, Winemaker Dinner

Sixteen wineries will join together for the winemaker dinner and live auction at the historic General's Residence at Fort Mason. Host wineries include Bernat, Broken Earth, Campovida, Cass, Fields Family, Halter Ranch, kukkula, L'Aventure, McCay, Michael-David, Qupe, Ridge, Stark, Still Waters, Tablas Creek and Two Shepherds. The dinner will be catered by Sonoma's the Girl & the Fig Restaurant (famous for its “Rhone Alone” wine list). Following dinner, a live auction will feature wine, unique wine country experiences and travel packages donated by the host winemakers. Proceeds from the auction will benefit The James Beard Foundation and the Rhone Rangers Scholarship Fund, which provides grants and scholarships to help educate the next generation of American Rhone winemakers.

Sunday, April 6, 10 AM – 1 PM Seminar Series

This year's seminar series will cover two exciting topics:

The Rise of the Rhone Garagiste. This seminar will focus on small producers of American Rhone wines, who make less than 3,000 cases per year, with each wine tasted having been made in less than 500 case lots. Presenting wineries include: Acquiesce, Caliza, Folin Cellars, kukkula, MacLaren Wine Co, Rancho Cellars, Seka Hills and Two Shepherds.

Grenache, The Most Widely Planted Rhone Wine Grape in the World. In this seminar, we will look at Grenache from many different regions, to see what impact terroir has on this grape variety. Wineries that will be featured include Baiocchi (Fair Play), Broken Earth (Paso Robles), Campovida (Mendocino), McCay Cellars (Lodi), Mounts Family (Healdsburg), Quady North (Jacksonville OR), Qupe (Los Olivos) and Tercero (Los Olivos).

Both seminars will be moderated by Luke Sykora, *Wine & Spirits* magazine. One ticket, the Sunday Events Pass, will admit guests to both seminars, as well as the Trade & VIP Tasting beginning at 1 PM.

Sunday, April 6, 1-3 PM

Trade & VIP Tasting. Approximately 100 wineries will pour more than 400 wines for members of the wine trade and media. Tickets are complimentary for trade and media who directly influence the purchase of wine including sommeliers, wine writers, wine retailers, wine wholesalers, distributors and brokers. Credentialed members of the wine trade and wine media can register at: www.rhonerangers.org.

Sunday, April 6, 3-6 PM

Grand Tasting General Admission. The wine tasting continues with consumers invited to enter from 3-6 PM to sample wines from the Rhone Rangers winemakers. Innovative small food plates, featuring American classics that pair well with the wines being tasted, will be available for purchase from Assemble Restaurant.

PURCHASE TICKETS

Tickets are now on sale and the public is invited to purchase them online at:

WWW.RHONERANGERS.ORG. For more information call 800 467-0163.

Ticket prices are as follows:

- Weekend Pass: \$295
(includes the winemaker dinner, seminars, and VIP entry to the grand tasting)
- Sunday Pass: \$150
(includes the seminars and VIP entry to the grand tasting)
- Winemaker Dinner: \$150
- Grand Tasting: \$65 (advance), \$75 (at the door)

Credentialed members of the wine trade and media can register online for the Grand Tasting

www.rhonerangers.org

About the Rhone Rangers

The Rhone Rangers are a group of roughly 150 wineries dedicated to making wines from the 22 grape varieties originally made famous in France's Rhone Valley. These varieties range from the better-known Syrah and Viognier to the up-and-coming Mourvèdre, Grenache and Roussanne, to obscure (but delicious) grapes like Counoise and Picpoul.

The Rhone Rangers started from a small gathering of American vintners who began meeting informally in the 1980s. As their numbers expanded, the group organized under the name "Rhone Rangers." The Rhone Rangers is a non-profit organization focused on promoting the enjoyment of Rhone varietal wines produced in the United States. These grapes include the 22 traditional varieties approved by the French government for the Côtes du Rhone, as well as Durif (Petite Sirah). In order for a winery to join the Rhone Rangers, they must produce at least one wine that contains 75% of any single approved varietal (or combination of these varietals).

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