

Napa Valley barrel auction total hits \$1.5m

Around 600 bidders competed for still-in-barrel wines from top producers in the charity auction, which is part of the new Collective Napa Valley initiative and was co-hosted by Sotheby's.



Chris Mercer June 8, 2022



Guests taste the wines ahead of the auction, held at Raymond Vineyards. Credit: Alexander Rubin Photography

A new-look Napa Valley barrel auction saw 75 lots raise a total \$1.5m in aid of children's mental health, organisers have announced.

Many wines were from the 2021 vintage, and Napa Valley Vintners (NVV) reported an average price per lot of \$18,683, which it said was a new record.

The barrel auction is **now part of Collective Napa Valley**, a philanthropy-focused initiative created to offer events and sales for wine lovers throughout the year – replacing **the previous Auction Napa Valley event** that started in 1981.

Sotheby's helped to organise this year's sale, which took place in-person at Raymond Vineyards on 3 June, amid a weekend of special events.

Most buyers were from North America, but Sotheby's also opened up bidding to international collectors online and it reported purchases from those based in Europe, Asia and Central America, too.

'The Napa Valley Barrel Auction attracted 600 bidders, which illustrates the strong interest in the diverse range of wines from Napa, being more than three times the number for a regular wine auction,' said Jamie Ritchie, worldwide chairman of Sotheby's Wine.

Under the auction's format, the 10 highest bids on a lot will secure a 12-bottle case of that particular wine – to be delivered at a future date.

'The top three lots by the number of bids received (getting more than 40 bids each) were Ovid, Shafer and Chappellet, while the three highest aggregate prices were VGS Chateau Potelle, Shafer and Alpha Omega, ranging from \$48,060 to \$77,328 for 10 cases,' Ritchie told *Decanter*.

The top bid on VGS Chateau Potelle's Fourmeaux, made from Cabernet Sauvignon grown in the Saffron Vineyard, Mt Veeder, was \$12,500.

Ritchie said the vast majority of the 275 buyers were private collectors. 'As always in Napa, the atmosphere was joyous and celebratory, which is not surprising given that so many people are able to taste the wine they are buying from the barrel and chat with the winemakers.'

Linda Reiff, president and CEO of NVV, said, 'We are humbled to have the support of so many bidders, wineries, businesses and volunteers who all contributed to the success of this fundraising endeavour.'

The next major Collective Napa Valley event will be the Vintage Celebration and Live Auction taking place on 4 and 5 November. NVV said this would raise money for an environmental cause.

<https://www.decanter.com/wine-news/napa-valley-barrel-auction-total-hits-1-5m-481952/>