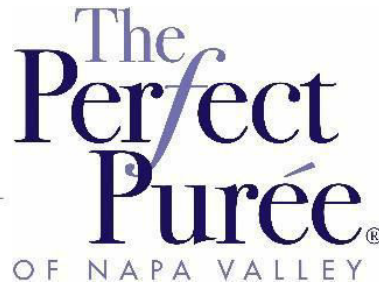


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The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley & Charbay Distillery Raise More Than \$14,000 for Buckelew Programs at Cocktail Competition

— Luma Bar & Eatery’s Chuck Starzenski and Team Wins People’s Choice Award and Lo & Behold Bar’s Luis Martir and Team Win 1st Place —

Napa, California (Nov. 6, 2024) — The annual Wizards of Elixirs Cocktail Competition, demonstrating the creative spirit of the Wine Country bartending community, has become one of the hottest Halloween traditions around. This year’s sixth annual competition at Brewsters Beer Garden in Petaluma raised a record \$14,000 for the North Bay mental health and substance use recovery services provider [Buckelew Programs](#). More than 400 people — up 100 from last year — attended the event hosted by [The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley](#) and [Charbay Distillery](#).



First place winner Luis Martir and the team from Lo & Behold Bar + Kitchen.

Bartending teams from 16 top Wine Country establishments vied for the coveted People’s Choice award and cash prizes. Their sample-size drinks featured Charbay Clear Vodka and a Perfect Purée flavor (or two) of choice. Luma Bar & Eatery’s Chuck Starzenski and his team won the popular vote and \$500 for their Wizard Of Oz-themed cocktail with Kiwi, “The Emerald City.”

First place and \$1,000 in the judges’ category went to Luis Martir and his team from Lo & Behold Bar and Kitchen in Healdsburg. Their “Sin City” summoned Vegas vibes with Charbay Clear Vodka (tropical tea infused), bitters, Papaya and Mango. Katie Fryxell

and her team from Grossman’s Noshery & Bar in Santa Rosa took home second place and \$750 for “Blood Moon” with Blood Orange, Carmelized Pineapple and hand-made habanero Sichuan

syrup. Third place and \$500 went to Carly Hiebert and Kelly Dallas of Solage in Calistoga, whose “Crystal Shop” cocktail combined vodka with Wilderton Earthen spirit-free botanicals, Blood Orange and a creative cinnamon stick incense. For the second year in a row, the same Solage team won the Best Décor Award and \$150. Vincent Lundeen from Andaz Napa emerged as another repeat winner. After taking home third place in 2023, he won the 2024 Staff Pick Award for “Club Havana” with Passion Fruit and Pink Guava.

Attendees got into the spirit of Halloween with an array of impressive costumes including the Best Costume Award winners, a pair inspired by “Avatar: The Last Airbender.”

This year’s attendance spike came from new early-admission VIP tickets that drew 100 people to preview the competing entries with complimentary VIP-only appetizers. Organizers agreed other improvements including spirit-free drinks at the Buckelew station and quick-service food from Brewsters Beer Garden made the event better than ever.

“Thank you to all who came out to support Buckelew Programs and try all the amazing cocktails from the Wizards of Elixirs teams this year! What a fantastic night, can't wait for next year! SO. MUCH. FUN!” raved Johnny Marrs, Charbay’s Wine Country sales comptroller.

“We’re incredibly grateful for the talented bartenders of Napa and Sonoma counties. They brought their A-game again, making our evening an unforgettable experience. Our competition allows them to showcase their creativity and flair, and we get to raise funds for vital local organizations like Buckelew Programs,” says Michele Lex, President & CMO of The Perfect Purée.

Buckelew Programs Chief Executive Officer Chris Kughn said his organization will use the money raised by Wizards of Elixir to further its mission of ensuring more people in the North Bay have access to mental health and substance use services. “We couldn’t be more thrilled to have been part of this unforgettable event! Seeing our board members and the whole community come together — in some truly outstanding costumes — was heartwarming. We’re deeply honored by the partnership with The Perfect Purée and Charbay Distillery and grateful they chose to give back to the community in such a meaningful way.”

The Perfect Purée and Charbay Distillery share the Wizards of Elixirs Cocktail Competition winning recipes:

First Place: “Sin City”

Luis Martir, Bartender, Lo & Behold Bar and Kitchen, Healdsburg

Ingredients for Sin City:

- 1 ½ oz. Charbay Clear Vodka (tropical tea infused)
- ¼ oz. dry vermouth
- 6 dashes tiki bitters
- ¼ oz. orgeat
- 1 oz. The Perfect Purée Papaya
- ½ oz. The Perfect Purée Mango
- 1 oz. lime juice

- 1/3 oz. yuzu syrup
- ¼ oz. lychee juice

Ingredients for Tropical Tea infused Charbay Clear Vodka:

- Charbay Clear Vodka
- Island Breeze Black Tea

Method for Tropical Tea infused Charbay Clear Vodka: Infuse the tropical tea with Charbay Clear Vodka. Let the mixture sit for a couple of hours at room temperature before straining.

