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EUROPEAN WINE COUNCIL HONORS TOM GENIESSE AND ALFIO MORICONI

NEW YORK, April 30, 2009 – At its annual gala celebrating fine wine and outstanding cuisine, the European Wine Council tonight honored the founder of Bottlerocket Wine & Spirits, Tom Geniesse, and the vice president of European Imports and Sales at Total Wine & More, Alfio Moriconi.

The awards were presented by Dr. Lucio Caputo, chairman of the European Wine Council, the New York-based consortium of trade representatives of leading European wine producing nations, at the Council's 13th Annual Dinner Gala, an invitational gathering at New York's elegant Le Cirque.

Tom Geniesse and Alfio Moriconi were both honored with the *2009 European Wine Ambassador's Award* for their enthusiasm and commitment to European wines and for their knowledge and educational and promotional efforts on behalf of the wines of Europe.

The Gala reception and dinner showcased wines from each of the Council members countries (*see enclosed wine notes*). The dinner wines were paired with a menu specially prepared under the personal direction of owner Sirio Maccioni to enhance the eight European wines selected for the Gala.

Formed in 1992, the European Wine Council was chartered to enhance knowledge and appreciation of European wines in the U.S. and to promote a spirit of good will among wine professionals in Europe and in the U.S.

The founding Council members include the Austrian Trade Commission, the Cyprus Embassy Trade Center, the German Wine Information Bureau, the Greek Trade

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Commission, the Italian Trade Commission, the Italian Wine & Food Institute, the Portuguese Trade Commission, Sopexa U.S.A. and Wines from Spain/Trade Commission of Spain.

Recipients of European Wine Council Distinguished Achievement awards include: Patrick W. Fegan, Doug Duda and Ms. Lesley Townsend (2008), Steven Kolpan and Micheal Weiss (2007), Stephen Mutkoski, Frank Prial and Adam Tihany (2006), Gerald Asher and Karen MacNeil (2005), Harriet Lembeck (2004), Mary Ewing-Mulligan, MW (2003), Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Kevin Zraly (2002), Fess Parker and Piero Selvaggio (2001), Francis Ford Coppola (2000), Morley Safer (1999) and Robert Mondavi (1998).

Recipients of European Wine Ambassador's Awards include: Jerry Martellaro (2008), Peter Nolis (2007), Peter Yi (2006), Steve Wallace (2005), Darryl Rosen (2004), Richard Marmet and Joshua Wesson (2003), Peter J. Morrell (2002), Clyde Beffa, Greg St. Clair and Piero Selvaggio (2001), Patrick "Chip" Cassidy (200), Michael Aaron (1999), Tom Schmeisser and Sirio Maccioni (1998) and Michael Goldstein (1997).

For more information please visit: www.europeanwinecouncil.com or contact: europeanwines@aol.com.

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