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## **KICKIN' BACK IN COLUMBUS**

### *Wine Expert Comes to Columbus to Roll Out First-Ever Wine Industry Campaign*

**COLUMBUS (Oct 18, 2004)** – Long recognized as one of America's favorite test markets, Columbus has been chosen as the first U.S. city to see the full advertising and promotional campaign currently being tested by the Wine Market Council, a non-profit association of leading wine grape growers, wine producers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and other industry businesses and organizations. John Gillespie, President of Wine Market Council, is coming to Columbus to roll out this groundbreaking effort.

The first wave of the ads, which were released in a limited number of national print publications earlier this year, humorously juxtapose the ancient origins of wine with today's casual lifestyles. Based on extensive research, the "Wine. Since 6000 B.C." theme colorfully illustrates the message that wine has been a part of everyday life for centuries. "Now that we successfully introduced the advertising theme to gauge initial trade and consumer responses – which were very positive – it is time to test the impact of executing a complete campaign," explains Gillespie.

The campaign's test phase in Columbus is really the first attempt to combine advertising's efforts with public relations and in-store promotions in order to assess the strength of the fully

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integrated campaign. Test market in-store promotional materials featuring advertising images and the “Wine. Since 6000 B.C.” logo will include posters, cut case cards and shelf talkers. Results of the Columbus test will determine the viability and likelihood of a full national campaign rollout.

### **WHY COLUMBUS?**

Aside from Columbus’ great history as an all-American playing field for marketers to test their best and brightest products, services and campaigns, Gillespie feels the location has particular relevance for the wine industry. “Like so many Americans, people in Columbus like wine, but they don’t generally think of it outside of ‘special occasions,’” Gillespie says, “These are exactly the types of perceptions Wine Market Council hopes to change.”

Research has shown the state of Ohio ranks in the bottom third of the nation, in terms of wine consumption. Among Ohioans who do enjoy wine, the vast majority of them enjoy it less than once a week. Gillespie feels that this represents a tremendous opportunity and a great reason for optimism in the wine industry. “As the capital of Ohio, Columbus offers us an excellent opportunity to try and better understand Ohioans’ behaviors and opinions towards wine,” he adds.

Another factor that makes Columbus an attractive test market for the Council’s efforts is the fact that, as with much of the country, wine is available in grocery stores in the Columbus metro area. “This is key because it represents where Americans buy most of their wine and it allows us to track and compare sales in a meaningful way,” explains Gillespie.

### **RELAX AND ENJOY – NO RULES REQUIRED**

Gillespie offers Columbus residents the following tips to encourage them to enjoy wine more often and in more everyday situations:

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- **Drink what you like.** Whether it's red or white wine, you really can't go wrong.
- **Check out the wine aisle.** Whether you're picking up a take-out meal or buying the ingredients for a weeknight dinner, a trip to the wine aisle will reward you with a great accompaniment to heighten your mealtime enjoyment.
- **Re-cork it.** You don't have to dump the bottle if you don't finish it. Just re-cork it and it will stay fresh for 3-4 days in the refrigerator (or, for red wines, 3-4 days on your kitchen counter).
- **Keep a stash.** Creating a nice pantry selection of wines is easy. Just gather bottles of all-purpose red and white wines to have on hand to enjoy with any meal.
- **Don't worry about the glass.** Whether it's a tumbler or stemmed, glass or plastic – any glass can be a wine glass.

As with all of Wine Market Council's efforts, the goal of the campaign is to make Americans more comfortable with wine and encourage them to enjoy wine any day of the week. "For the past several years, Wine Market Council has been helping Americans enjoy wine in everyday situations," explains Gillespie. Covering a wide range of meals not typically associated with wine – such as pizza, Chinese takeout, frozen entrees – the Council has helped to move wine out of the "special occasion" category and into everyday life.

For more information on Wine Market Council's background and previous efforts, log on to [www.winemarketcouncil.com](http://www.winemarketcouncil.com) and [www.wineanswers.com](http://www.wineanswers.com).

Wine Market Council is an independent, non-profit trade association of grape growers, wine producers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and other organizations affiliated with the wine industry.

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