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Extraordinary wine lots set to uncork keen bidding at 2011 Naples Winter Wine Festival

NAPLES, Fla. (Oct. 15, 2010) – The 2011 Naples Winter Wine Festival charity auction holds the promise of acquiring rare vintages and unique and unforgettable wine country experiences around the globe. Of the 70 lots to be auctioned during the Jan. 28 – 30 festival to raise funds for underprivileged and at-risk children, the majority feature very special wines and trips donated by renowned vintners and private collectors.

“I’m betting wine connoisseurs will be thrilled at the prospect of owning a 3-liter bottle of Petrus or the very rare opportunity to obtain one-of-a-kind, large-format bottles from Cos d’Estournel, one of the top Bordeaux producers,” said Scott Lutgert, vintner lot chairman and trustee of the Naples Children & Education Foundation, the festival’s founding organization. “For U.S. wine lovers, we have impossible to obtain bottles paired with Napa-style luxury vacations made very personal by the vintners’ participation. There’s also a phenomenal Shafer Vineyards lot with a complete vertical of Hillside Select. You can’t find these wines and experiences anywhere else, and at the festival, the proceeds are all for charity.”

Here is a sampling of wine lots to be offered at the 2011 festival. Descriptions of all auction lots will be posted at www.napleswinefestival.com in late October.

Lot 2 is a remarkable collection of 28 Magnums – one from each of the festival’s participating vintners. Among the extraordinary bottles is a 2005 Torbreck RunRig, 2005 Araujo Estate Eisele Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon and Shafer Vineyards Sunspot Cabernet Sauvignon – 25th Anniversary Magnum.

Lot 9 features some of Burgundy’s best in this baker’s dozen donated by The Rusty Staub Foundation. Among the 3-liter bottles are a 2006 Domaine Pierre Morey Meursault Perrières Premier Cru and 2006 Faiveley Chambertin Clos de Beze Grand Cru.

Lot 13 boasts big reds from Torbreck, widely viewed as the benchmark vineyard of Australia’s famed Barossa Valley. The lot holds three 6-liter bottles – the equivalent of more than two regular-sized cases – of 2005 Torbreck Descendant, Factor and RunRig.

Lot 22 takes being wine-and-dined to a whole new level for the lucky lot winner who receives four Magnums of highly prized Colgin Cellars IX Estate Napa Valley Red Wine along with dinner for eight with Ann Colgin (a California cult-wines pioneer) and Joe Wender at one of the world’s top restaurants, Per Se in New York City. Dinner includes Colgin Cellars wines and wines from the vintner’s personal collection.

Lot 26 rewards the winning bidder with the ultimate Pinot Noir experience at Domaine Serene. The lot includes four 3-liter bottles of 2005 Domaine Serene Monogram Pinot Noir, etched and painted, as well as 12 assorted bottles of Domaine Serene. The winner and seven guests will stay three nights at the vineyard's luxurious "bunkhouse," enjoy a barbeque at vintners Grace and Ken Evenstad's home, a helicopter tour of the estate vineyards and surroundings, and a tasting in the private barrel cellar. A special finale dinner prepared by Chef Gabriel Rucker at Le Pigeon in Portland is highlighted by rare, library wines from the Domaine Serene cellar.

Lot 27 is a true Spanish delight holding a special case of wines from century-old R. López de Heredia Viña Tondonia, a winery known for unwavering quality and producing Spain's greatest wines of incomparable age ability. A private winery tour with a family member and two nights for two couples at the five-star Marqués de Riscal in Elciego with dinner at the hotel's Michelin-starred restaurant are included.

Lot 30 is the definitive food-and-wine experience in Sonoma and Napa for three couples for three nights guided by Tim Mondavi and other members of California's iconic Mondavi family. The wine included is 2008 Continuum in three formats: 1.5-, 3- and 6-liter bottles. The trip features a special vineyard tour, guided tasting, private cellar visit and barrel tasting with Tim Mondavi as well as dinner at Tim's home. Wild Table authors Sarah Scott and Connie Green prepare cuisine made with the local bounty.

