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13TH Annual RHONE RANGERS SAN FRANCISCO TASTING
March 27-28, 2010

**More than 100 Vintners Will Gather in San Francisco for the
13th Annual Rhone Rangers Tasting
of American-Produced Rhone Wines**

San Francisco, Calif. (February 1, 2010) The Rhone Rangers will ride into San Francisco on March 27th and 28th for the thirteenth consecutive year of the largest American Rhone wine event in the country. The Rhone Rangers Grand Tasting takes place at Fort Mason's Festival Pavilion on March 28 from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Over 2,000 consumers and members of the trade are expected to attend for the opportunity to taste over 500 of the best American Rhone wines from at least 100 Rhone Rangers member wineries. Tickets are now on sale at WWW.RHONERANGERS.ORG.

In addition to the Grand Tasting, the program includes three diverse tasting seminars:

- Bay Area Sommeliers Speak Out: Pairing Food with American Rhone Wines (Saturday, 3/27/10), moderated by Jon Bonné, Wine Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*, with special guest Evan Goldstein, Author: *Perfect Pairings*
- Grenache: Red, White & Pink! (Saturday, 3/27/10), moderated by Jon Bonné, Wine Editor, *San Francisco Chronicle*
- The Ageability of American Rhones (Sunday, 3/28/10), moderated by Karen MacNeil, Culinary Institute of America

Jason Haas, partner at Tablas Creek Vineyard in Paso Robles and President of the Rhone Rangers Board of Directors, is especially excited about this year's tasting seminars. "Seminar topics ranging from the ageability of American-produced Rhone varieties to why sommeliers love these food friendly wines will appeal not only to sophisticated wine consumers, but also novices who love food and wine and want to begin building their cellars." Haas said.

On Saturday evening March 27, fifteen wineries will participate in a winemaker dinner at the Log Cabin in the San Francisco Presidio. The dinner will again be catered by The Girl & the Fig Restaurant in Sonoma, Calif. (famous for its “Rhone Alone” wine list) and offers an opportunity to taste current and limited release wines and enjoy a three-course meal with fifteen leading Rhone Rangers winemakers. Tickets are \$125. Following the meal, a brief live auction will feature fifteen lots of wine, unique wine country experiences and travel packages, donated by the host winemakers. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the Rhone Rangers Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships to help educate the next generation of American Rhone winemakers. Last year’s scholarships were awarded to the University of California Davis, California State University Fresno, California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo and Washington State University.

“With over 500 wines being poured by our member wineries, the Grand Tasting offers consumers the opportunity to taste both wines of extraordinary complexity and of great value. Our members include a large collection of long-established winemakers as well as young up-and-coming vintners,” said Cheryl Quist, Executive Director of the Rhone Rangers.

At the Grand Tasting, attendees can sample gourmet foods from more than 35 specialty food purveyors, including cheese, bread, olive oil, charcuterie, fruits and chocolates. A silent auction will feature wines from the Rhone Rangers member wineries and wine-related items. Proceeds from the auction will benefit Meals on Wheels of San Francisco.

PURCHASE TICKETS

The public is invited to purchase tickets for the Saturday Seminars \$50-\$70/ticket, Winemaker Dinner \$125/ticket, and Sunday Seminar & Grand Tasting (combined ticket) \$100/ticket or for the Grand Tasting (Only): \$60/each (through February 26, 2010); \$65 thereafter. For further information or to purchase tickets see WWW.RHONERANGERS.ORG or call (800) 467-0163.

**Credentialed members of the wine trade and media can register online at WWW.RHONERANGERS.ORG/TRADEREGISTRATIONF
Or send an email to info@rhonerangers.org for further information.**

About the Rhone Rangers

The Rhone Rangers are a group of nearly 200 winemakers 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, and the obscure (but delicious) 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 themselves 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 grown in the Cotes 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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