

## W.J. Deutsch & Sons Joins Group of Investors to Form Ascentia Wine Estates

**N**ewly-formed Ascentia Wine Estates is the result of a partnership between William and Peter Deutsch, proprietors of leading wine importer W.J. Deutsch & Sons and Jim DeBonis, former COO of Beam Wine Estates and GESD Capital Partners, a San Francisco-based food and beverage investor. Also involved in the group is Peter Ekman, the former CEO of Wine.com, who will become chief sales and marketing officer.

W.J. Deutsch & Sons is the exclusive sales and marketing agent for the entire portfolio, which consists of Geyser Peak Winery, Atlas Peak, Buena Vista Carneros, Gary Farrell Winery, XYZin, Columbia Winery, Covey Run and Ste. Chappelle. The eight premium wine groups were recently acquired from Constellation Brands for the sum of \$234 million.

Deutsch, now the fifth largest importer in the nation has long been recognized for its imported wine. Ascentia Wine Estates has allowed Deutsch to expand into new territory. "We saw Ascentia as an opportunity to round out our portfolio with domestic brands," comments Peter Deutsch. "The decision came at a time when the prices of imports are rising and when domestic wine is viewed as better value."

The newly acquired brands were selected for their predicted growth in the American market. "The Ascentia Wine Estates portfolio of renowned California, Washington state and Idaho properties is the ideal complement to our current range of award-winning producers," explains Bill Deutsch. "The great success that we are experiencing with our signature estate from Sonoma, Kunde Estate Winery and Vineyards, encouraged us to look for additional North American producers. With the addition of these ultra-premium wine brands we are now able to provide our customers with a comprehensive portfolio of domestic and imported fine wine estates."



William and Peter Deutsch