

PREMIERE WEEK IN NAPA VALLEY

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Wine Lovers Converge on the Napa Valley During Premiere Week

Premiere week is an opportunity for Napa Valley Vintners to command the attention of the wine trade, wine collectors and wine buyers. Over the 23-years since the first **Premiere Napa Valley** (PNV) began in 1997, the number of auxiliary events during PNV have exploded. What originally started as an “informal stop on by”, this year saw over 40 individual vintners and American Viticultural Area (AVA) designated groups hold open houses showcasing auction preview lots as well as other selected vintages. Serious wine buyers from across the country were able to spend one-on-one time with vintners and winemakers.

Atop the east side of Mount Veeder, sits Progeny Winery who hosted this year’s Mount Veeder AVA open house kicked off the intimate tastings around the valley. To the north valley, the historic Charles Krug Winery showcased the St. Helena AVA vintages. To the south, Cuvaision Winery, who is celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year, hosted the Los Carneros AVA open house. Most of the open houses featured fifteen plus vintners at each location giving the wine enthusiast a good overview of each region of the Napa Valley.



Korrine Munson of the Napa Valley Vintners said these open houses are not official events of the NVV, but are welcomed.

“All the auxiliary events and educational opportunities are the bi-product of the people who are in town and the level of trade visiting the valley for Premiere,” said Munson. “This is an excellent chance for our vintners to entertain their best customers or acquire new best customers and spend one-on-one time with people who are serious wine buyers. This has become a ‘homecoming’ for the trade. When I talked to my wine friends from around the country, they all say, ‘I’ll see you in February.’”



One of the three events that were sponsored by NVV during PNV19 was the Vintage Perspective and 20-Case Lot tasting held at the historic Freemark Abbey Winery. Attendees started out doing blind tastings and had an opportunity to create their own perspective from Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon from the 2014, 2015 and 2016 vintages as well as Napa Valley Chardonnay from the 2015, 2016 and 2017 vintages. With pen and their guide book opened up to the notes page, tasters went from table to table with each vintner’s three year vintages in an unmarked wine crafts and began tasting. For those whose palate isn’t as refined, there was a number on each craft corresponding to an index to the wines in the back of the accompanying guide book.



“I tried to the wines first, but I needed to the guide book to tell me what was what,” said Nicole Brown, from Arizona attending with her husband Shawn. “It was interesting to taste the subtle differences between the three vintages from each vintner.”



After the Perspective Tasting, guests were invited down stairs to experience the 20 Case Lot Preview Tasting that were auctioned off during the Barrel and Live Auction the following day. Winemakers and vintners were on-hand to discuss and describe what makes their wine so unique and collectible.



Wineries involved in the Perspective tasting included: Beringer Vineyards, CADE Estate Winery, Chimney Rock Winery, Frank Family Vineyard, Herb Lamb Vineyards, Ideology Cellars, Jamieson Ranch Vineyards, Odette Estate Winery, Raymond Vineyards, Spottswoode Estate Vineyard, Stags Leap Wine Cellars, Turnbull Wine Cellars, **Alpha Omega**, Artesa Vineyards, Cakebread Cellars, Clos Du Val, Freemark Abbey Winery, Keenan Winery, Miner Family Winery and Trefethen Family Vineyards.

Wineries involved in the 20-Case Lot Preview Tasting included: Ghost Black and Markharm Vineyard, Beringer Vineyards, Quilt Wines, Hestan Vineyards, JaM Cellars, St. Supery Estate Vineyards and Winery, Duckhorn Vineyards, Honig Vineyard & Winery, Reynolds Family Winery, Louis M. Martini Winery, Rombauer Vineyards, Saintsbury, Keenan Winery, Coquerel Family Wine Estates, Silver Oak, Freemark Abbey, PEJU, Jamieson Ranch Vineyards, The Hess Collection Winery and Belle Glos.

Freemark Abbey Winemaker, Ted Edwards now with his 39th vintage said these 20-Case Lot Previews reflect one-of-kind vintages never to be replicated by a collection of Napa Valley Vintners. “There is so much talent in this room,” he said. “We were proud to host this event and show off the newly renovated Freemark Abbey.”

Following the Barrel Tasting and Live Auction held at the Culinary Institute of America, which raised nearly \$3.7 million on Saturday, February 23,