

RODNEY STRONG

V I N E Y A R D S

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RODNEY STRONG VINEYARDS SPONSORS GUILD OF SOMMELIERS TOP | SOMM COMPETITION

Three-year Sponsorship Continues Winery's Support of the Advancement of Sommeliers

HEALDSBURG, CA (December 3, 2012) – Rodney Strong Vineyards recently agreed with the Guild of Sommeliers to sponsor their annual Top | Somm Competition, where working wine professionals compete for the honor of being named the year's Top | Somm. The agreement is for three years starting in 2013 and includes a combination of financial support and a wine contribution. There are four regional competitions throughout the U.S. culminating with a National Championship in April in San Francisco, California.

Rodney Strong Vineyards continues to support sommeliers and wine professionals through their involvement with the Sonoma County Vintner's Sonoma Wine Country Weekend Sommelier Star program, the Russian River Valley Pinot Forum, the Alexander Valley Winegrower's Cabernet Academy, the James Beard Foundation Celebrity Chefs dinners and Johnson & Wales University as well as the development of internal and trade educational programs. The Top | Somm Competition carries on a Rodney Strong tradition of encouraging continuing education for wine professionals.

"The wine industry needs highly informed and approachable professionals to share the virtuous pleasures of enjoying wine on a reasonable and regular basis," says Rodney Strong's Carmen Castaldi, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing. "Whether on the wine shop floor or in a restaurant, wine knowledgeable pros bring wine to people without pretense and that's something Rodney Strong Vineyards wants to help grow."

Top | Somm is a competition for wine service professionals administered under the framework of the Guild of Sommeliers, judged by Master Sommeliers. It affords wine service professionals the opportunity to fine-tune their skills and compete for the title of Top | Somm. The competition recognizes excellence and encourages mastery of wine and spirit knowledge and service. For more information visit their [website](#).

RODNEY STRONG VINEYARDS is dedicated to crafting world-class wines that capture the essence of Sonoma County. Rodney Strong sustainably farms 13 estate vineyards and produces wines from Sonoma County's finest appellations – Alexander Valley, Russian River Valley, Chalk Hill and Sonoma Coast. The winery was founded in 1959 by Sonoma County wine pioneer Rodney D. Strong as the 13th bonded winery in the county. It was purchased in 1989 by the Klein family, a fourth generation California farming family. The company aspires to conserve and protect the environment in all its operations.

THE GUILD OF SOMMELIERS is a non-profit, member-run organization, committed to excellence measures, development, inspiration and exchange of information for wine service professionals and wine enthusiasts across the U.S. Through our online community and in-person events, we aim to help our members broaden their knowledge of the world's wine regions, enhance their beverage service skills, network with other wine enthusiasts and stay up to date on industry news and trends.