Method for Sin City: Combine all ingredients with ice into a shaker, shake and strain.

Second Place: “Blood Moon”

Katie Fryxell, Bartender, Grossman’s Noshery & Bar, Santa Rosa

Ingredients for Blood Moon:

- 1 ½ oz Charbay Clear Vodka
- ¾ oz Lillet Blanc
- spritz of absinthe
- ½ oz The Perfect Purée Carmelized Pineapple
- ½ oz The Perfect Purée Blood Orange
- ¾ oz lemon juice
- ¾ oz habanero Sichuan syrup
- sugar and ground Sichuan peppercorn dusted pineapple, garnish

Ingredients for habanero Sichuan syrup:

- 2 parts sugar
- 1 part water
- sliced habaneros
- whole Sichuan peppercorns

Method for habanero Sichuan syrup: Combine and cook on low heat until sugar is dissolved. Let come to room temperature before storing.

Method for Blood Moon: Combine all ingredients except absinthe in a shaker and add ice. Shake until chilled. Strain into a bucket glass and spritz with absinthe. Garnish with a candied pineapple dusted in sugar and ground up peppercorn mixture.

Third Place: “Crystal Shop”

Carly Hiebert & Kelly Dallas, Bartenders, Solage, Calistoga

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ oz. Charbay Clear Vodka
- 1 ½ oz. Wilderton Earthen
- ½ oz. Wilderton Bittersweet Aperitivo
- ¾ oz. The Perfect Purée Blood Orange
- ¾ oz. pomegranate juice
- ½ oz. lemon juice

- ¼ oz. simple syrup
- smoking cinnamon shard, garnish

Method: Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice and shake until frothy. Serve on the rocks and garnish with a cinnamon shard attached to the rim of the glass with a clothes pin. Use a torch to light the cinnamon like a piece of incense!

About The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley

For more than 35 years, The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley has indulged the culinary passion of chefs, mixologists and food enthusiasts with products that provide ultimate fresh fruit flavor minus the peeling, dicing and simmering required for making purées from scratch. The company’s line-up of fruit purées, specialties and blends features 41 on-trend premium flavors ranging from pantry staples Red Raspberry, Strawberry and Banana to the tropical Lychee, Passion Fruit and Pink Guava. The fruits are harvested at peak ripeness, puréed and packed frozen to maintain optimal freshness, flavor and color no matter what the season. As the leading U.S. producer of premium fruit purées with foodservice distribution throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico, The Perfect Purée of Napa Valley is revered in restaurants, hotels, bars, bakeries and catering kitchens for the just-picked taste and unmatched consistency of its products.

All flavors can be frozen for up to 24 months from date of manufacture. When thawed, the purées, concentrates and specialties last 7-10 days in the refrigerator, and blends for 21 days.

For more information, visit www.perfectpuree.com or follow on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) @theperfectpuree.

About Charbay Distillery

The Karakasevic family, one of the early pioneers of the modern American artisan distillery movement, began distilling in California in 1983 with an Alambic pot still and hasn’t stopped since. Charbay Distillery, nestled in Ukiah, California, is family-owned and spans 13 generations of European distilling heritage. With a lineup that includes whiskeys distilled from bottle-ready beer, brandies from Napa Valley grapes, vodkas flavored with 100% real fruit or tea, and rum distilled from sugar cane syrup, Charbay brings quality and creativity to every bottle. Their latest release, a pre-batched espresso cocktail, continues their tradition of innovation. Led by Marko Karakasevic, the thirteenth generation, who completed a 25-year apprenticeship in every category of distilling, Charbay is highly regarded in the industry with numerous accolades to its name. For more information, visit charbay.com or follow their socials on [Facebook](#) & [Instagram](#) @charbaydistillery

About Buckelew Programs

Founded in 1970, Buckelew Programs is North Bay’s largest nonprofit provider of comprehensive behavioral health services. Each year, Buckelew helps thousands who experience mental health and addiction challenges — often those with no other access to care — to lead healthier, more independent lives. Buckelew also operates one of 12 California call centers in the national 988 Lifeline network, responding to nearly 22,000 calls this year. Buckelew’s core programs include Counseling, Service Navigation, Substance Use Recovery, Suicide Prevention and Supported Housing. Learn more at Buckelew.org.

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