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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

REGISTRATION OPENS FOR SOMMCON™, A FOUR-DAY EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR WINE INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AND ENTHUSIASTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

San Diego-Based Conference Features 50 Educational Seminars, Certification Opportunities, Tasting Events and More This November 18-21, 2015

San Diego, CA (August 27, 2015) – The glass is half-full for oenophiles with the debut of [SommCon™](#) in San Diego, CA November 18-21, 2015 at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. Designed to offer [wine industry professionals](#) and serious enthusiasts convenient and affordable access to education and networking opportunities, SommCon™ launches with 50 sessions and brings together some of the greatest thought leaders, entrepreneurs and artisans to discuss, develop and lead the conversation on the business of wine.

At the helm of SommCon™ is a group of over 25 industry experts dubbed [“Team SommCon.”](#) Together these industry leaders have had a role in the selection of SommCon’s education, sessions, workshops, tastings and certification offerings. [Jesse Rodriguez](#), Advanced Sommelier and member of Team SommCon™ says that a forum for professionals to network, learn and share their knowledge is long overdue in Southern California.

“This is an opportunity that until now, has not existed in this way in [San Diego](#). Through SommCon™, our industry members have access to a wide variety of educators from all different backgrounds – enhancing the skill set of both established and aspiring professionals,” continued Rodriguez. “SommCon™ provides an avenue for us to gather as friends, colleagues, teachers, students and mentors to further the industry that we are all so passionate about.”

SommCon™ begins on Wednesday, November 18 with professional certification opportunities including the [WSET](#) (Wine & Spirits Education Trust) Level 1 Award in Wine offered by the Neptune School of Wine, as well as [Certified Cicerone®](#), the second level of certification through the Cicerone Certification Program.

The main conference is held Thursday, November 19 and Friday, November 20, and includes in-depth sessions led by industry thought leaders, power speed dating style blind tastings, round-table discussions, regional explorations, and a trade tasting featuring over 100 wineries, breweries, spirit purveyors, and service industry brands. SommCon™ concludes on Saturday, November 21 at the [San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival’s](#) Grand Tasting – the west coast’s most exciting weeklong epicurean experience.

For many current and aspiring wine and spirit professionals, access to the education required to further their career is logistically, geographically and financially out of reach. Over just a few short days, SommCon™ opens the door to a wealth of knowledge from some of the most celebrated minds in the industry.

Young professionals under the age of 30 who have a passion for entering a profession in the wine industry or expanding their knowledge can apply to receive free conference registration through the [Young Leader's Summit Scholarship](#). Applications are due by September 15, 2015 and can be found [here](#).

Fifty sessions will be offered at this year's conference, including:

- **[Chardonnay and White Burgundy](#)**: This session compares old and new world stylistic differences with this iconic varietal. Led by Masters of Wine, [Geoff Labitzke](#), Director of Sales and Marketing, Kistler and [Bernard Retornaz](#), President, Louis Latour. Thursday, November 19
- **[Brunello Di Montalcino – A Master's Perspective](#)**: Receive an in-depth perspective of the Italian red wine, Brunello di Montalcino. Led by Master Sommelier [Fred Dame](#) and Castello Banfi family proprietor [Cristina Mariani-May](#). Thursday, November 19
- **[Wine Faults: Yeast, Bacterial and Sulfur Defects in Wine](#)**: Explore the root of the most conspicuous wine faults, from visual defects to microbial issues that stem from yeast, bacteria and rot. Led by Masters of Wine [Amy Christine](#) and [Patrick Farrell](#). Thursday, November 19
- **[Napa Valley "Connect the Rocks" Panel Discussion and Tasting](#)**: Learn how Napa Valley terroir is expressed in wines. Examine the fulcrum of terroir and culture by tasting Cabernet Sauvignon that consistently demonstrates discernible aspects of terroir, and how the unique environment of Napa puts it at the cutting edge of modern winemaking. Presented by Master Sommelier, [David Glancy](#). Thursday, November 19
- **[Bordeaux Beyond the Classified Growths](#)**: Bordeaux's hidden treasures under \$60 - a journey of discovery and tasting of eight red Bordeaux wines. Led by Master of Wine [Mary Gorman](#). Thursday, November 19
- **[Establish Your Own Import Business](#)**: This introductory seminar covers the basics of starting a wine import and distribution business. Led by [Damon Goldstein](#), President and CEO, Truly Fine Wines. Thursday, November 19
- **[Emerging Mexico](#)**: Panel discussion of the most preeminent wines, vineyards and importers found in Baja. Friday, November 20
- **[Solutions-Based Technologies to Drive Beverage Profits](#)**: This seminar includes panelists from companies that bring technology and innovation to the sommelier community, such as Tastevin ipad, i-sommelier decanting system, BinWise inventory and beverage management programs and wine ring, the app for building wine preferences. Friday, November 20
- **[A Journey Of The Senses](#)**: An informative and interesting wine and glass experience, that explores the difference a glass can make in the enjoyment of food and the wine itself. Presented by [Georg Riedel](#). Friday, November 20

