

2024 Sonoma County Barrel Auction Raises More Than \$400,000

Vintners, Wine Trade Members and Guests Celebrate 10th Anniversary

SANTA ROSA, CA, USA, May 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sonoma County Vintners](#) (SCV) is pleased to announce that over \$400,000 was raised at the 10th Anniversary [Sonoma County Barrel Auction](#) (SoCoBA), presented by [American AgCredit](#) and hosted by MacMurray Estate Vineyards on Friday, May 3, 2024. The proceeds assist in creating marketing programs and initiatives that support the Sonoma County wine trade and community. The auction featured 63 unique barrel lots ranging from 5 to 20 cases from 69 participating Sonoma County vintners.

Over 300 guests attended the auction day, including trade and media guests, partners, participating vintners and celebrated honorees. Guests from across the United States and from as far away as the United Kingdom and Ireland traveled to Sonoma County for SoCoBA, with others joining by proxy bidding during the live auction.

The highest selling barrel auction lot of the day was the 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon "Legacy" 20-case lot from Silver Oak and it sold for \$43,000. A 2023 Pinot Noir lot called "20-1-20" from Williams Selyem commanded the second highest price at \$29,000. Kosta Browne's 10-case 2023 Pinot Noir lot named "The Green Valley Cuvée" rounded out the top three lots of the day at



Paddles Raised at SoCoBA



Guests cheers to the Sonoma County Barrel Auction.

\$19,000.

Other top 10-case lots included the “Western Wind” 2023 Pinot Noir from Convene, by Dan Kosta, going for \$12,000 and a collaboration 2022 Pinot Noir called “Heirloom” from multigenerational wineries Rochioli Vineyards and Winery, Bacigalupi Vineyards and Ramey Wine Cellars, which was sold for \$11,000. The top 5-case lot of the day, and the one commanding the highest bottle price for the auction, was “First & Five,” a 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon from Pride Mountain Vineyards.



2024 SoCoBA Honorees Zelma Long, Marimar Torres, and George Christie

Auctioneer John Curley kept guests engaged with his high energy and entertaining style, throughout the auction. During the final lot, he encouraged trade buyers to continue increasing their bids by playing “Sweet Caroline,” as guests joined in a resounding serenade for the grand finale to the auction.

Before the bidding started, the 10th Anniversary Sonoma County Barrel Auction Honorees were recognized on stage with introductions and remarks. Dr. Ray Johnson, Executive Director of the Wine Business Institute at Sonoma State University, introduced George Christie, Founder and CEO of Wine Industry Network and Partner of Saini Vineyards, to receive the SoCoBA Innovator award. “George Christie is truly an innovator with impact,” said Johnson. “His entrepreneurial spirit led him to create the Wine Industry Network. What began 15 years ago as an online directory has really grown into a media empire.” George Christie was eager to share the praise with his team and industry colleagues by saying, “I want to thank all of you who I have had the pleasure of working with for teaching me so much. I feel so lucky.”

Marimar Torres, Founder and President of Marimar Estate Vineyards & Winery, was honored as the SoCoBA Icon and introduced on stage by her daughter, Cristina Torres. Marimar explained that in the 1970s, she had looked from Mendocino to Monterey for just the right vineyard land in California, a world away from the vineyards in her native Spain. She found 56 acres to purchase in the Green Valley of the Russian River Valley that she thought was just beautiful. Only Chardonnay had been grown in the area previously but she wanted to try her hand at Pinot Noir, which everyone now knows is an ideal grape for this cool climate area. “She is no stranger to people doubting her,” said Cristina Torres. “Mom, you are an inspiration to women everywhere. Thank you for laying the foundation for generations of women to come.”

Zelma Long, an enologist, winemaker, consultant and author for more than 50 years, was then

introduced by her husband, Dr. Phillip Freese, to accept the Lifetime Achievement Award. She conveyed her love of the region's agricultural heritage. "I want to thank Sonoma County Vintners for this award. It's such an extraordinary honor to be recognized by your peers," said Long. "What Sonoma County has which is so unusual is this incredible diversity of land – it's got the mountains, it's got the seashore, it's got the valleys, it's got the bay – I don't think any other place has that diversity. It's a very special place. I feel fortunate to have been here for over 40 years. Other wine areas are focused on one grape variety and here we can grow almost anything successfully."

As a special recognition for their achievements, each of the honorees also received a congressional proclamation from Congressmen Mike Thompson and Jared Huffman.

A new SoCoBA commemorative label design was unveiled during the auction. The unique wrap style label is a beautiful deep grey with gold foil elements, and for the first time, a QR code that customers and collectors can scan and learn more about SoCoBA and the special Never Before, Never Again wine only available from the winning trade buyer's establishment.

The SoCoBA events kicked off with an all-inclusive lot tasting preview event on May 2 at Bacchus Landing. The event offered trade buyers the opportunity to speak with the vintners, taste barrel samples and learn more about the auction lots before the live auction the following day.

Sonoma County Vintners extends a special thank-you to the members who have participated in the Sonoma County Barrel Auction all 10 years since the inaugural year in 2015 – Alexander Valley Vineyards, Balletto Vineyards, Dry Creek Vineyard, Francis Ford Coppola Winery, MacRostie Winery, Mauritson Wines, Patz & Hall, Pride Mountain Vineyards, Ramey Wine Cellars, Rodney Strong Vineyards, Three Sticks Wines, WALT Wines and Williams Selyem Winery.

Save the date for next year's SoCoBA planned for May 1-2, 2025!

About Sonoma County Vintners

Sonoma County Vintners is the leading voice of Sonoma County wine, dedicated to raising awareness of Sonoma County as one of the world's premier wine regions. Sonoma County Vintners represents over 250 wineries throughout the county. The organization actively promotes Sonoma County through educational programming; advocates for its members at local, state and federal levels; and contributes to the local communities through our Sonoma County Vintners Foundation.

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