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THE CLAREMONT HOTEL, CLUB & SPA PRESENTS THE  
FIRST ANNUAL BERKELEY WINE FESTIVAL

*Napa and Sonoma Wineries Take Center Stage at the Claremont for a Series of Dinners and Seminars  
Kicking Off on March 12, 2010*

San Francisco, CA (January XX, 2010) – The Claremont will host the first annual Berkeley Wine Festival celebrating wines from the Napa and Sonoma Valleys beginning Friday, March 12. The festival will open with a grand reception and tasting of more than 50 wines from top wineries including Far Niente, Duckhorn Wine Company and Cliff Lede Vineyards. Sponsored in part by Piper Heidsieck Champagne, S. Pellegrino and Acqua Panna, the two-month long festival continues with a series of receptions, dinners and seminars hosted by local winemakers and proprietors before closing with a celebratory gala.

The Berkeley Wine Festival is modeled after the prestigious Boston Wine Festival created by Chef Daniel Bruce, the award-winning chef of Meritage at the Boston Harbor Hotel. Since launching the Boston Wine Festival over twenty years ago, Bruce expanded the event to New Orleans with the French Quarter Festival in 2007 and is launching the Capital Wine Festival in Washington D.C. and Berkeley Wine Festival this year.

Bringing together winemakers and wine enthusiasts, the first annual Berkeley Wine Festival celebrates great Northern California wine and seasonal cuisine presented by Claremont Executive Chef Josh Thomsen. Throughout the Berkeley Wine Festival, guests are invited to experience eight

intimate dinners hosted by a guest winemaker or proprietor. Prior to each dinner, guests will enjoy an intimate reception or seminar before being seated for a festive evening of food and wine pairings.

The Berkeley Wine Festival will also celebrate the launch of the “Vineyard to Table” menu in the newly opened Meritage at the Claremont. This unique prix fixe menu will feature ingredients grown specifically for Meritage by local winemakers. Sure to become a signature Meritage experience, the bi-weekly changing “Vineyard to Table” menu will pair wines with ingredients sourced from the very same winery in a four course menu. Dishes may include Meyer lemons from Hanzell Winery which shine in Thomsen’s *Seared Diver Sea Scallops* dish with Meyer lemon confit, Sonoma oyster mushrooms and crispy fingerling potatoes, complemented by Hanzell Winery’s 2006 Chardonnay. Far Niente provides the lavender for the *Goldbud Farms Apple Tart* with lavender ice cream paired with 2005 Far Niente Dolce Late Harvest.

Each winemaker dinner throughout the Berkeley Wine Festival will showcase this special relationship with Meritage and give guests the opportunity to enjoy both the world-class wines and ingredients exclusive to that evening’s featured winery. The “Vineyard to Table” menu offered during the guest winemaker dinner will also be showcased in the Meritage dining room for that particular week, allowing locals and hotel guests to enjoy the prestigious wineries highlighted throughout the Berkeley Wine Festival.

A list of scheduled events is as follows:

**Wednesday, March 12, 2010**

Grand Opening Reception

Location: Sonoma/Monterey Room, Claremont Hotel

Taste more than 50 distinctive wines, including many featured in this year’s festival dinners, with food pairings of exquisite cuisine

6:30pm, \$85 per person

**Wednesday, March 17, 2010**

Far Niente with Larry Maguire

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$140 per person

**Wednesday, March 24, 2010**

Benziger Family Winery with Chris Benziger

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$130 per person

**Wednesday, March 31, 2010**

Frog’s Leap with John Williams

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$130 per person

**Wednesday, April 7, 2010**

Cliff Lede Vineyards with Jack Bittner

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$140 per person

**Wednesday, April 14, 2010**

Duckhorn Wine Company with Dan Duckhorn

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Seminar and Dinner, \$160 per person

7:30pm, Dinner only, \$130 per person

**Wednesday, April 21, 2010**

Silver Oak Cellars with Daniel Baron

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$165 per person

**Wednesday, April 28, 2010**

Cakebread Cellars with Dennis Cakebread

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Reception and Dinner, \$130 per person

**Wednesday, May 5, 2010**

Joseph Phelps Vineyards with Damian Parker

Location: Meritage Private Dining Room, Claremont Hotel

6:30pm, Seminar and Dinner, \$185 per person

7:30pm, Dinner only, \$155 per person

**Friday, May 7, 2010**

Closing Reception

Location: Sonoma/Monterey Room, Claremont Hotel

Celebrate your favorite wineries from this year's festival and get a preview of the 2011 event. The impressive selection of wines will be accompanied by signature food pairings.

6:30pm, \$85 per person

Reservations are required for each event and seating for the seminars and dinners is limited. Guests are also invited to stay overnight during the festival events for 20% off the best available rates. Rooms are subject to availability and can be booked at [www.claremont-hotel.com](http://www.claremont-hotel.com) or 800-551-7166 using the promotional code WINE.

For more information on the Berkeley Wine Festival or to purchase tickets, please visit [www.berkeleywinefestival.com](http://www.berkeleywinefestival.com). For more information on the Claremont Hotel, Club & Spa, please call 800.551.7266 or visit [www.claremont-hotel.com](http://www.claremont-hotel.com). For more information on Meritage restaurant, please visit [www.meritage-claremont.com](http://www.meritage-claremont.com).

**About the Claremont Hotel, Club & Spa**

The Claremont, a member of the Pyramid Hotel Group, opened in 1915 and is located in California's Berkeley Hills. The property features 279 uniquely designed rooms and suites, a variety of unique meeting and event spaces, state-of-the-art fitness facilities, an incomparable 32 treatment room spa, and an award-winning food & beverage program. The new Meritage restaurant specializes in bringing the wine and food experience together with a menu of contemporary California cuisine while Paragon Bar & Café offers a menu of hand-shaken libations complementing a menu of casual American comfort food. In addition to the culinary experiences to be found at the Claremont, guests can relax at Spa Claremont, play a game of tennis or spend the afternoon

poolside enjoying this landmark's spectacular views. For more information, please visit [www.claremont-hotel.com](http://www.claremont-hotel.com) or call (800) 551-7266.

**About Pyramid Hotel Group**

The Pyramid Hotel Group, founded in 1999, is a Boston-based full-service hotel company that owns, manages and asset manages hotels and manages hotel construction/renovation projects. Pyramid Hotel Group currently has a portfolio of more than 50 hotels under management and asset management throughout the U.S. For more information about Pyramid Hotel Group, visit the company's website, [www.pyramidhotelgroup.com](http://www.pyramidhotelgroup.com)

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT WAGSTAFF WORLDWIDE, (415) 274-2510**