

Symphony's Duckhorns

You're unlikely to find any Duckhorns among the brass on stage at a symphony performance. Their usual habitats include oenophiles' wine cellars and the tables at fine dinners — like the San Diego Symphony's (SDS) April 17 Duckhorn and Donovan's Wine Dinner, at Donovan's Circle of Fifths and Donovan's Prime Seafood. With about 150 guests, the event was a sellout again this year, but it was still intimate (taking over the entire establishment!) After a very social reception with hors d'oeuvres, pinot noir and chardonnay, excited guests were seated for dinner. The first course was served (a sorrel soup, with a different pinot noir), and diners were warmly welcomed by SDS executive director Ward Gill, event chair Chuck LeMoine and board chair Mitch Woodbury. Donovan's was thanked for donating the catering. The second course was a crispy duck breast matched with a merlot. Executive winemaker Bill Nancarrow gave a talk about the six selections, from Duckhorn's three wine families, which would be served during the evening. Next came a superlative sliced filet, cooked to perfection, with a cabernet sauvignon. Fork-tender and full-flavored, nearly everyone found this dish exceptionally

enjoyable. A five-major-item live auction and "Fund-A-Note" raised money for SDS' music education programs, depicted in a short video. Some bidders were exceptionally generous, and all were thanked for their support. Dessert — a raspberry truffle and a duo of cheeses — was served, and Oscar-, Emmy- and Grammy-winning composer, conductor and performer Marvin Hamlisch took the stage. He sang several of his most popular hits, and guests occasionally dropped \$100 bills into the brandy snifter by his baby grand (the "tips" went to SDS, of course). He related that as a child when he complained about playing an upright piano, a female relative said, "What's the difference? He's just going to end up playing in some bar somewhere" — and now he is! He said he'd write to Julliard and tell them that he'd finally made the "big time." He got a big standing ovation.



Symphony: 1. Craigar and Joyce Grosvenor, Marvin Hamlisch, Mitch Woodbury (SDS board chair), Sandy and Chuck Lemoine (he's the event chair) 2. Courtney Gill, Ward Gill (SDS executive director), Catherine and Phil Blair, Joye Blount