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## **CELEBRITY CRUISES UNCORKS FULL-BODIED ONBOARD WINE PROGRAM**

**MIAMI – February 15, 2012 –** The exploration of wine, guided by knowledgeable sommeliers, is a hallmark of <u>Celebrity Cruises'</u> modern luxury vacation experience. Now, Celebrity has expanded its wine program to illuminate an even more full-bodied slate of offerings representing the world's most robust wine-producing regions, offering vacationers the opportunity to taste and learn about more wine than ever before. The updated program presents a comprehensive selection of wines from diverse regions and grape varietals, and a variety of price points. With an aim of delivering an intuitive tasting experience for guests who purchase wines by the bottle or by the glass, wine lists are now categorized by flavor rather than grape varietal or geographic region.

"Our guests have told us how much they enjoy the wine experience on our ships, from participating in tastings led by our highly trained sommeliers to the convenience of our wine packages, to simply sipping a glass of wine while gazing out at sea," said Scott Steenrod, Associate Vice President, Food and Beverage Operations. "The updated, now globally focused program exemplifies modern luxury, with offerings from more wine-producing regions than before, a new emphasis on the many nuances of flavor that make wines unique, and a variety of convenient pricing and packaging options."

Celebrity's evolved wine program introduces more than 100 new selections of wines by the bottle, including 20 additional new half-bottle selections. As a result, the award-winning Solstice Class fleet offers over 500 different wines, and its Millennium Class ships – currently undergoing a revitalization program known as "Solsticizing" – offer over 300, as does *Celebrity Century*.

The program now expands beyond the previous emphasis on wines from Italy, France and California, to include more wines from South America, Spain, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Portugal and South Africa. When Celebrity's ships are in wine-producing areas such as Australia and South America, guests will now have more opportunities to select locally produced wines and more deeply immerse themselves in the flavors and experiences of a destination.

In the ships' main restaurants as well as in "Blu," the specialty restaurant for AquaClass guests, wines are listed by flavor profile, identifying primary flavor characteristics so that guests can make selections based on what matters most: taste. A new "Reserve List" within the main restaurant wine list identifies some of the finest sparkling, red, white and dessert wines from Celebrity's specialty restaurants. Prior to the wine program being updated, these selections were offered only in Celebrity's specialty restaurants; their popularity there led to Celebrity now making them available in the main restaurants.

In various bars, restaurants and lounges throughout its ships, Celebrity offers a list of wines available by the glass. As part of the program expansion, this list has grown from 25 to 38 selections, with 60% of the wines by the glass being new wines for Celebrity.

Celebrity's in-house sommelier and beverage programming expert, Chanelle Duarte, developed the enhancements to Celebrity's main restaurant wine list, carefully changing out over 100 wines in order to add depth and relevance to the program. Duarte has worked with Celebrity since 2007, and has contributed to the development and launch of numerous unique beverage offerings, including the Enomatic wine preservation and dispensing system, among others.

"Chanelle's creativity and knowledge have been integral to the evolution of our beverage program, and the updated wine program is another example of her ability to elevate our already exceptional offerings to even greater heights," Steenrod said.

Celebrity's beverage packages that include wine also have been updated to mirror changes to the overall wine program. The "Taste of the Vineyards" three-, five- and seven-bottle wine packages that were previously available on the Millennium Class ships and *Celebrity Century* have also been introduced on Celebrity's Solstice Class ships, and 90% of the wines that guests can choose from to create their packages are new wines for Celebrity. The introduction of so many additional choices adds many wines that offer both high quality and great value, while incorporating international varietals and regions. Celebrity's "Classic Beverage Package" and "Premium Beverage Package," both of which include wines by the glass in addition to beer and spirits, now include more choices of wine varietals. Over 80% of Celebrity's wines available by the glass are part of the Premium Beverage Package.

Celebrity engaged wine educator Brian Connors to develop a comprehensive wine education program for its sommeliers, bar staff and restaurant staff. Dubbed "Celebrity Cruises Wine University at Sea," the program provides up to 24 hours of training with multiple levels of knowledge advancement based on the participants' position. Celebrity's Cellarmasters and future Cellarmasters complete the full training.

The training focuses on wine fundamentals, including viticulture, wine making and food and wine pairing; regional knowledge, including terroir, regional wine laws and unique characteristics of the world's wine-producing regions; tasting skills; storytelling, which helps sommeliers bring wines to life by painting a picture of its producer, grape varietal, region or even the origin of its label; and future trends.

"We are constantly tweaking and revising our training program to make it better and more relevant to the changes in the wine market," Steenrod said. "Our training program is on par with what organizations such as the Society of Wine Educators, the Wine and Spirits Education Trust, and the Guild of Sommeliers offer. Brian delivers an engaging, interactive training program that has truly resonated with our crew, and, in turn, has made our guest experience even richer. What really takes our wine program from being just a list of names on a menu to being a truly interactive experience is one of the world's largest teams of highly knowledgeable sommeliers in the world."

Having trained for his Sommelier certification at the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley, California, Connors has extensive experience including certification by the Court of Master Sommelier, a certification through the Society of Wine Educators, a position as a wine educator at Johnson & Wales University's College of Hospitality Management, and experience lecturing at many of the country's top schools, including Cornell University, the Culinary Institute of America, Florida State University and more.

Guests on Celebrity's ships also have the opportunity to experience wine tastings and food-and-wine pairing events, including the first Riedel comparative wine crystal workshops at sea, as part of the line's Celebrity Life activities program.

## **About Celebrity Cruises:**

Celebrity Cruises' iconic "X" is the mark of modern luxury, with its cool, contemporary design and warm spaces; dining experiences where the design of the venues is as important as the cuisine; and the amazing service that only Celebrity can provide, all created to provide an unmatchable experience for vacationers' precious time. In addition to offering vacations visiting all continents, Celebrity also presents immersive cruisetour experiences in Alaska, Australia/New Zealand, Canada, Europe and South America. Celebrity's fleet of 10 ships represents the newest in the premium cruise category, with an additional Solstice Class ship, *Celebrity Reflection*, scheduled to join the fleet this fall. Celebrity Cruises is part of global vacation company Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (NYSE, OSE: RCL). For more information, dial 1-800-437-3111, visit <a href="https://www.celebritycruises.com">www.celebritycruises.com</a>, or call your travel agent. Follow the brand socially at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/celebritycruises">www.facebook.com/celebritycruises</a>.