

Champagne Sells for World Record \$43,630

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NEW YORK — A bottle of Veuve Clicquot meant for Tsar Nicholas I and salvaged from a 19th-century shipwreck in the Baltic Sea set a world record for Champagne when it sold for 30,000 euros (\$43,630) at an auction in Aland, Finland.

It is one of two bottles from a cache of 145 recovered from a two-masted schooner. The Clicquot was sold to an Internet bidder from Singapore after a spirited round with a U.S. bidder at the auction in Mariehamn, Aland's capital.

The other Champagne bottle made by Juglar, which went out of business in the early 19th century, fetched 24,000 euros (\$35,000) at the auction.

"Today proved to be one of the most historic and exhilarating events in the world of wine," said John Kapon, CEO of the New York auction house Acker Merrall & Condit, which conducted Friday's sale.

Ella Grussner Cromwell-Morgan, a sommelier who lives on Aland and tasted the Juglar, said it

was sweet with a crisp acidity. She described it as having "a flowery, young citrus aroma, sort of fruity apricots."

The previous record price for a bottle of Champagne was \$42,000 for a 1959 Dom Perignon Rose sold in 2008, according to Kapon.

The unidentified ship where diver Christian Erikson and his team found the Champagne, as well as bottles of beer, is estimated to have been built between 1780 and 1830. It is believed to have been on its way to the court of Tsar Nicholas I.

Experts estimated from the corks and hand-blown bottles that the wines were produced between 1811 and 1831.

Aland, an autonomous region, is a duty-free port, so the buyers will not have to pay any taxes, said Bjorn Haggblom, head of communications for the government of Aland.

The cache belongs to the government of Aland, an archipelago in the Baltic, which plans to use the proceeds to fund maritime archeological work and benefit the Baltic Sea environment.

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