



## **Corking year for wine breaks, says Grape Escapes**

**London, 18 July 2011:** Economic woes may be dampening demand for foreign holidays, but one holiday company is reporting a vintage season.

Specialist wine tour operator Grape Escapes has already notched up record sales in 2011 as travelers opt for a short break that combines twin passions of travel and cuisine.

The company, launched in 2004 by wine lovers Mark and Claire Hallett, specialises in gourmet breaks to the French wine regions and has just surpassed all previous annual sales figures, despite only being half way through the year.

Grape Escapes notes a particular interest in tours to the Rhone during 2011 with bookings to the region up 200 per cent on last year. Return customers are also now making up more than 15 per cent of total sales.

Mark Hallett, managing director of Grape Escapes comments: "We've certainly noticed that our customers are looking for something a little bit different from their traditional weekend break.

"Although trips to Champagne continue to be our best sellers, our newer itineraries to destinations such as Loire Valley and Burgundy are also generating a lot of interest.

"We are very proud to have surpassed our sales record so early in the year and certainly believe that our range of new tours and regions have inspired both new and returning customers to book with us."

Grape Escapes offers a selection of gourmet wine-tasting breaks in France, Spain and Italy and has launched several new tours for 2011. These include gourmet Chateau breaks in Provence, flexible tasting tours to Burgundy, premium Loire Valley weekends and 'Rhone by Rail' packages.

For more information about Grape Escapes please visit [www.grapeescapes.net](http://www.grapeescapes.net) or call 08456 430 860.

**Ends**

### **About Grape Escapes**

Grape Escapes is a specialist in travel to the French wine regions offering a selection of gourmet wine-tasting weekends in Champagne, Burgundy, Bordeaux, the Loire and the Rhone. Catering for all food and wine lovers from the serious connoisseur to enthusiastic beginner, Grape Escapes' small group tours average just 12 guests and blend tastings at prestigious chateaux and Champagne houses with more intimate invitations as the guests of smaller family-run estates. Grape Escapes also offers

longer tailor-made self-drive itineraries, private group tours for friends or social groups such as hen weekends and weddings.

### **Media Information**

For more details on Grape Escapes, please visit: [www.grapeescapes.net](http://www.grapeescapes.net) or call 08456 430 860

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