



## Gems of Napa Event Kicks Off the V Foundation Wine Celebration

By [Jennifer Boden \(http://kron4.com/author/gmailjenniferboden/\)](http://kron4.com/author/gmailjenniferboden/)

Published: August 3, 2017, 6:42 pm | Updated: August 4, 2017, 8:12 am



Gems of Napa Event. From left to right: Blakesley Chappellet, Michelle Baggett, Amy Dornbusch, Jean-Charles Boisset, Rubin Singer, Beth Nickel, Heidi Barrett, Helen Keplinger, Gina Gallo (Photography: Alexander Rubin)

Billed as “an intimate evening of couture fashion, cuisine and fine wines,” Gems of Napa was much more. Think of it as a wine dinner that dreams are made of, as some of the valley’s finest wines – and winemakers – accompanied uber fashion designer Rubin Singer. Proceeds from the event support the V Foundation for cancer research, which kicks off its 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Wine Celebration today.

Gems of Napa was hosted by the famous wine pair – Gina Gallo and Jean-Charles Boisset at their private home, which was previously owned by Robert and Margrit Mondavi.

“Jean-Charles and Gina, longtime supporters of the V Foundation Wine Celebration, were incredibly generous to offer their stunning home on Wappo Hill in Yountville as the backdrop for Rubin Singer’s fashion show,” said V Wine Celebration board member Amy Dornbusch. “I know myself and my fellow vintners are thrilled to begin this week’s V events by slipping into Rubin’s gorgeous gowns to showcase his Resort 2018 collection.”



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"Wine is the epicenter of generosity, and the catalyst for giving," said Jean-Charles Boisset. "Last night's fundraising dinner was a remarkable celebration of friendship and community, led by the charming and wonderful leading ladies of winemaking in Napa Valley."

The singular event was an auction item at last year's V Foundation gala. The evening began with a red carpet

entrance and cocktail reception, where guests could mingle with the "Gems" of

Napa Valley: Gina Gallo, E&J Gallo Winery; Michelle Baggett, Alpha Omega Winery; Heidi Barrett, La Sirena; Blakesley Chappellet, Chappellet Winery; Beth Nickel, Far Niente Winery; Amy Marks Dornbusch, Gemstone Vineyard and Helen Keplinger, Keplinger Wines. Each wearing a custom Singer design.

Guests also had the chance to meet with Singer whose designs are well-known. He has designed clothes for numerous celebrities such as Beyonce, Jennifer Lopez, Sharon Stone, Taylor Swift in addition to several private clients for society events such as the Asian Art Museum and the MoMa opening.

"Singer created a Mad Men meets Monet dress for me that was both timeless and modern. The simplicity of the cut allowed the fabric to be the star. I felt like I was draped in an impressionist painting," said Blakesley Chappellet, author of the newly released coffee-table book *Napa Valley Entertaining*.

Gems of Napa stylist, Victoria Hitchcock said "It was a treat to see these talented winemakers in Rubin's designs! "To top it off, we got to taste their wines with each dinner course in a picture-perfect setting."

This event raised more than \$100,000 that went toward the V Foundation, which was founded by legendary college basketball coach Jim Valvano. "We were touched by the spirit of generosity for a cause that has touched us all," said Gina Gallo. "The ultimate defeat of cancer in our lifetime!"

"The V Foundation Wine Celebration is one of the most important charity events my husband, Robin, and I participate in each year," said Alpha Omega vintner Michelle Baggett. "Because we both lost our mothers to cancer, we know how haunting this disease can be. The V Foundation is one of the premier cancer fighting foundations in the world and we stand by them 100% in their efforts to uncover preventative medicines and cures for cancer."



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Dinner Fun at Gina Gallo & Jean-Charles Boisset's home (Photo: Alexander Rubin)



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Modeling Singer's Collection Above Living Room Pool (Photo: Alexander Rubin)



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Modeling Singer's Collection during Dinner (Photo: Alexander Rubin)