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Ph 4448 6082
B640 Princes Hwy, Jaspers Brush
PO Box 411, Berry NSW 2535

Record number of participating cellar doors announced for the 'Shoalhaven Coast 2009 Winter Wine Festival'

18 May 2009 – The Shoalhaven wine region today announced a record number of participating cellar doors for the South Coasts' premier food and wine event the 'Winter Wine Festival'.

Announcing the news, Rajarshi Ray, President of the Shoalhaven Coast Wine Association (SCWIA) said "We are thrilled to have a record number of wineries participating in the 2009 Winter Wine Festival. The wine region is less than two hours from Sydney and three hours from Canberra and it boasts over 1000 medals and trophies. The food and wine festival has become a must see for locals and regional visitors alike".

Tom Phillips, Tourism Manager for the Shoalhaven commented "The Shoalhaven offers a unique package for visitors – the beaches, the mountains, exceptional accommodation and amazing food and wine. The quality of the wines in particular has contributed to the Shoalhaven wine region being amongst the only in Australia to record double digit growth in visitations in 2008/09. This event further show cases to the rest of Australia our great wine and produce, and we are thrilled with the ongoing success of the Festival"

Jim and Niki Kladis from Kladis Estate –world renowned for their 2005 Dion Cabernet Sauvignon which was voted in the White Book as one of the top 100 wines of that year – on joining the 2009 festival said "The region has come leaps and bounds in the last five years, and we are delighted to participate in the Festival. More and more people are discovering the region, and the individual wineries in particular, giving real impetus to the national and global recognition of our wines.'

The 2009 Festival marks the fifth year for the event, and has grown over 50% year on year since its inception. The largest food and wine event on the South Coast, it has become a must visit event on the annual food and wine calendar and is held over the June Long Weekend annually – and in 2009 will be held on 6th to the 8th of June.

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About Shoalhaven Coast Wine Region

The Shoalhaven Coast is Australia's 95th declared wine region, although it is also one of the oldest grape growing regions tracing its history to the early 1800's. Now comprising over 20 grape growers and 16 accompanying wineries and cellar doors, it is one of the fastest growing and awarded wine regions having gathered more than 1,000 medals and trophies. For more information about Shoalhaven Coast Wine Region, visit <http://www.shoalhavencoast.com.au>

About the Shoalhaven

Imagine watching the mist rise over Kangaroo Valley or walking barefoot along the whitest sand in the world. Imagine discovering a ruined lighthouse and that evening enjoying fresh sea food and a bottle of crisp local wine. Book your romantic beak in the Shoalhaven, online www.shoalhavenholidays.com.au or 1300 662 808.

For further Winter Wine Festival media information please contact Rajarshi Ray, President Shoalhaven Coast Wine Industry Association on 02 4448 6082 or Linda Marquis, SCWIA Co-ordinator at marquis@southernphone.com.au

For further media information on the Shoalhaven please contact Tom Phillips, Tourism Manager, Shoalhaven City Council on 02 4429 3248