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RHÔNELY HEARTS CELEBRATE ON CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST

The World of Rhône through Seminars, Tastings and iRhône

San Luis Obispo, Calif. USA—Hospice du Rhône (HdR), the world's largest celebration of Rhône variety wines concluded their 18th annual event on Saturday, May 1, 2010 in Paso Robles, California. The yearly event brought energy, passion and excitement to the Central Coast as worldwide Rhône producers showcased the diversity of the twenty-two Rhône varieties.

“The three-day event held an array of outlets to expand, learn and explore what is currently happening in the Rhône community worldwide,” notes Vicki Carroll, Director of Hospice du Rhône. “It is the enthusiasm and energy from each attendee, participating producer and our own passion that allows us to continually draw extraordinary Rhône producers from throughout the world to speak, share and engage at the annual event.”

The weekend boasts a serious Rhône education component coupled with a burst of fun that creates the passion and energy at the yearly event. There is something for every wine lover when attending Hospice du Rhône. Be it attending the in-depth Rhône seminars, focused Rhône wine tastings, Rhône inspired meals, cooking demonstrations or entering into an annual bowling competition.

Comprised of four Rhône focused seminars, the 2010 Seminar Series hosted winemakers from France, South Africa and Washington State. The sessions began Friday, April 30th with a look at the South African Rhône movement with six producers on hand to share their wines and history of crafting Rhône variety wines. The series then transitioned to an in-depth look at the northern Rhône, more specifically Côte Rôtie. On Saturday, May 1st the session began with a passionate look at the distinctive terroirs found in the AVA of Walla Walla, Washington. The event closed the 18th annual Seminar Series with a focused seminar on wines from the renowned winegrowing region of Châteauneuf du Pape.

Following the daily seminar sessions, 130 Rhône producers from France, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona were on hand to pour their Rhône variety wines for attendees. It is noted that these tastings are the largest collection of Rhône variety wines and producers. For one to replicate this tasting they would need a passport and many weeks of vacation. To complement the wines and to further show the diversity of wine and food, each tasting boasts 15 artisan food purveyors sharing their wares for attendees.

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Many attendees navigated the tastings and the over 1,000 Rhône wines poured by charting their course with iRhône, the event's application for iPhone, iPad and iTouch. iRhône is the first of its kind for any wine event or wine organization. Holders of this application could sort by wine producing region, variety or producer. They then could tweet their tasting notes, test their knowledge with a Rhône quiz or snap a photo.

Joining forces to showcase the parallel between wine and food, the Friday Rhône Rendezvous and the Saturday Grand Tasting hosted nationally-acclaimed chefs to showcase their talents at the Sommelier Journal Demonstration Kitchen. Chef John Toulze, Chef Chris Jones both from the girl & the fig and Chef Budi Kazali highlighted the versatility of food and Rhône variety wines.

To celebrate the love of Rhône wines and the love for exceptional food, the girl & the fig from Sonoma, California, was the 2010 Hospice du Rhône Featured Restaurant. Longtime friends of the organization and Rhône wine aficionados, proprietor Sondra Bernstein and Chef John Toulze, along with their astounding culinary team, tantalized palates with Duck Confit, Pot de Crème three ways and Porchetta just to name a few dishes of their Rhône inspired fare.

In any organization there are individuals who stand out due to their dedication to the goals of the company. Hospice du Rhône is fortunate to benefit from the support of many such individuals. Since 1996 Hospice du Rhône has felt it appropriate to publically recognize particular individuals for their unwavering passion for Rhône varieties. This year the honoree was Dave Miner of Miner Family Vineyards for his continual support of the Rhône category be it here in the United States or abroad with winemaking partnerships.

Each year, Hospice du Rhône holds an event specifically catered to winemakers. The serious but highly energetic Syrah Shoot-Out is a gathering of winemakers who come together to blind-taste and rate Syrahs made by their peers. The 2010 wine competition focused on the 2007 vintage with 41 Syrah submissions from Rhône producing regions worldwide. Taking home the coveted "Coat du Rhône" was Russell Bevan of Westerhold Family Vineyards of the Bennett Valley AVA in Sonoma County. Sharing the second place spot were past recipients of this honor Christian Tietje of Four Vines and Russell From of Herman Story.

The 19th annual celebration of all things Rhône will take place April 28 – 30, 2011 at the Paso Robles Event Center in Paso Robles, California. Tickets to the event will go on sale in November 2010.

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ABOUT HOSPICE DU RHÔNE®

Hospice du Rhône® (HdR) will celebrate 19 years of all things Rhone, April 28 – 30, 2011. Noted as the World's largest International celebration of Rhône variety wines, Hospice du Rhône serves as an International Vintners Association providing promotional and educational opportunities through an annual event. Proceeds from the annual

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event are used to carry out programs that benefit Rhône producers worldwide. Operating as a non-profit business league, Hospice du Rhône strives to improve the business conditions of grape growers and wine producers of Rhône variety wines and grapes throughout the world. Hospice du Rhône is not affiliated with any other charitable organization. Non-profit 501 (c) (6) Business League

ABOUT iRHÔNE

Hospice du Rhône has launched the first wine event/organization application for all iDevices! With over 1000 Rhône wines and over 140 international Rhône producers and importers application holders will never be at a lost for Rhône wines when at the annual event or at home. From inside the application, sort by the 2010 attending producers, variety and region or filter by any combination of the three. Tweet from inside the application, save tasting notes, snap a photo, take a quiz and much more! iRhône is a free application and can be downloaded from an iDevice or iTunes by searching iRhône: Hospice du Rhône.

Editor's Note—For further information, photos or to arrange interviews with attending Rhône producers please contact Communications Director Faith Wells at faith@hospicedurhone.org

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