

FOR: BLACKBIRD VINEYARDS

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**BLACKBIRD
VINEYARDS**

BLACKBIRD VINEYARDS COLLECTIVELY RAISES OVER \$47,000 AT THE 29TH ANNUAL AUCTION NAPA VALLEY

Blackbird Vineyards' barrel lot has an impressive eighth place finish among 115 lots

(NAPA VALLEY, CA; June 12, 2009)—Wine lovers descended on Napa the first weekend of June for Auction Napa Valley, one of the largest wine-focused charity auctions in the world. Blackbird Vineyards participated in this four-day event, which culminated in Saturday night's live auction and dinner at Meadowood Resort, raising more than \$5.7 million for healthcare, youth services, and affordable housing non-profits in the Napa Valley.

In its third year of participation in the auction, Blackbird Vineyards collectively raised \$47,750 with its exclusive lot offerings including: a dual-hemisphere live lot selling for \$30,000; a 10-case Proprietary Red Wine barrel lot purchased for \$15,900; and an E-Auction lot of one hand-etched 3L bottle of 2006 Blackbird Vineyards Napa Valley Proprietary Red Wine, selling for \$1,850. Blackbird's 2007 Proprietary Red Wine barrel auction lot—comprised of 65% Estate Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon—garnered the eighth highest bid among 115 barrel lots.

"We are thrilled to have a top eight finish, which further validates our belief that world-class Merlot can rival Napa Valley Cabernets. We are also pleased to have been able to create a one-of-a-kind experience that resonates with auction attendees. Our global partners are invaluable when it comes to raising money for these worthy charities," says Blackbird Vineyards Proprietor Michael Polenske.

Blackbird Vineyards' live lot—referred to as 38°N x 32°S—represents the latitude of the winegrowing regions of Napa Valley and Mendoza, Argentina. The winner of this auction lot will be presented with a three-year vertical collection of 2004-06 double magnums from Blackbird Vineyards, signed by winemaker Sarah Gott; two nights' accommodations for three couples at the Villagio Inn & Spa in Yountville, CA; spa treatments for six persons at the Villagio Spa; concierge arrangements for all travel needs while in Napa Valley provided by All Access Napa Valley; an intimate, wine-paired Argentine *asado* dinner for three couples at Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley; and a one-day Audi R8 driving experience for three couples.

In Mendoza, guests will be treated to a three-night experience personally hosted by Michael Evans and Pablo Gimenez-Riili, co-founders of The Vines of Mendoza. The experience will include accommodations at the renowned Park Hyatt Mendoza; programmed events; intimate gourmet lunches and dinners; and extraordinary wine-tastings at Mendoza's finest restaurants and wineries during the Masters of Food & Wine South America event to be held in February 2010.

Auction Napa Valley officially commenced on Thursday, June 4 with Blackbird Vineyards hosting an auction kick-off open house reception at Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley—"a life aesthetic." Guests

had the opportunity to tour the sculpture garden and peruse the art, design, and furnishings gallery. Patrons enjoyed hors d'oeuvres prepared by chefs from the New York, Miami, and San Francisco's Mandarin Oriental hotels, paired with artisan wines from limited-production collective winery partners, including Brown Estate, Lail Vineyards, Pedras Wine Company, Renteria Wines and Tor Kenward Family Wines.

The next evening, Blackbird Vineyards' Proprietor Michael Polenske hosted an intimate dinner in conjunction with The Vines of Mendoza at Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley. The four-course wine-paired dinner was prepared by acclaimed chef Michael Chiarello of Bottega Restaurant and featured current and library wine selections from Blackbird Vineyards' portfolio of Proprietary Red Wines.

About Blackbird Vineyards

Founded in 2003 by Michael Polenske, Blackbird Vineyards is an artisanal producer of Pomerol-inspired wines from the Napa Valley. Planted in 1997, the estate vineyard is located in the heart of the Oak Knoll District—a region appreciated for its moderate climate and deep, gravelly soils. The vineyard's valley floor topography presents optimum growing conditions for Winemaker Sarah Gott and Winegrower Aaron Pott to produce an elegantly styled, appropriately balanced red wine that offers short- and long-term cellaring potential. Limited quantities are available through an allocated mailing list direct from the winery and in the finer restaurants and hotels around the world. Learn more at www.blackbirdvineyards.com.

About Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley

Restored in 2008 by Blackbird Vineyards proprietor, Michael Polenske, this historic 1904 stone building serves as a stylized backdrop for Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley—"a life aesthetic." As an art, design and collective wine-tasting gallery among an outdoor sculpture garden, Ma(i)sonry offers guests a differentiated lifestyle experience in wine country. Located in Yountville—a world-class culinary, wine, and tourism destination—Ma(i)sonry Napa Valley features a rotating collection of limited-production wines and internationally renowned art and furnishings to appreciate and acquire. Guests are welcome to peruse Ma(i)sonry's galleries seven days a week, with seasonal evening appointments until 10pm. www.maisonry.com and [facebook](#)

About The Vines of Mendoza

The Vines of Mendoza's Tasting Room in Mendoza, Argentina presents the continent's widest selection of boutique Argentine wines. Its Private Vineyard Estates in Mendoza's acclaimed Uco Valley offer wine enthusiasts the unique opportunity to own their own vineyard and produce ultra-premium wines under the expert guidance Santiago Achaval, one of Argentina's most celebrated winemakers.

About E-motive

Emotive is the engine behind some of the automotive world's most powerful experiences, from the first racing school in the world: the Jim Russell Racing Drivers School, to the Audi Sportscar Experience which was recently named "The Best Factory Driving School in the US" by Best Life magazine (Feb. 2008).

About Villagio Inn & Spa

The award-winning Tuscan-inspired Villagio Inn & Spa in Yountville, CA shares the 23-acre Vintage Estate with its sister hotel, Vintage Inn—a discreetly elegant French country-style inn—and the retail centerpiece, V Marketplace, a lifestyle shopping collection housed in the former 138-year-old Groezinger Winery listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

About Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group

Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group is the award-winning owner and operator of some of the world's most prestigious hotels, resorts and residences. Mandarin Oriental now operates, or has under development, 41 hotels representing over 10,000 rooms in 25 countries.

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