



MEDIA CONTACT:

Faith Wells

805.784.9543

faith@hospicedurhone.org

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RHÔNE IS THE WORD AT HDR 2009

Paso Robles, Calif. USA—Hospice du Rhône (HdR), the world's largest celebration of Rhône varietal wines concluded their 17th annual event on Saturday, May 2, 2009. The yearly event showcases the unique diversity of the twenty-two Rhône varieties by inviting producers and enthusiasts to attend HdR to partake in a weekend dedicated to honoring these standout varietals.

The three-day event kicked off in Paso Robles, California on Thursday, April 30th with the highly energetic Rhône-n-Bowl. The weekend continued with educational seminars that guided attendees through the journey of wines crafted by acclaimed sommeliers turned winemakers. The second session allowed winemakers to battle it out by sharing their wines from the Santa Ynez Valley and the Santa Rita Hills. The Rhône exploration continued by tasting the science of glassware crafted by Riedel and finished with a serious look at California viticulture and enology experiments.

Following the daily seminar sessions, over 160 producers converged from France, South Africa, Australia, California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona to sample their wines for attendees. The Friday Rhône Rendezvous and the Saturday Grand tastings allowed producers to highlight barrel samples, new, current and older vintages for the patrons. Each tasting was complimented by specialty food purveyors who shared their wares for the HdR 2009 enthusiasts.

The winemakers, speakers and wines were not the only highlights at this year's event. The dining experience at HdR 2009 was spearheaded by longtime friend of HdR, Chef Maegen Loring of The Park Restaurant of San Luis Obispo. In developing her dishes, Maegen often looks first to the wine for inspiration whether they be floral Viogniers or full-bodied Syrahs



Since 1996 HdR has felt it appropriate to publically recognize particular individuals for their unwavering passion for Rhône varieties and staunch support of HdR's message and goals. This year the honoree was Georg Riedel, longtime sponsor of HdR, for his generosity to the event and his dedication to crafting stemware collections that beautifully capture and translate the flavors of wines.

Keeping with tradition, HdR 2009 was themed , “You’re the Rhône that I Want,” and the mantra rang loudly throughout the weekend. 50’s inspired decorations adorned the event, including a 1950’s pink Bel Air, Roller Derby Girls, sock hop dancers and custom chrome car parts.

This annual celebration of all things Rhône will continue in 2010. Dates will be April 29 - May 1 at the Paso Robles Event Center. For more information on HdR please visit www.hospicedurhone.org

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ABOUT HDR

HdR represents and embodies the spirit of Rhône varieties and those who produce the wines made of these unique wine grapes. HdR operates as a non-profit business league with the specific purpose of improving the business conditions of the grape growers and wine producers of Rhône varietal wines and grapes throughout the world. We serve as an international vintners association, providing promotional and educational opportunities through our annual event. Proceeds from this event are used to carry out programs that benefit Rhône producers worldwide. HdR is not affiliated with any other charitable organization. Non-profit 501 (c) (6) Business League

Editor's Note—For more information or photos please contact Faith Wells at faith@hospicedurhone.org