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Media, Technology Pros To Kick Off Wine Conference

TEXSOM Conference: August 13-15 at Four Seasons – Las Colinas

Irving, Texas (July 11, 2011) — On August 13, social media, blog and traditional journalism experts will broaden the depth and scope of TEXSOM, solidifying its position as the country's preeminent wine conference. As in years prior, leading wine professionals and connoisseurs from across the nation will gather at Four Seasons Resort and Club in Las Colinas on August 13-15 to share wine knowledge. However, this newly added Media and Technology Symposium will take that spirit a step further by teaching attendees how to stay better connected with each other and consumers as the wine subculture becomes increasingly mainstream. For the Symposium, seating is limited to 50 guests. For more information or to register, visit www.teksom.com.

In its seventh year, the conference's core values and focus remains the same: top-notch wine education at affordable prices. In addition to the daylong Media and Technology Symposium on August 13, TEXSOM offers two days of wine seminars led by the world's top experts and a grand tasting. Wine lovers of any level will appreciate the Monday, August 15 Grand Tasting (150 wines, \$75) and the Sunday, August 14 classes (\$150 for five seminars and lunch). Although open to the public, these classes are also appropriate for those working in the industry— such as distributor representatives, sommeliers, restaurant managers and servers.

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Monday's daytime courses deliver tougher, industry-specific material such as *Management of a Beverage Program* and thus are only open to the trade (\$50 for five seminars and lunch.) Each seminar features at least eight wines to taste and lasts one hour and fifteen minutes. Multi-day passes are also available for a discounted price.

The panelists form a who's who list of wine professionals which includes the strongest Master Sommelier contingent to be found at any public event worldwide. Scheduled Master Sommeliers include Serafin Alvarado, Wayne Belding, Richard Betts, John Blazon, Thomas Burke, Brian Cronin, Fred Dame, Brett Davis, Laura DePasquale, Jay Fletcher, Ken Fredrickson, Doug Frost, Keith Goldston, Scott Harper, Drew Hendricks, Jay James, Geoff Kruth, Andrew McNamara, Sally Mohr, Melissa Monosoff, Peter Neptune, Sean Razee, Paul Roberts, Joseph Spellman, Larry Stone, Guy Stout, Bobby Stuckey, James Tidwell, Barbara Werley, and Laura Williamson. The lineup also includes James Beard Award-winning writers Jordan Mackay and Rajat Parr, social media guru Tony Jones, bloggers Alfonso Cevola and Jeremy Parzen, and Master of Wine Jay Youmans.

While the courses are conducted, a competition for Texas' Best Sommelier runs behind the scenes. The prize for the winner includes scholarship money to be used for a Court of Master Sommeliers' certification program. The victorious sommelier will be named at the Grand Tasting on Monday, August 15. More than 150 world-class wines and hors d'oeuvre from Four Seasons Executive Chef Christof Syre will be available for sampling as attendees celebrate the announcement.

The Four Seasons Resort and Club in Las Colinas is located in Irving, between Dallas and Fort Worth at 4150 North MacArthur Boulevard. Valet parking or complimentary self-park is available. As part of Four Seasons Resort and Club's Platinum Level Sponsorship, the resort offers rates of \$135 to TEXSOM participants. For booking, call reservations at 972-717-2499.

For more details and registration information, visit www.texsom.com.

Conference Calendar

Saturday, August 13

9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Open to public. Courses include *Social Media Boot Camp*, *Blogging: Unfiltered and Unfined*, and *Partnering with Traditional Media*. A daylong pass costs \$40. No complimentary tickets are available to VIPs/sponsors. Seating is limited to 50 participants.

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Sunday, August 14

9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Open to public. Courses include *Terroir Focus: Wines of Spain, Regional Diversity: South Africa, White Wines: Benchmark Styles of Modern Classics, Varietal Focus: Grenache*, and *Terroir Focus: Red Wines of Burgandy's Cote d'Or*. Each class features at least eight wines to taste and lasts one hour and fifteen minutes. An all-day pass costs \$150 with lunch included. Multi-day passes are also available at a discounted price.

Monday, August 15

9 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Trade/Media only. Topics include *Management of a Beverage Program, Varietal Focus: Chenin Blanc, Styles: Bordeaux Blends from the New World*, and *Iconic Producer: Vertical Tasting of Chateau Musar*. Each class features at least eight wines to taste and lasts one hour and fifteen minutes. Registration is \$50 and includes lunch. Multi-day passes are also available at a discounted price.

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.: Grand tasting. Be there to celebrate when Texas' Best Sommelier 2011 is announced. \$65. More than 150 world-class wines will be featured. Tickets cost \$75, and multi-day passes are also available.

The TEXSOM Conference Background

TEXSOM and the Texas' Best Sommelier Competition were founded by James Tidwell, MS, CWE, Sommelier at the Four Seasons Resort and Club in Las Colinas; Drew Hendricks, MS, CWE, Director of Beverage Education for Pappas Restaurants in Houston; and Guy Stout, MS, Education Director for Glazer's Distributors.

Presented by the not-for-profit organizations the Texas Sommelier Association and the Wine and Food Foundation of Texas, TEXSOM is the only event of its kind in the world. Since its inception in 2005, it has attracted more than 1,500 wine professionals, and more than 120 Texas sommeliers have competed.

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The Texas Sommelier Association Background

The Texas Sommelier Association is a trade association comprised of Texas wine professionals. The Association promotes professional wine service standards, outlines paths for further wine education and certification, and raises public awareness about the professional standards and certifications for sommeliers. The organization sponsors the “Texas’ Best Sommelier” competition, with the winner being awarded scholarships for professional certification courses. This competition is held behind the scenes during the TEXSOM conference. For more information, visit www.texsom.com

The Wine and Food Foundation of Texas Background

The Wine & Food Foundation of Texas was established to connect its members and the general public with the value, creativity and craftsmanship inherently present in the culinary and viticulture arts. This mission is fulfilled by funding grants, scholarships and research aimed at elevating the quality, awareness and enjoyment of good food and fine wine as well as hosting education and social events that enhance the quality of life for members and communities. These programs offer unique opportunities to enrich the minds and palates of guests, who in turn can relate their experience with friends sharing common interests. For more information, visit www.winefoodfoundation.org.

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