

Wonderful atmosphere,  
friendly people-  
Christoph Wellendorff  
welcomes guests to a festive  
dinner at the Hamel winery  
in California's  
Sonoma Valley.

JEWELLERY PIECE OF THE YEAR

# WE ARE FAMILY



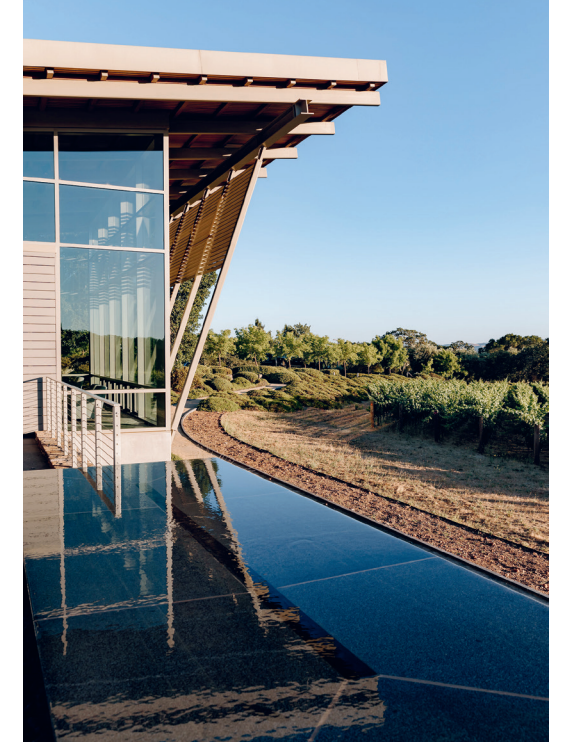
What an unforgettable experience: In the summer of 2024, Wellendorff's Jewellery Piece of the Year was presented in the USA – in an exclusive and informal setting at the Hamel winery in Sonoma Valley, California.

The California evening sun shines gently through the large window, bathing the wall in sunlight, bouncing off wine glasses and cutlery, brushing an arm and nestling over a shoulder. Around 20 guests sit at the festively laid table enjoying the intimate atmosphere, full of anticipation for the hours to come. Not everyone knows each other personally, but there is still a comforting familiarity. They are united by their love of fine jewellery and excellent craftsmanship; they share the same values. They are like one big family.

"We are family" says Christoph Wellendorff that evening. These three words have shaped the life and career of Wellendorff's head of sales and foreign minister. And so he is pleased that they are also the perfect motto for this exclusive gathering at George Hamel's winery in Sonoma, 80 kilometres north of San Francisco.

The reason for this get-together is to present a very special creation from the Pforzheim manufactory: the Jewellery Piece of the Year – this time, an innovative necklace that can be worn in three different ways (see p. 42). Christoph Wellendorff invited seven couples who are clients from North America to the event, including successful tech managers from Silicon Valley, investment bankers from Wall Street and entrepreneurs. He had previously personally presented the Jewellery Piece of the Year, which is limited to 47 pieces, to each of them in a small, private setting. "This allowed our customers to explore it in peace and quiet and take their time." They were all thrilled, says Christoph Wellendorff. "Especially because this necklace is inspired by the Wellendorff women, namely my mother, my sister-in-law and my wife. The Americans told me that this gives the piece of jewellery a special touch – because they are not just buying any old beautiful necklace, but one that the family has developed together."

Phil Schiller was also in attendance on this special Saturday in June. The top manager of



See you again in beautiful surroundings:  
Christoph Wellendorff with  
Apple Fellow Phil Schiller  
and his wife Kim.







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Apple, who has enjoyed a close friendship with Christoph Wellendorff for many years, is a big fan of Wellendorff. He once said in a conversation: "I collect three brands – Patek Philippe, Porsche and Wellendorff."

In Sonoma, he chatted cheerfully late into the night about Apple's success model and the legendary Steve Jobs. And he also said: "Wellendorff, never stop surprising us!"

Wellendorff's ability to create groundbreaking innovations also fascinates George Hamel. Christoph Wellendorff emphasises that he is one of the most important Wellendorff collectors in the USA. The two became friends in 2013, at an event celebrating Wellendorff's 120th anniversary at Schloss Vollrads in Oestrich-Winkel, Germany. "Since then, whenever I travel to the United States, I always try to meet up with George or at least go to a restaurant where I can drink his wonderful wine." So, there was no question that the presentation of the Jewellery Piece of the Year would take place at his winery in America. So beautifully situated in the hills of the Sonoma Valley, it produces such a great Cabernet Sauvignon.

All guests were in agreement on the beauty and unique nature of this location and that the Jewellery Piece of the Year should once again be presented in North America in 2025. However, there was passionate debate about the future location and a real battle of words broke out about the advantages of each location. Some once again favoured the USA, others spoke in favour of Canada. Christoph Wellendorff enjoyed the stimulating discussion: "When successful people discuss where our next event should take place, it shows their special appreciation for this event and for our company." A healthy debate, just like we would have as a family.



An evening full of enjoyment – with singer Marc Marshall, great wine and good conversation.



Photography: Mariana Calderon

“Wellendorff,  
never stop  
surprising us!”

*Phil Schiller, Apple Fellow*

