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Mount Veeder Appellation Reemerges with Coveted, Distinctive Wines

Once obscure Napa region reveals serious wines at 2400 feet

(NAPA, Calif.—July 9, 2010) — In an industry where the newest wine star seems to be crowned with great frequency, it is often difficult to distinguish the venerable from the upstart. However, the Mount Veeder appellation within the Napa Valley is making a splash through its recent reemergence. With a bevy of awards, new growers and wineries, and the unification of historically independent-minded growers, the appellation is becoming widely known as a sophisticated hideaway where artists are working magic with their wines.

Mount Veeder fruit is now trending as a coveted commodity and is being crafted into appellation dedicated varietals by the mountain's boutique and artisanal wine makers.... a reemergence in every sense of the word.

The Mount Veeder appellation has a storied history that begins in 1864, when Captain Stalham Wing produced the region's first bottle. He bucked the convention of sunny vineyards on the valley floor and instead chose the lush mountain region. He recognized that the extremely steep slopes would render shallow topsoil and minimal water retention. Sitting above the fog line, this cooler region produces low yields of tiny berries with intense flavor concentration and elegant tannins.

The growers and vintners of Mount Veeder still reflect the independent spirit of Captain Wing. Virtually all farming is done by hand. Rugged mountainous conditions demand handcraftsmanship at the highest level.

Innovation has continued to be an integral part of the region, starting with Petit Verdot's introduction to Napa, courtesy of the Bernsteins of Mount Veeder. The region also boasts the first vineyard planted to all five red Bordeaux varieties. The growers are also always willing to experiment – most recently with new Cabernet/Syrah blends and other distinctive varietals.

An essential element of the appellation's reinvention is the arrival of new winemakers and growers, all welcomed by the existing residents. As a result, the Mount Veeder Appellation Council now boasts 32 members, its highest membership to date. Additionally, as more and more vineyards turn to corporate ownership, the families within Mount Veeder continue their traditions by instead handing the reigns to their children. This includes Yates Family Vineyards and Mayacamas Vineyards, Random

Ridge, Rubissow Wines, and Godspeed Vineyards, among others.

"Being the newest winery on Mt. Veeder, we felt honored to join such an elite group of wine grape growers and producers. We were particularly drawn to the appellation because of the incredible soils and climate that produce such rich and lush wines of limited production. The exclusivity of the appellation provides us the opportunity to hand craft the style of wines that originally marked Napa Valley as a world-class wine producing region and we embrace this opportunity to show the world the potential of Mt. Veeder." Jeff Fontanella, Winemaker, Fontanella Winery

Red varietals, led by Cabernet Sauvignon, dominate the mountain. With characteristics of black fruit and floral aromatics, they have moderate to bold tannins with assertive, fine texture. Reserve wines may often be cellared for ten-plus years with improving quality.

White varietals, primarily Chardonnay, are also receiving recognition for their minerally luscious stone fruit, and hints of citrus and herb aromas and flavors.

The Mount Veeder appellation has recently been honored with a number of awards, including two inclusions on the San Francisco Chronicle's top ten list (2007 Robert Craig and 2007 Fontanella).

"... I became enamored with the structure and depth of flavors of hillside wines and wanted to be part of that challenge. It has been gratifying to be part of the evolution of Mt. Veeder wines over the years. There is a new group of talented and dedicated growers and winemakers on Mt. Veeder and the best wines made from our mountain slopes are ahead of us in the future." Robert Craig, Owner, Robert Craig Winery

As the appellation continues to flourish, it has become clear to the winemakers that while they are an important part of Napa's history, they are also leading the way to its future – an appropriate position for a roguish yet refined collective.

Yearly Tasting Opportunity: There will be an autumn wine tasting on September 25, 2010 at Hess Collection Winery from 1-4p.m., for those interested in experiencing Mount Veeder wines first-hand. This is a once a year opportunity for visitors to discover Mount Veeder Wines.

More information can be found at www.mtveederwines.com.

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