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Carrabba's Italian Grill Lets Consumers Uncork Their Passion for Wine and Creativity

TAMPA, Fla., July 2, 2008 – A famous Scottish author once said that “wine is bottled poetry.” In an artful twist of the cork, Carrabba's Italian Grill is giving consumers the opportunity to leave their creative mark on the label of an exclusive new wine from Ruffino.

Ruffino is producing a limited-edition baby Super Tuscan available only at Carrabba's this fall. The wine is almost ready to be bottled in Italy, and the only thing missing is a name. Consumers are invited to submit suggestions through **July 31, 2008**, for the chance to win a **\$1,500 epicurean prize package**, including: a case of the exclusive Ruffino wine, a 2008 holiday dining experience for 12 by Carrabba's at winner's home, and a year's worth of Carrabba's dinners in 2009.

Limited-Edition Wine Series Debuts with Acclaimed Il Borro Winery

The Ruffino blend is part of a limited-edition wine series that Carrabba's initiated to reward its best customers and wine lovers with seasonal additions to its award-winning wine list. The program kicks off late summer with a special red wine blend from acclaimed winery Il Borro, owned by the family of fashion icon Salvatore Ferragamo. The debut wine “Qualcosa di Speciale, Grace's Blend,” is a tribute to Grace Mandola, the 92-year old matriarch of the Carrabba's family and creator of many of the recipes on the menu today.

The name “Qualcosa di Speciale” means “something special” in Italian and reflects Carrabba's desire to give back to its best patrons through the new wine program. The IGT Toscana by Il Borro is a blend of Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon, and will be released late summer. Due to their limited production, wines in the new series are available to members of Carrabba's Amici Club, the restaurant's free customer appreciation program.

"We have a philosophy that everyone deserves to enjoy wine with dinner that is both delicious and affordable," said Shelly Hurley, director of beverage for Carrabba's Italian Grill. "All of our restaurants have a wine list that is designed to suit local tastes and offers a number of excellent bottles of wine starting at \$27. Our new exclusive wines will add unique variety to the list for our frequent guests and wine enthusiasts."

Entering Carrabba's "Uncorking Creativity" Contest

Consumers can visit www.Carrabbas.com from now through **July 31, 2008** to enter Carrabba's "Uncorking Creativity" Contest and submit their suggested name for the new Ruffino blend. All submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Overall uniqueness of name
- Appropriateness for the wine blend
- Match with the Carrabba's Italian Grill brand (e.g., heritage, atmosphere, food)
- Brief description of name inspiration (100 words or less)

For complete rules, prize package details and more information on Carrabba's, visit www.carrabbas.com. Consumers also can sign up for free membership in the Amici Club online or at their local Carrabba's.

About Carrabba's Italian Grill

Carrabba's Italian Grill was founded by Johnny Carrabba and Damian Mandola in Houston, Texas in 1986. The restaurant features hand-prepared family recipes made from the finest ingredients and prepared to order in an exhibition kitchen. The success of Carrabba's led to the popular PBS cooking show *Cucina!*, starring Carrabba and Mandola, as well as a series of companion cookbooks. There are currently 240 Carrabba's Italian Grill locations around the country, with another three locations planned for 2008.

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