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Announcing the IV *Copa Jerez* Food and Sherry Pairing Competition

Washington, DC -- The Sherry Council of America announced that the U.S. National Finals for the *Copa Jerez* wine and food pairing competition will be held in New York City on October 6th, 2010. Chef and sommelier teams across the United States are invited to compete for the U.S. Finals. The winning U.S. team will be chosen by a panel of judges to compete in Spain at *Copa Jerez*, the international food and Sherry competition, against renowned chefs and sommeliers from eight countries including Spain, the United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Japan.

To select the U.S. Finalists, a panel of expert judges will narrow down the submissions to three teams. These teams will travel to New York City for a live cook-off on October 6th to present their creations at the U.S. National Finals. One team will be selected as the winner and will then travel to Jerez, Spain to compete for the International *Copa Jerez* title.

Submissions will be received during the summer, with a deadline of August 15th, 2010. “We expect record submissions this year,” said Steve Olson, lead judge of the U.S. national panel. “The versatility of Sherry allows sommeliers and chefs to really express their creativity, so we are seeing an even greater diversity in the types of cuisine that enter the competition- from Sushi to Steakhouse.”

During the 2009 *Copa Jerez* competition, Roger Kugler and Seamus Mullen from Suba Restaurant in New York City were selected as the winning U.S. team. Roger Kugler went on to receive the award for “Best Sommelier” in the international competition, making him the first American to win this title.

“I’ve been integrating Sherry into my wine menus for some time now, so I saw this competition as a great opportunity,” said Roger Kugler. “It was a great honor to win, and share my passion for Sherry, showing how well it works with so many foods and flavors. ”

“*Copa Jerez* showcases the innovative ways top chefs and sommeliers experiment with the flavor profiles of Sherry wine,” said Sonia Smith, Director of the Sherry

Council of America. “It is a wonderful way to discover authentic Sherry wines, from Jerez – a town in Spain’s southern-most province of Andalucía.”

For more information about the competition or for rules and regulations please contact Natalie Alhonte at 202.777.3549 or nalhonte@clsdc.com.

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Sherry Council of America is the official U.S. representative of the Federación de Bodegas del Marco de Jerez (Fedejerez), the trade organization for all Sherry producers of the Jerez region of Spain. Based in Washington, D.C., the Council works to expand knowledge of the unique geographic characteristics, rich cultural traditions, and generations of winemaking expertise that are central to creating the distinctive range of flavors found in Sherry wines. The Council also works to raise awareness among U.S. policymakers, consumers, and other audiences about the importance of protecting the Sherry name.

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