"I am excited to bring two sessions to SommCon™, and offer seminars that are relevant to today's professionals and consumers looking for a deeper dive into the word of wine," said Master of Wine and member of Team SommCon,™ [Amy Christine](#). "We have an incredible collection of pros teaching this year and it's an honor to be among them. The sessions that have been added to the lineup are diverse and touch on a wide variety of topics, appealing to an audience from varied backgrounds."

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SommCon™ is only open to 300 registrants, and for those in attendance, there are several ways to participate, with conference packages and single day passes available.

- **Level 1: Full Conference Registration (November 19-21)** –Full conference access with choice of seminars, trade tasting, San Diego Bay Wine & Food Festival Grand Tasting, continental breakfast and roundtable discussions, networking tasting, winemaker and pairing lunches, \$395 before November 1 (\$710 value)
- **Level 2: Single Day Conference Registration Package (November 19)** – One-day conference access with choice of seminars, trade tasting, winemaker lunch and networking tasting, \$225 before November 1 (\$455 value)
- **Level 3: Single Day Conference Registration Package (November 20)** –One-day conference access with choice of seminars, trade tasting, and pairing lunch. \$195 before November 1 (\$320 value)
- **Level 4: SommCon™ Trade Tasting (November 20)** –Admission to trade tasting. Free for qualified members of the trade, and \$65 after November 1

Sponsor and educational partners to date include: The SOMM Journal, THE TASTING PANEL, Napa Valley Vintners, Santa Lucia Highlands Wine Artisans, Kistler Vineyard, Lewis Cellars, Somm's List, Vins de Bordeaux, Riedel, San Diego State University College of Extended Studies, Wine & Spirits Education Trust, Cicerone Certification Program, Acqua Panna, Banfi Vintners and Wine Spectator.

SommCon™ takes place November 18-21, 2015 at the [Manchester Grand Hyatt](#) in San Diego, California. For more information or to purchase Conference registration, visit: [SommConUSA.com](#).

Discounted accommodations are available at the Manchester Grand Hyatt for SommCon attendees, to make a reservation call: 877.385.9595.

ABOUT SOMMCON™: [SommCon™](#) is a leading conference and exposition for sommelier-level education and training of wine professionals and serious enthusiasts. Held November 18 - 21, 2015, in San Diego, CA, the four-day Sommelier Conference brings together industry professionals of all levels to discuss, develop, and lead the conversation on the business of wine. SommCon's™ education is built by industry thought leaders for trade professionals and serious enthusiasts who have a passion for wine and spirits and an unyielding quest for knowledge. Attendees learn and taste their way through keynote sessions and educational classes, complete with a trade-only tasting and expo. SommCon™ is produced by Fast Forward Event Productions, an event management agency specializing in productions for the wine, beer and spirits industry [fastforwardevents.com](#).

SommCon™ is made possible by the experts who are committed to the continued growth of the wine, beer and spirit industries, Team SommCon members include: Joseph Spellman, Master Sommelier; David Glancy, Master Sommelier; Eric Entrikin, Master Sommelier; Eddie Osterland, Master Sommelier; Evan Goldstein, Master Sommelier; Geoff Labitzke, Master of Wine; Lisa Redwine, Advanced Sommelier; Lindsay Pomeroy, WSET educator; Adam

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Sensney, Certified Sommelier; Patrick Farrell, Master of Wine; Mary Gorman, Master of Wine; Steve Pagano, General Manager, Marriott Marquis & Marina; Joshua Orr, Advanced Sommelier; Amy Christine, Master of Wine; Bonnie Graves, Certified Sommelier; Jörn Kleinhans, Certified Specialist of Wine; Ira Norof, Certified Wine Educator; Mindy Hewitson, Distributor, Young's Market; Jesse Rodriguez, Advanced Sommelier; Brian Donegan, Advanced Sommelier; Tami Wong, Sommelier; Molly Brooks Thornton, Certified Sommelier and Cicerone; Jeff Josenhans, Certified Sommelier and Cicerone; Jennifer Roberts, Certified Sommelier; Eric Runyon, Certified Sommelier, CSW, and Rebekah Turpin, Certified Sommelier, CSW, FWS.

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