



For Immediate Release

Contact: Jim Fiolek
(805) 688-0881
jim@sbcountywines.com

November 26, 2012

Spirited Festivities Abound Throughout Wine Country

From Chowder Fests to Movies Under the Stars

SANTA YNEZ, CA – As Santa Barbara County vintners barrel down the last of this year's harvest, attention turns to holidays celebrations with a wine country flair. In addition to a bevy of festive open houses and community celebrations throughout the county, wineries are tapping into the local food culture, offering outdoor viewings of holiday movies and polishing up rare or specialty wines to provide unique enhancements to the season's entertainments. "Our member wineries offer something above and beyond the standard holiday activities," says Executive Director Jim Fiolek. "Our events tend to be more interactive, offering visitors a chance to participate and become part of our community as we come together to celebrate the holidays."

Sunstone Winery will host the ultimate participatory event on December 14 at their Villa, when author Pamela Sheldon Johns conducts an interactive culinary workshop. Guests will receive instruction as they help Ms. Johns prepare a wine country lunch which they will then enjoy paired with Sunstone wines. On December 1st Bedford Winery in Los Alamos continues their ongoing "Food for Thought" series with *Ginger Around the World*, an exploration of the spice as an enhancement in both sweet and savory dishes, while in Santa Ynez, Brander Winery serves up a Clam Chowder and Cassolet lunch at their annual open house which also features live music.

Several wineries offer holiday movie viewings under the stars. On December 1st Kalyra will feature Jim Carrey's *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, and Zaca Mesa Winery will show *Elf* starring Will Farrell on December 8. "People love to bundle up and get out in nature under the stars," says Zaca Mesa's Kori DeVries. "When it's cold and there is a breeze it creates an almost 3D effect." Both events welcome the entire family. Another favorite event for the whole family is the Olde Fashioned Christmas celebration in the quaint village of Los Olivos. Stroll the luminaria lined streets for a round of caroling, roasting chestnuts and popcorn, hot chocolate and mulled wine. And don't be surprised if Santa makes an appearance!

Visitors looking for special holiday libations of a vinous nature can venture out to Foxen Winery on December 8 and 9 when they will feature a selection of library wines for tasting along with sweet treats. Hospitality Manager Lori Hamill says, "We don't decide what to pull from the library until the very last moment... it's always a fun surprise!" Or take in the warmth of the Consilience and Tre Anelli tasting room for a taste of their zinfandel port, which winemaker Brett Escalera describes as rich, unctuous and irresistible. Or if the holidays just aren't the holidays without a bit of bubbly, the sparkling wine producers of Santa Barbara County offer many options. The adventurous may want to search out the sparkling Vermentino from Tessa Marie or Palmina's *Lumina*, a sparkling Nebbiolo. For the traditionalists, Cottonwood Canyon, Riverbench, Flying Goat, and Lucas and Lewellen offer an assortment of *methode champenoise* styles ranging from Brut to Blanc de Blanc to Blanc de Noirs.

For a complete list of holiday activities and events in Santa Barbara County Wine Country, go to www.sbcountywines.com.

###