

SAN FRANCISCO

# HAUTE LIVING

MAY/JUNE 2016

## ANTHONY MACKIE

CAPTAIN AMERICA'S THE FALCON STARTS A NEW HOLLYWOOD CONVERSATION BY TAKING ON THE ICONIC ROLE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## MATT LIGHTNER

NINEBARK'S NO-NONSENSE CHEF CREATES CULINARY MAGIC IN NAPA

## JEFF OWENS

ON LIFE AFTER SCORING A PERFECT 100 ON HIS INAUGURAL CABERNET SAUVIGNON

## PLUS

FORMER L.A. DODGERS OWNER JAMIE MCCOURT INVITES US INTO HER RUTHERFORD HOME & OUR COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO AUCTION NAPA VALLEY



SPECIAL FEATURE



*Dining al fresco among the vines at Inglenook's vintner dinner at the 2015 Auction Napa Valley.*





THE 36TH ANNUAL AUCTION NAPA VALLEY BRINGS

# Latin Flair TO WINE COUNTRY

SECOND-GENERATION WINEMAKER CHAIRS THE EXTRAVAGANT EVENT

BY KATIE SWEENEY

ON JUNE 2-5, 2016, MORE THAN 2,000 WINE LOVERS, 500 community volunteers and 400 vintners will come together to celebrate the 36th annual Auction Napa Valley, hosted by the Napa Valley Vintners. Winemakers, vintners, chefs, and wine lovers will use some 14,000 wine glasses, four tons of firewood, 200 pounds of Meyer lemons, 650 pounds of kosher salt and 40 liters of extra-virgin olive oil at the over-the-top event. With everything from vine-side yoga to intimate dinners prepared by the region's top chefs, the weekend is the biggest wine country party of the year.

Along with other notable Napa Valley vintners, Robert Mondavi created the first Auction Napa Valley in 1981 to raise money for two local hospitals. Since then, the annual wine extravaganza has given away more than \$150 million to local charities that benefit children's education and community health care. The four-day charity fundraiser includes an online auction that starts on Sunday, May 29, a barrel auction, a live auction and plenty of philanthropic parties. The 2015 auction raised \$15.8 million and this year's honorary chair, Agustin Francisco Huneus, hopes to top that number.



## SPECIAL FEATURE

The honorary chair is the son of illustrious Chilean wine entrepreneur, Agustin Huneus, a pioneer of distinctive wines that highlight terroir. During his career, the elder Huneus oversaw countless significant wine brands in both Napa and South America, including Concha y Toro, Franciscan Estate and Noble Vineyards. Today, Huneus presides over a Napa-based wine empire that controls Quintessa, Flowers, Faust, Veramonte and several other wineries. His son is in charge of the day-to-day operations. In 1996, Huneus, the father, was honorary chair of Auction Napa Valley. Now, 20 years later, proving that Napa lives and breathes as a family-based wine

ment like Argentinean *planchas* (flat cast-iron slabs that rest on top of a grill) to the Meadowood Napa Valley resort and spa. Huneus talks excitedly about the auction's afterparty, a new event called Club Tinto: "The idea is to make the auction shorter. We want to have a wild celebration after the auction. So we're bringing [the auction] down to three hours instead of five. Afterward, we will have this beautiful dinner outside, and the fires will be cooking the food. Mallmann is cooking the whole dinner over live fire! Instead of dessert, you'll get ushered into a tent where there will be dancing late into the night. We're also bringing in Cuba's most famous salsa band, the 30-piece orchestra, Los Van Van."

Huneus sounds like a child at Christmas as he predicts hours of wine-fueled revelry that may even veer into a rowdy but good-natured celebration. "One of my favorite memories of the auction is one year when they had this Mexican dinner," he says, his eyes glittering. "Someone started to pick up and throw their tortillas, and all of a sudden there were thousands of tortillas flying in the air!" In a moment, he composes himself and carefully points out that Auction Napa Valley is really about the community of winemakers giving back to the land they call home. "Napa is this great place, and going to the auction, it gives you a real sense of community. You run into all these personalities and old friends," he says. "Part of the reason Napa is Napa is because it's been going on for generations. The community has been around for a while. My father told his story 20 years ago. Now it's my turn to tell mine. Hopefully one day, one of my daughters will tell her story." Only time will tell if one of the Huneus *niñas* will participate in a future auction, but for now, one thing is for sure: This year's event promises to be a sensational treat. Get more of the haute details below.



Empty bottles at the end of the 2015 auction.

community, Agustin Francisco, the son, serves as the festival chair. "Listen, it's a really big honor for me and my family," the next-generation chair says. "We were immigrants who came from Chile. We were total outsiders, and when my dad started in the wine business, it wasn't what it is today. It wasn't sexy or high end. I remember in 1996, when I was 27 or 28 years old, and my dad became the chair of the Napa Valley wine auction. To me, at that time, it felt like we had finally arrived. Suddenly we weren't outsiders. It was a really important moment. We started to feel like we were a part of Napa. Now, to be the guy who is the second-generation [chair], it's an incredible honor."

To differentiate the auction from years past, Huneus is infusing the weekend with Latin flair. The headlining chef for the celebratory meal after Saturday's live auction is Argentina's Francis Mallmann. The star chef is known for his open-fire style of cooking that will involve shipping special equip-

### WHAT'S NEW

Besides a shorter auction and the inaugural Club Tinto, this year's auction will have hosted vineyard activities on the morning of Saturday, June 4. Auction goers will be invited to take part in a private painting lesson with Alexis Deutsch-Adler and Bob Adler at Adler Deutsch Vineyards or play croquet and enjoy a poolside brunch at Clif Family Winery. They could also practice yoga sun salutations in the vineyard hosted by Kathryn Hall at her namesake winery, Hall Vineyard. If none of those will do, there's always bocce, walking tours, and an exploration of the Napa River restoration project.

