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From left to right: Karim J. Saade, Salim Wardé, Sandro J. Saade

# Lebanon's **First** *& wine* museum

With its future location at the heart of the **Bekaa Valley**, Lebanon's premier Museum of Vine and Wine, is scheduled to open in 2013 and reasserts the value of the Levant's viticulture while further advancing the public's access to a currently burgeoning field in the region. It was under the patronage of Lebanon's minister of culture, Salim Wardé, the Johnny R. Saade family, known for its legacy in wine making, announced the creation and imminent launching of the Middle East's first wine museum.

A team of specially appointed experts will supervise its progress, while a designated Board of Trustees will oversee all things related to the institution's management. Board members include local, regional and international experts, namely: Patrick McGovern, the Scientific Director of the Biomolecular Archaeology Laboratory for Cuisine, Fermented Beverages, and Health at the University of Pennsylvania Museum; Jennifer Huggett, a geologist and consultant at Petroclays; Stéphane Deroncourt, a French vigneron and wine consultant; Grégory Buchakjian, an art historian and photographer currently teaching at ALBA, Lebanon's Academy of the Arts; Anne-Marie Maïla-Afeïche, the curator of Beirut's National Museum; Assaad Seif, the coordinator of archaeological research and excavations at Lebanon's Directorate General of Antiquities; as well as Naji Morcos, co-founder and managing partner of HODEMA hospitality consulting firm.

During his speech, the minister of culture highlighted the importance of creating such an institution at both national and regional levels. He commended the Johnny R. Saadé Foundation's initiative and called on universities to cultivate a new generation of students, actively engaged in preserving Lebanon's historical and cultural heritage.

"We live in a region that has witnessed the birth of wine, thereby justifying the initiative to create the first wine museum in the Middle East. Additionally, it will serve to promote our cultural and natural heritage," said Karim Saade. "Through comprehensive, scientific documentation, we will discover the world of wine, from antiquity to the present day. To this end, we will apply a number of new technologies to help foster better interaction with our public."

## The Museum research team: International and local profiles



Patrick McGovern



Jennifer Huggett



Stéphane Deroncourt



Grégory Buchakjian



Anne-Marie Maïla Afeïche



Assaad Seif



Naji Morkos