



**kitchens**  
in the  
vineyards

## Kitchens in the Vineyards?

*Kitchens in the Vineyards* was a one-of-a-kind tour of the Napa Valley's most exquisite estates and innovative, private properties. From 1998 to 2018 on the last Saturday in April, more than 1,000 patrons got an exclusive look inside five stunning homes in the heart of wine country featuring kitchens, dining rooms, entertainment areas and gardens – all enhanced by springtime floral designs and table settings by recognized floral and interior designers. Homes were styled by professional designers and florists who highlighted each home's unique character. The popular tour, with a focus on entertaining and the culinary arts, was an up-close look into the premiere lifestyles of the Napa Valley and proved ideal for gathering home décor, landscaping, and architectural inspiration. Hundreds of high-end house tour fans enjoy a day of exploring the homes. At each home, patrons enjoy food tastings offered by well-known Napa Valley chefs and for our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017 a special cookbook was available with recipes from the chefs and restaurants since the tour began. On the evening before the tour a Preview Party took place when 160 guests took a private champagne bus tour to the five homes, followed by an elegant Napa Valley wine reception and dinner buffet which often took place in winery settings throughout the valley.



*Kitchens in the Vineyards* was the brainchild of volunteers Bonnie Lind and Melinda Mendelson who started the tour in 1998. KITV's amazing success was dependent on an ever-larger group of dedicated volunteers. By the last tour there was a roster of 155 volunteers working throughout the weekend at each home and supporting the event. Planning started each year in May following the previous tour in April and continued throughout the year with a dedicated team contacting homeowners and taking trips all over the valley to identify the unique homes that would fit on the tour. Designers, chefs and florists were then recruited to donate their services and by January each year the five houses were in place and the ticket invitation was in the mail. Buses, a caterer and venue were booked for the Preview Party and monthly meetings of the large organizing committee took place often in borrowed offices or homes. It was a major labor of love for everyone involved but was extremely popular and rewarding for all concerned.



*Kitchens in the Vineyards* was voted the region's "Best Home Tour" by Solano Magazine and received valuable editorial coverage in well-known Bay Area newspapers and magazines. Due to its uniqueness, overall ambience and appeal, *Kitchens in the Vineyards* grew in popularity each year and attracted more than 1,200 visitors to the Napa Valley. Patrons came from throughout the Bay Area, including San Francisco, Contra Costa and Marin Counties, East Bay and the South Bay, as well as the Napa Valley itself. In addition to our surrounding counties, almost a third of our patrons travel from all over the state of California to attend our one-of-a-kind home

tour and exclusive preview party. *Kitchens in the Vineyards* was for 21 years the major fundraising event for *Music in the Vineyards*, our Napa Valley chamber music festival held each August. When the tour began it ensured the financial stability of MITV and through the years went on to be a major contributor to the festival's income with an annual income of \$50 - \$70,000. The tour attracted approximately 1200 patrons annually with a strength of attracting patrons who were not chamber music lovers but who through their interest in touring Napa Valley homes, sustained our chamber music festival.