

Guests enjoy dinner  
at Ma( )sonry,  
Auction Napa  
Valley 2012.  
Partner Meet  
and Greet



PHOTOGRAPH: LUKE SWYDER, JASON TINACCI

# INSIDE AUCTION NAPA VALLEY 2013

BY ANGELLA SPRAUVE



AUCTION NAPA VALLEY 2013 IS FINALLY HERE. This year's event, beginning on May 30, marks the 33rd annual celebration of Napa Valley wine that has become one of the country's most successful fundraising events.

Over the past 32 years, the auction has raised more than \$104 million for philanthropic causes in Napa County. This year should prove to be another winner. Exciting, never-before-seen auction items have been added to a lineup that should have the paddles of big donors waving high. Coveted wine lots, sports packages, private concerts and spa getaways were just a few of the flashy big-ticket items in past auctions.



Barrel Auction  
at Jarvis Winery  
Auction Napa  
Valley 2012



Fund A Need  
lot in progress,  
Auction Napa  
Valley 2012

In addition to the main draw, which includes the barrel auction, main Auction and private parties, bidders come from far and wide to rub elbows with legendary winemakers, master chefs and celebrities.

One chef who is a celebrity is Thomas Keller, who will be represented by his culinary teams from the French Laundry and Bouchon. They will prepare meals at two of the Vintner Dinners on Friday night (May 31st).

Keller, a long time Auction Napa Valley supporter, is a culinary legend. At the helm of four restaurants and a bakery, he has built a reputation on precision, control and attention to detail that shows in every dish that is sent out under his name. His flagship Yountville restaurant, The French Laundry, has been called the best in the world, and has earned countless accolades from industry experts, peers and critics – including multiple

Michelin 3-star ratings.

For foodies, Keller's participation at Auction Napa Valley is a rare opportunity to experience his off-menu dishes without having to join a long waiting list to dine at the French Laundry.

Although Keller has steadily built his empire with the haute cuisine of the French Laundry, Per Se, and Bouchon, Keller's casual side of cuisine has emerged from his latest restaurant, Ad Hoc, a low-key eatery located just down the street from the French Laundry in Yountville, Calif.

Last year, Keller tapped Dave Cruz, chef de cuisine at his Ad Hoc restaurant, to pull together a summer country-style picnic for the Auction Napa Valley.

Who knows what may be in store this year? It's best to sit back, relax and enjoy. Guests will be in good hands with whatever style of cuisine Keller's team has ready for this year.

## Here is the schedule of events at this year's Auction weekend:

### THURSDAY, MAY 30 VINTNER WELCOME PARTIES

Auction Napa Valley weekend officially kicks off with a range of vintner welcome parties that start at 6 p.m. Hosted at vintners' homes or wineries, celebrations can range from elegant to casual, from relaxed to lively. But one thing is for sure: each gathering offers the opportunity to spend private time with the people behind Napa Valley's legendary wines. Top chefs from the valley

will prepare a multi-course meal to pair perfectly with the wines being served. The Vintner Welcome Parties are a lovely way to mix, mingle and slowly ease your way into the festivities to come.

### FRIDAY, MAY 31 NAPA VALLEY BARREL AUCTION DAY AT THE RAYMOND VINEYARD

This year's Barrel Auction will be held for the first time at the

TOP LEFT: © 2012 JASON TINACCI; RIGHT: JASON TINACCI



Guests raise their paddles in support of the community bidding on the Fund A Need lot. Auction Napa Valley 2012.

Dinner at Nickel & Nickel dinner, Auction Napa Valley 2012.

Vineyard 29 dinner, Auction Napa Valley 2012.

Fried Chicken Sliders at Friday Marketplace Auction Napa Valley 2012.

Raymond Vineyards in St. Helena. The day commences at 11 a.m. for the Barrel Auction and Marketplace Festivities with a little friendly competition combined with high spirits, great wine and superb food.

This event draws 2,000 attendees, including bidders, chefs, vintners and media from across the U.S., Japan, China, Hong Kong, Canada and the UK. The walk-around tasting features hundreds of yet-to-be-released Napa Valley wines and dozens of dishes from local chefs. Guests have the opportunity to mingle with winery owners and winemakers as they offer samples directly from the barrel. Like what you tasted? Then add your bid to the board. If you're one of the top ten bidders for that lot, look forward to having a case of that wine sent to your home when it's ready for release. This is your chance to have a close look at the Live Auction lots up for bid at Saturday's Auction Celebration.

By 4p.m., the lively daytime festivities will draw to a close, and guests will have a couple of hours to rest and prepare for

a spectacular – but more subdued - evening of amazing wine, food and company.

Friday Night Vintner-hosted Private Dinner Parties  
The festivities continue at private dinner parties hosted throughout Napa Valley from 6p.m. until the last bottle of wine is poured. These intimate dinner parties remain a perennial favorite of the Auction weekend for guests and vintners. These festive, intimate gatherings offer an opportunity to enjoy great food, library-selection wines, and a memorable evening with a Napa Valley vintner.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 1  
LIVE AUCTION CELEBRATION AT  
MEADOWOOD NAPA VALLEY**

The Live Auction is the centerpiece of the weekend, with 800 guests including bidders, vintners, and media. The celebration always arrives with great anticipation. And for good reason: It is one of the most exciting parties in the wine world with 40

offerings of “Firsts, Favorites and Far Away Places” wine, cellar collections, and wine experiences with member vintners. The Auction will be held at the iconic Meadowood property, host of this event every year since 1981.

Festivities begin roughly around noon and end around 8p.m., so pace yourself during this brilliant day-long event.

Start with a glass of wine as you talk to the vintners who have generously crafted the 46 mega-lots for auction later in the day.

Then it's onto the lawn for a lively lunch. This year, lunch will be prepared by a rare collaboration of nine BravoTV Top Chef winners. They will serve up specially prepared courses to be paired with your choice of wines—white, red, rose or sparkling—all provided by your vintner hosts.

Saturday also is your last chance to get your bids in for the Napa Valley Barrel Auction. Stroll over to view the barrel boards and place your bids before lunch or one hour after the Live Auction concludes.

Next, pick up your paddle and head into the big tent for the Live Auction. Vintners from each winning lot will join the winner for a congratulatory toast.

After the Auction, head back out to the lawn for a refined country-style dinner by chef Joseph Lenn of the Blackberry Farm in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. The evening also includes dancing to the music of an all-star band, who will entertain auction-goers as the sun sets on Saturday night.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 2  
AUCTION FAREWELL AT MEADOWOOD NAPA  
VALLEY**

Saying goodbye is never easy. For the final gathering of the weekend, vintners will join guests for a 10 a.m. breakfast to enjoy one last bite and one last sip. Vintners and hosts will offer their thanks to all the guests who took part in – and added to -- the bounty, the generosity and philanthropy of Auction Napa Valley.



Guests enjoying Friday Marketplace Auction Napa Valley 2012.

CLOCKWISE: CREDIT JASON TINACCI; CREDIT LUKE SWYDER; JASON TINACCI  
RIGHT PAGE: JASON TINACCI