



MARILYN MONROE BARES ALL TASTEFULLY
Velvet Collection 2003 features legendary centerfold photo

Napa, California, September 15, 2005 – The first-ever centerfold in the inaugural issue of *Playboy* is now an elegant and artful label on the Velvet Collection 2003, a blend of Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

Arguably the most famous nude photo portrait ever created, the original image is overlaid with a clear polypropylene label, foil-stamped with strategically-placed red iridescent sparkles. The clear cover and its sparkles can be peeled away to reveal the nude Marilyn Monroe reclining on red velvet – a photograph taken by Tom Kelley in 1949. Fledgling publisher Hugh Hefner utilized this photograph as the Centerfold for the very first issue of *Playboy* magazine in December, 1953.

Marilyn Wines was licensed the rights to that photograph and today announces the release of Velvet Collection 2003. The wine is available as a 1.5 liter magnum in sealed, individually-numbered presentation boxes, and retails for approximately \$225. A collector's set of a 3 liter, 1.5 liter and 750ml bottle in a wooden display box is also offered for \$1,000.

The wine, from the 2003 vintage, is a proprietary blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon and 45% Merlot from Napa Valley. "The deep red colors, aromas of ripe black fruits, and spicy French oak are immediately appealing," notes winemaker John McKay. "This wine displays the strength of Cabernet, but is balanced by the suppleness of Merlot. As approachable now as this wine is, it will age gracefully due to its lineage."

Marilyn Wines' proprietors Robert and Donna Holder explain the intriguing intersection of Marilyn Monroe and elegant wines from the Napa Valley: "Marilyn Monroe is one of the most sensuous and powerful icons of our century. Whether you remember her breathy rendition of 'Happy Birthday' sung to President Kennedy or treasure one particular moment from her films...to be able to 'bring her home' as a delicious Napa Valley wine in a stunning package that is highly collectible is an experience as unforgettable as Marilyn's legend."

The first release of Marilyn Merlot was the 1985 vintage (released in 1987). The idea for a line of wines focusing on Marilyn Monroe began at a dinner party in

Napa Valley in 1983 at the Holders' home. Marilyn Wines has an exclusive agreement with the estate of Marilyn Monroe for the use of her name and her image: no other wines or products have this distinction, and accordingly, royalties are distributed to The Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute in New York and Los Angeles and to the Anna Freud Centre in London, as Marilyn directed in her will.

The Velvet Collection 2003 can be purchased from MarilynWines.com, by calling 866-MMWINES, through fine wine retailers nationwide, or at the Napa Wine Company, Highway 29 & Oakville Crossroad, Oakville CA. The Velvet Collection is part of the family of Marilyn Wines, which also includes Marilyn Merlot, Marilyn Cabernet, and Norma Jeane – a young Merlot.

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