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GrapeVine

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< Canada-born comic actor **Dan Aykroyd** has invested US\$850,000 in an Ontario wine company. Niagara Cellars owns four wineries—Birchwood Estate, EastDell Estates, Lakeview Cellars and Thomas & Vaughan—and is planning another acquisition. Aykroyd, known for roles in such films as *The Blues Brothers* and *Ghost Busters*, is also an investor in the House of Blues restaurants and nightclubs. "Everywhere you go in the United States," he said, "you see Argentinean, Chilean and Australian wines, but you don't see Canadian wine on the shelves, and I'd like to change that."

< **Greg Norman, Ernie Els, Arnold Palmer** and other professional golfers have their own wine brands. Now the PGA Tour is releasing its own private labels. The wines, which carry the PGA Tour logo, come from California and are offered in three tiers, with a mix of varietals and appellations. The Players Cellars (\$15-\$18) and Champions Select (\$18-\$30) tiers will be available at retailers nationwide, while the Commissioners Private Reserve tier (\$40-\$60) will be sold primarily at country clubs, golf resorts and PGA Tour events, as well as online.

< Wine lovers in search of excitement may want to take a peek at Sogno Uno when the wine is unveiled in February. The high-end Italian red is a collaboration between American adult-film actress **Savanna Samson** and winemaker **Roberto Cipresso**, who crafts Argentina's Achával-Ferrer and Brunello under his own Fattoria La Fiorita label. Samson, who learned about wine through her wine-merchant husband, chose a blend of the little-known Cesanese grape, Sangiovese and Montepulciano from the 2004 vintage. To help boost sales, Samson put a provocative image of herself on the label.

< Two former executives at Foster's Wine Estates Americas have purchased fast-growing value brands Red Truck and White Truck and plan to make them the centerpiece of a new Sonoma-based wine company named Axiom. **Dan Leese** and **Doug Walker** bought the names and inventory of the two blends, which sell for \$10 to \$12, from Cline Cellars in Sonoma. Leese and Walker plan to add varietal wines under the labels and are shopping for other brands.

—Eric Arnold, Konrad Ejbich, Tim Fish, Mitch Frank

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