



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sonoma County Vintners enlists a panel of Master Sommeliers for Sonoma County Barrel Auction

(January 25, 2017; Santa Rosa, CA) An all-star panel of Master Sommeliers from around the country has once again been assembled to evaluate lot submissions for the Third Annual Sonoma County Barrel Auction. Hosted by Sonoma County Vintners, the invite and trade-only Barrel Auction will take place on April 21, and will offer a selection of one-of-a-kind "never before, never again" lots representing Sonoma County's 17 diverse viticultural appellations. The panel has been tasked with assessing the wines to ensure the highest quality, terroir authenticity and varietal correctness.

"Every year we bring in some of the most experienced palates in the world of wine to ensure that each Barrel Auction lot is both well executed and also representative of Sonoma County," says Sonoma County Vintners Executive Director Jean Sessions. "Because all submissions are tasted in a blind setting, the panel's assessment offers a unique and valuable expert perspective of Sonoma County climate, terroir and winemaking in its entirety."

The panel of experts to evaluate the wine lot submissions for the 2017 auction includes:

- Randall Bertao, MS, Los Altos Golf and Country Club, Los Altos, CA
- Roger Dagorn, MS, One Five Hospitality, New York, NY
- Evan Goldstein, MS, Full Circle Wine Solutions, San Francisco, CA
- Keith Goldston, MS, Rosewood Hotel, Washington D.C.
- Peter Granoff, MS, Ferry Plaza Wine Merchant, San Francisco, & Oxbow Cheese & Wine Merchant, Napa, CA
- Jack Mason, MS, Pappas Bros. Steakhouse, Houston, TX
- Laura Williamson, MS, Mandarin Oriental, New York, NY

The seven panelists came together this month to begin the rigorous double-blind tasting process of the lot submissions, and will finalize the selections mid-February. The panel will return to Sonoma County once more in April to attend the auction and its preview tastings. Full background information on each of the Master Sommeliers can be found online at: www.sonomawine.com/barrelauction/sommeliers

"This panel brings an interesting element to the Sonoma County Barrel Auction as it not only holds vintners to the highest standards of winemaking, but it also has the potential to create ambassadors who



*Sonoma County Barrel Auction Master Sommelier panelists Jack Mason, Randall Bertao, Laura Williamson, Roger Dagorn, Peter Granoff, Evan Goldstein, Keith Goldston
Photo credit: Alexander Rubin, Rubinphotography.com.*

can communicate the full beauty and diversity of Sonoma throughout the country," says Evan Goldstein, MS of San Francisco's Full Circle Wine Solutions, which helped select the panel members on behalf of the Sonoma County Vintners. "In evaluating the 2017 submissions thus far, it has been refreshing to see the evolution and diversity of style in Sonoma County. The region truly stands at the intersection of winemaking talent and terroir."

The 2017 Barrel Auction is on pace to exceed last year's offering of 75 small-lot wines. The selected lots will be previewed at Sonoma County AVA Association events on April 20 and auctioned the following day to select licensed wine sellers, including retailers, restaurateurs and wholesalers, invited personally by participating wineries. For more information on the panelists, or to request a ticket to the Barrel Auction, please visit <http://www.sonomawine.com/barrelauction>

About Sonoma County Vintners

Sonoma County Vintners (SCV) is the leading voice of Sonoma County wine, dedicated to raising awareness of Sonoma County as one of the world's premier wine regions, noted for its heritage of artisan winemaking, distinct growing regions, and extraordinary quality. Founded in 1944, SCV represents more than 200 wineries and affiliated businesses throughout the county. To learn more about Sonoma County Vintners, visit: www.SonomaWine.com.

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