



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Jeanne Sullivan, Black Ink PR, (650)-215-8156, Jeanne@BlackInkPr.com

Margot Black, Black Ink PR, (323) 993 7171, Margot@BlackInkPr.com

San Luis Obispo County's Paso Robles to Host Two Major Wine Events in 2014: Wine Tourism Conference Nov. 12-14, and Great American Wine Festival Nov. 15

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA -- November 19, 2013 -- Save the date! Visit San Luis Obispo ("SLO") County is proud to announce Paso Robles has been selected to host the West Coast's top two 2014 wine events: the Wine Tourism Conference Nov. 12 to 14, and the Great American Wine Festival Nov. 15, 2014. Located mid-way between San Francisco and Los Angeles, SLO County includes some of central California's popular communities and travel destinations -- from laid-back surfing haven Pismo Beach and artsy college hub SLO to rustic wine town Paso Robles. Visit the website to both events (below) to sign up for future updates; tickets are limited and will go on sale in early 2014.

"This is a huge win for SLO County and Paso Robles residents and merchants, as well as for wine aficionados novice and expert alike," said Stacie Jacob, executive director of [Visit San Luis Obispo County](#) who, along with Travel Paso (Paso Robles' tourism alliance) was instrumental in securing the dual event. "We are thrilled to add these opportunities showcase our beautiful and hospitable County in 2014, which benefit residents, merchants and local government by driving a thriving economy."

"Paso Robles is one of the best wine regions in the state and we are always delighted to welcome both new and returning visitors," said Travel Paso Destination Manager Amanda Diefenderfer.

"SLO County continues to win the big wins and earn its reputation as an idyllic setting for tourism events," notes Stacie Jacob. "In addition to being known as a mecca for wine and food enthusiasts, we're the place you simply want to be on vacation. We're often on those "happiest" and "healthiest" places to live lists because we don't take ourselves too seriously and we make time for 'pure play.'"

Wine Tourism Conference

The Fourth Annual Wine Tourism Conference will be held in Paso Robles, California Nov. xx to Nov. xx, 2014, with an expected weekday attendance of more than 250 wine tourism professionals. The Conference: 1) Provides information about the growing wine tourism industry that professionals can bring use to boost their local business or organization, and: 2) It provides a forum for meeting fellow wine tourism industry leaders.

It will include regional tastings, pre-conference excursions, workshops, a post-conference wine-pairing dinner, an overview of the current state of wine tourism, strategy sessions, networking opportunities and an opportunity for select vintners to pour their wines visit: <http://winetourismconference.org/>.

The Conference will benefit:

- Wineries that would like to increase the number of visitors to their winery and improve cellar door sales
- Wine and tourism associations and chambers of commerce who are tasked to increase the number of butts in seats, bodies in beds, and inquiring minds at area attractions
- Tour operators, travel agencies, transportation companies, and event planners who provide wine tourism offerings to the public
- Hotels and restaurants that make a substantial portion of their living from wine tourism
- Public relations professionals and other consultants to the wine and tourism industries
- Academics and students from university wine tourism programs
- Media and bloggers who write about wine and tourism

Great American Wine Festival

The Conference ends on a Friday and will be followed by the Great American Wine Festival Saturday, Nov. 15, 2014 from 4 to 8 p.m. It is open to the public and will bring wineries and winery associations from all over North America to Paso Robles. It is expected to feature wines from over 25 different regions of North America, including New York's Finger Lakes, Virginia, Ohio, and Ontario in addition to more well-known regions in California, Washington, and Oregon. Each region will pour wines from multiple wineries, allowing guests to sample wines from up to 200 wineries --- and spitting is not only welcomed, but encouraged (visit: <http://greatamericanwinefestival.com>).

As the Second Annual, this Festival seeks to emulate the success of its Great American Beer Festival (GABF) counterpart. Paste Magazine, (www.pastemagazine.com) which covers, "Signs of Life in Music, Film and Culture," on Nov. 13 quotes Allan Wright, spokesman for the organizer of both events, Zephyr Adventures, saying, "Just like in the beer world, there are hundreds of wine festivals each year. None has the size, diversity, and impact of the Great American Beer Festival. We thought it was the perfect opportunity to create something that starts to resemble a true North American-wide wine festival."

Paste reports, There are just a few differences between the GABF and the GAWF. For one, the last beer festival attracted 49,000 attendees for four sessions held over three days at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver; the (2014) wine fest is expecting attendance to be around 1,500.

And the biggest difference? Wine tasters spit, while beer tasters swallow.

"In the wine world, all professionals spit," Wright told Paste. "Even for non-professionals, there is so much wine available and it has such a comparative kick that spitting is a good idea. Most people will only spit (or dump) on occasion but at least it allows you to be discriminatory, drinking what you like best. I was told one time the makeup of beer does not allow one to adequately taste it when spitting. I don't know if that is true or just someone giving himself a good rationale to not spit beer at beer tastings."

About Visit San Luis Obispo County

Visit San Luis Obispo County promotes San Luis Obispo County through advertising, marketing, public relations and group sales. Its membership base is comprised of over 500 tourism industry-related businesses including lodging properties, restaurants, wineries, golf courses and retail stores. *Sunset SAVOR* the Central Coast is produced and managed by Visit San Luis Obispo County. For more information on Visit San Luis Obispo County, please visit www.VisitSanLuisObispoCounty.com.

###