



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HISTORIC SHIPWRECK CHAMPAGNE AUCTION THIS FRIDAY

'The Tsar's Treasure' Could Set New World Record

**VEUVE CLICQUOT NOW EXCLUSIVE AUCTION PARTNER FOR THE
EXTRAORDINARY SALE OF THE WORLD'S OLDEST CHAMPAGNE**

*Auction to Include Additional Rare Vintages of Veuve Clicquot
Direct from the Cellars of Clicquot*

*Historic Live Auction Scheduled for June 3, 2011
Auction Preview Available Online at www.ackeraland.com*

NEW YORK, N.Y. May 31, 2011 – Acker Merrall & Condit, the world's premier wine auction house, announced today that Veuve Clicquot will serve as the exclusive partner to the Government of Åland in the historic auction of the world's oldest Champagne recovered in 2010 from a 19th century shipwreck off the Åland Islands of Finland. As part of the partnership, Veuve Clicquot will provide an additional fifteen lots of rare Champagne from the Company's personal cellars to be auctioned at the event on June 3, 2011. A preview of the auction, including a listing of all lots, bidding guidelines and amazing pictures of the discovery are available now at www.ackeraland.com.

The unique auction will feature two single bottles of the shipwrecked Champagne, one each from the legendary houses of Veuve Clicquot and Juglar. These vintage Champagnes, which date to the early 1840s and are thought to be the oldest Champagnes for sale in existence, are among the most exciting discoveries ever in the world of wine. Additionally, Veuve Clicquot will provide several rare vintages of Champagne to be auctioned off as part of the unprecedented event. All proceeds from the auction will be donated to charitable causes at the discretion of the Government of Åland.

A minimum price of 10,000 euros has been set for each of the shipwrecked Champagne lots. "It's difficult to estimate what the two bottles will fetch at auction in Mariehamn because they are unique and it depends who is bidding," said Richard Juhlin, the world's foremost authority on Champagne. "The bottles may fetch 100,000 euros each", he then said. The current world record for a bottle of Champagne is held by Acker Merrall, who sold two bottles of 1959 Dom Pérignon Rosé in April 2008 for a combined total of US\$84,700.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with Veuve Clicquot, one of the world’s premier Champagne houses, for this extraordinary auction event,” said John Kapon, CEO of Acker Merrall & Condit. *“These salvaged bottles are more than just bottles of Champagne, they are pieces of history. With the additional vintages from Veuve’s rare cellar collections, this promises to be one of the most important and exhilarating events in the history of Champagne.”*

“This is truly a historic event. We have worked closely with the Government of Åland since the discovery of the shipwreck, to help salvage and protect the precious wines, which we know now were tasted by Madame Clicquot herself! We are proud to be associated to the sale of the oldest bottle of Veuve Clicquot,” said Stéphane Baschiera, President of Veuve Clicquot.

To commemorate this unprecedented event, in the days preceding the auction the Government of Åland, which owns the priceless bottles, will host exclusive dinners and tastings showcasing many of the world’s great Champagnes and featuring Richard Juhlin, the world’s foremost Champagne authority, and John Kapon, CEO of Acker Merrall.

The auction will take place at Alandica Culture and Congress Center in Mariehamn, Åland on June 3, 2011 at 3pm local time (8am in New York, 8pm in Hong Kong). Bidders can participate via absentee bidding, in person, via telephone, or live on the Internet. Prospective bidders must register for the auction by emailing info@ackerwines.com or visiting www.ackeraland.com

About the Åland Champagne Discovery

During the summer of 2010, divers discovered unique bottles of Champagne in a shipwreck off the Åland Islands, an autonomous region of Finland, at the mouth of the Baltic Sea. Having survived nearly two centuries at the bottom of the Baltic Sea, the contents of the bottles are extremely well preserved. The constant temperature and low light levels have provided optimal conditions for storage, and the pressure in the bottles has prevented seawater from seeping in through the corks.

The name of the sunken vessel is still unknown, as is its destination, but it is speculated the cargo was bound for the court of the Russian Emperor, Nicholas I, in St Petersburg. Following a successful salvage operation of 145 bottles, it was discovered the bounty included some of the world’s oldest Champagnes, wines from the famed houses of Veuve Clicquot, Juglar, and Heidsieck.

About Acker Merrall & Condit

Founded in 1820, Acker Merrall & Condit is America’s oldest fine wine merchant and the world’s largest fine and rare wine auction house. With operations in New York and Hong Kong, Acker Merrall & Condit hosts over two dozen live and internet auctions annually, and conducts retail operations from its historic headquarters on New York’s West Side. Acker is devoted to helping customers buy, sell, and experience the world’s great wines.

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