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Livermore Valley Wine Region Announces Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc as the Region's Signature Varietals

*Both grapes have a strong historical significance having first been planted in the region
as far back as 1882.*

Livermore, CA, February 11, 2025 – Livermore Valley Wine Region's winemakers and growers are proud to announce Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc as the region's signature varietals. With a strong historical significance, excellent growth potential in the valley, and its increasing market demand, the decision marks a pivotal time for Livermore Valley as the region has seen recent winery growth and investment in the future of one of California's oldest wine regions.

"The Livermore Valley played a pivotal role in shaping California's wine industry and this announcement further commits the region to be a driving force in the future of California wine," said Brandi Lombardi, Executive Director of the Livermore Valley Wine Community. "We anticipate wine lovers across the country and visitors to the region will come to know Livermore Valley for their favorite Cabernet Francs and Sauvignon Blancs - and stay for all of the other award-winning varietals that we have to offer."

Sauvignon Blanc traces its roots in the region back to Concannon Vineyard. In 1882, Charles Wetmore planted cuttings of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon from Chateau d'Yquem in his Cresta Blanca Vineyard. Wine from these grapes won the Grand Prize at the 1889 Paris Expo, becoming the first American wine ever to win a prize in France. Cabernet Franc was planted in the Livermore Valley in the 1880s. In the early 1900s, pioneering winemaker Theodore Gier, who had vineyards in Livermore Valley and Napa, considered the Cabernet Franc from Livermore Valley the finest example of this wine anywhere in the world.

A 2022 UC Davis report¹ found that Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc are two grapes that are poised for successful growth in the region given the agronomic conditions, including the climate, soils and irrigation water.

“Climate change is a real thing in wine country. Over the last 10 years temperatures have consistently risen in California, and the wine landscape as we know it today may be radically different twenty to thirty years from now,” said Steven Mirassou, sixth-generation winemaker and proprietor at The Steven Kent Winery. “These grapes are poised to withstand the most extreme effects of climate change. This really sets up the region for significant success in the years to come.”

Plans to replant these varietals have spread across the valley. The Tri-Valley Conservancy has initiated a replanting program for these two varietals that provides low interest financing for replanting. In addition, Lemmons Family Vineyards and Darcie Kent Vineyards have announced plans to support these grapes.

“With our recent acquisition of Concannon Vineyard, we are committed to re-planting the vineyards to Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc,” said David Kent, CEO of Darcie Kent Vineyards and Almost Famous Wine Company. “We’re excited about the future of the region and believe putting a stake in the ground for these two grapes is an exciting development for Livermore Valley.”

The Livermore Valley wine region is located less than an hour east of San Francisco and just north of Silicon Valley. Known for its history, award-winning wines and friendly wine community, there are approximately 50 wineries in the region. For more information on the Livermore Valley Wine Community, visit lvwine.org.

ABOUT LIVERMORE VALLEY WINE COMMUNITY

The Livermore Valley Wine Community is a 501(c)6 organization that supports the wineries, growers and members in the Livermore Valley American Viticultural Area through educational and marketing programs. For more information, please visit www.LVwine.org.

¹<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/65dfdf71cc5d4901208972f6/t/6643de1aaeb4cb2d19085f6f/1715723808083/Realizing+the+Heritage+Digital+Version..pdf>