Lot 31 is called the Perfection Lot for one simple reason: all 100 bottles are rated 100 points – a perfect score – by either Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate or Wine Spectator. Included in the lot are Château Latour, Château Margaux, Château Lafite-Rothschild and Château Mouton-Rothschild.

Lot 34 presents vintners Deborah and Bill Harlan's 3-liter inaugural vintages of their five BOND Cru in hand-crafted wooden boxes. The Harlans, considered among the world's greatest winemakers, will host a celebratory dinner at BOND Estates for five couples, with three nights' accommodations at Meadowood Resort in Napa Valley.

Lot 39 includes a 25-year complete vertical of Shafer's Hillside Select – an unparalleled collectors' dream come true – and 24 bottles of Hillside Select Silver Anniversary Sensation when released in 2013. Full access to Auction Napa Valley for two couples, three nights at Meadowood Resort, dinner at the French Laundry and a special private winery dinner hosted by Barbara and John Shafer, Shafer Vineyards, is also included.

Lot 40 is a London and Tuscany adventure highlighted by two 3-liter bottles of 2000 Il Molino di Grace Chianti Classico Riserva. The trip is an experience of a lifetime for two couples: London for two nights including a champagne reception in the Mayfair home of vintners Judy and Frank Grace. While in Tuscany, winners spend five nights at the vintners' estate home, enjoy the services of a private chef and a farewell dinner hosted by the Graces in an exotic tree house on the vineyard property.

Lot 52 features a very rare opportunity to own one-of-a-kind, large-format bottles of Château Cos d'Estournel – one of Bordeaux's most respected estates. One night in Paris for two couples and a private dining experience at vintner Jean Guillaume's home adds to the exclusivity of the lot.

Lot 55 gives the winning bidder the opportunity to own what is perhaps the greatest private collection of Sine Qua Non – the only winery awarded a perfect 100-point score nine times. Four of the wineries' perfect wines are included in this extraordinary lot of 39 bottles, many of which are large format.

Lot 62 is a wine-world gem of the highest magnitude: a 3-liter bottle of Château Petrus, a 100-point wine from one of the most highly coveted estates, paired with a 3-liter, 99-point Dominus, Petrus' American winery. To top it off, two couples enjoy a tour and tasting at Dominus Estate and a private estate dinner with Cherise and Christian Moueix paired with wines from their private cellar.

Lot 64 holds a 9-liter bottle of 2008 Grace Family Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon and 2008 Grace Family Vineyards Blank Cabernet Sauvignon, both etched with logos of the charities that the festival supports. The wine is produced solely for charitable causes.

Festival background

The Naples Winter Wine Festival has raised \$82.5 million for children in need since 2001. The three-day affair includes exceptional food and wine experiences for 550 guests. Meet the Kids Day enables guests a firsthand glimpse at the impact of festival proceeds. Vintner dinners at trustees' homes are prepared by famous chefs, with special wines poured by renowned vintners. A culinary feast and wine tasting at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples, a founding sponsor of the festival, is followed by the live auction of rare wines, other luxuries and unparalleled experiences. A post-auction "wine-down" party follows and a final celebration brunch brings the festival to a close.

The Naples Winter Wine Festival was founded and is hosted annually by trustees of the Naples Children & Education Foundation. Festival proceeds have helped nearly 100,000 children through grants to children's charities and collaborative funding of major projects including a pediatric dental center and early learning center. The festival is ranked by Wine Spectator as the most successful charity wine auction in the nation since 2004 and a top 10 event for wealthy Americans by the Luxury Institute.

Festival ticket packages are \$7,500 per couple; \$20,000 for reserved seating at the same vintner dinner for two couples. For a festival schedule and other information, visit www.napleswinefestival.com or call the wine festival office at 888-837-4919.