Every year, Friday's main event, the barrel auction, is held at a different winery. On June 3, it will take place at the iconic Robert Mondavi Winery, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Tasters can sip current releases from 100 wineries while sampling snacks from the Bay Area's talented chefs and artisanal food makers. There will be a Big Board Auction—new this year—which will be a silent auction at the barrel tasting with rare selections up for bid. Think limited edition big bottles,





AUCTION NAPA VALLEY

*Festival signage*



*Winning bidder number 21 at the 2013 Auction Napa Valley.*

PHOTOS BOB MCLENNAN

“ MY FATHER TOLD HIS STORY 20 YEARS AGO. NOW IT'S MY TURN TO TELL MINE. HOPEFULLY ONE DAY, ONE OF MY DAUGHTERS WILL TELL YOU HER STORY. ”



SPECIAL FEATURE



Saturday's main event at last year's Auction Napa Valley.

JASON TINACCI



Food at the 2015 Auction Napa Valley.



The tables awaiting bidders at the 2015 Auction Napa Valley.

PHOTO: JASON TINACCI



one-of-a-kind farm-to-bottle-to-glass experiences and exclusive access to winemakers.

#### WHAT NOT TO MISS

Those arriving in Napa earlier in the week should make reservations for the Young Winemaker's Dinner on Wednesday, June 1. This is the third annual such dinner and will be hosted by chef Christopher Kostow and his team at The Restaurant at Meadowood. Chef Kostow will serve up a carefully crafted tasting menu paired with two wines from three up-and-coming young vintners. The winemakers are: Kale Anderson, Massimo Di Costanzo and Macario Montoya. Anderson is the director of winemaking at Pahlmeyer and has his own Kale Wines label, which focuses on creating Rhône-inspired wines. Costanzo apprenticed on four continents before settling in his native California, where he produces an excellent small-batch, old-vine Cabernet Sauvignon. And Montoya is the owner and winemaker at Campesino Cellars, where he is a champion of Spanish varietals and Mediterranean grapes.

If only attending Auction Napa Valley for one day, Saturday is the must-see day. With the stunning outdoor location, live musicians, local wines paired with South American flavors and thrilling live auction, it's the culmination of the week's events. Expect a sea of waving auction paddles and clouds of confetti floating down from a white tented ceiling. Dress to impress in your best festive attire, but note that the entire thing takes place on Meadowood's lawn, so leave those sexy Aquazzura stilettos at home.

#### WHAT TO BID ON

The most spectacular auction items will be showcased at Saturday's live auction. Last year, John Legend took the stage to perform his hit All of Me before the live sale of Lot 31, a package that included six etched bottles of Napa wine and a dinner party for 30 at Raymond Vineyards with a private performance by Legend — it sold for \$850,000. This year's 36 live lots promise to be just as dazzling. **The Alpha Omega Live Auction Lot, titled A World of Wonder, includes a 14-night voyage for two couples aboard The World, the largest privately owned residential mega yacht on the globe. All meals and beverages are included, as well as one night with an on-call chef and wine expertly chosen by The World's sommelier. But that's not all: The highest bidder will also get a private wine-blending session for four at Alpha Omega with winemakers Jean Hoefliger and Michel Rolland, three days and two nights at the vineyard's private estate, lunch for four in the winery's caves with owners Robin and Michelle Baggett, and 12 magnums of Alpha Omega wines.**

Antica Napa Valley and Antinori Family Wine Estate are offering Rooms with a View from Napa Valley to Tuscany, featuring overnight accommodations in Florence, Bolgheri and Umbria at Antinori family estates. The top bidders will also take part in a custom wine-blending session resulting in 20 cases of Antinori wines. St. Supéry Estate Vineyards & Winery's A True Gem of Old-World Allure and California Cool includes treats on both coasts. In New York City, auction winners will have an 18-karat limited-

edition Chanel Fine Jewelry piece from the 1932 collection, three nights at The Plaza hotel and dinner for eight at Charlie Palmer Steak; back in Napa Valley, there will be dinner for 12 at the St. Supéry Estate, along with several bottles of fine estate wine. Also on offer the night of the live auction: VIP courtside Golden State Warriors seats, dinner with renowned wine critic Robert Parker and plenty more magnificent wine- and food-related escapades.

#### WHERE TO STAY

Meadowood has been home to the live auction and subsequent party since the event's inception. With its proximity to the main celebration and dreamy cottages with plush bedding and private balconies, it's the best place to stay during the auction. The VIP Auction Napa Valley Experience is an all-inclusive package that includes access to every event, accommodations at Meadowood, a private concierge, and car service to drive you around the Valley. Other resorts that have partnered with Auction Napa



Vintner Jean Charles Boisset mans the Raymond barrels at Friday's barrel tasting in 2015.

Valley include Calistoga Ranch and Harvest Inn by Charlie Palmer.

For those who want a more relaxing auction experience away from the hustle and bustle of the main event, the Bardessono Hotel and Spa in downtown Yountville is an excellent option. The lush compound, with 62 suites, has a rooftop pool perfect for a rejuvenating nap post-barrel tasting or pre-vintner dinner. There is also the amazing Lucy restaurant, helmed by chef Nate Lindsay, in-room spa services, a modern and relaxing eco-friendly atmosphere with bubbling fountains and original artwork. Guests will also be able to reserve complimentary Lexuses for drives of up to three hours at a time. Plus, the Bardessono allows guests to bring their pets along during their stay. ■