



Gold Club August 2026

Auctioneer Wines 2023 Auctioneer Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain, Napa Valley, California

About the wine: Some wines ask politely for your attention. **Auctioneer Howell Mountain Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon** walks into the room and earns it.

Auctioneer was created with a simple idea: showcase some of Napa Valley's most distinctive vineyards without the sky-high prices often attached to them. Rather than focusing on a single estate, the winery partners with exceptional growers to source fruit from some of Napa's most sought-after sites, allowing each bottling to tell the story of its vineyard. This Reserve Cabernet highlights one of Napa's most celebrated mountain appellations—Howell Mountain—where rugged terrain, volcanic soils, and high elevations produce wines known for both power and elegance.

The 2023 vintage captures everything that makes mountain Cabernet so compelling. While valley-floor Cabernets often lean toward plush, ripe fruit, Howell Mountain adds another dimension: intensity, freshness, structure, and remarkable aging potential. This is a wine built for tonight's steak dinner—but one that could easily reward patience for years to come.

Region: Perched above Napa Valley's famous morning fog, Howell Mountain was the first mountain-growing appellation officially recognized in Napa Valley. Vineyards typically sit between 1,400 and 2,500 feet above sea level, basking in abundant sunshine during the day while enjoying significantly cooler evenings than the valley below.

That elevation changes everything.

The vines receive more direct sunlight, developing thick-skinned grapes packed with concentrated flavor, color, and tannin. Volcanic soils are rocky, well-drained, and naturally low in fertility, forcing the vines to work harder and send roots deep into the mountainside. The payoff is fruit with extraordinary concentration and character.

Howell Mountain Cabernets have earned a worldwide reputation for combining richness with remarkable balance. They're powerful without being heavy, bold without sacrificing elegance, and often among Napa's longest-lived wines. It's one of those places where Mother Nature did most of the hard work long before the winemaker arrived.

Tasting Notes: Pour a generous glass and give it a few minutes to breathe. The wine opens with enticing aromas of black currant, blackberry, dark cherry, cassis, violets, cedar, graphite, espresso, and baking spices. As it evolves, subtle notes of cocoa, tobacco leaf, and crushed rock begin to emerge, adding layer after layer of complexity.

On the palate, this Cabernet is rich without feeling oversized. Concentrated black fruit is framed by polished tannins and vibrant acidity, creating a wine that's both muscular and remarkably graceful. Hints of dark chocolate, vanilla, savory herbs, and toasted oak linger through a long, satisfying finish that seems determined not to leave the conversation.

Despite its youthful energy, everything feels beautifully integrated. Decant it for 30 to 60 minutes if opening now, or tuck away a few bottles and let time work its magic. Either approach is a winning strategy.

If you've ever wondered why mountain-grown Cabernet commands such admiration, this bottle makes an awfully convincing argument.

Food Pairing: Big wines deserve memorable meals, and this Cabernet is happiest when there's something hearty on the table.

Classic pairings include grilled ribeye, filet mignon, New York strip, prime rib, or slow-braised short ribs. Lamb chops with rosemary, herb-crusted beef tenderloin, venison, or smoked brisket are equally outstanding companions. Mushroom lovers will find plenty to celebrate with wild mushroom risotto or grilled portobello mushrooms topped with blue cheese.

Speaking of cheese, aged Cheddar, Gouda, Gruyère, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and blue cheeses all stand up beautifully to the wine's richness. For dessert, skip anything overly sweet and instead reach for dark chocolate with a high cocoa content or chocolate-covered espresso beans.

And if you're looking for the perfect ending to the evening, pour one last glass after dinner with no food at all. Some wines are conversation starters. Others become the conversation. This one just might have everyone lingering around the table long after the plates have been cleared.

